

Essay competition

In 2025, a new NATO – the Republic of Moldova [Individual Partnership Programme](#) for the years 2025–2028 was approved. Built around four strategic objectives set by the Moldovan authorities, the Programme emphasises strengthening of national resilience and civil preparedness.

In this context, NATO Liaison Office in the Republic of Moldova is launching the second edition of the national essay contest for undergraduate and master's students. The objectives of the essay competition is as follows:

- ✓ foster a deeper understanding of what the notion of ‘resilience’ stand for, and its significance for the country’s security and future;
- ✓ explore the Alliance’s approach to resilience and assess its relevance to Moldova’s current realities; and
- ✓ propose ways in which NATO can most effectively continue supporting Moldova in building its national resilience.

Theme: *“Resilience beyond buzzword: why it matters for Moldova’s future and how can the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance (NATO) better support the country’s efforts ?”*

Award: The selection committee will announce five best essays. The winners will have the possibility to benefit from a sponsored trip to NATO Headquarters in Brussels, Belgium, to meet and discuss with NATO experts enabling the partnership and cooperation.

Terms of reference

Eligibility criteria: Who can participate?

There is no participation fee.

The essay competition is open to all citizens of the Republic of Moldova who are currently enrolled as undergraduate or master's students at an accredited university in the Republic of Moldova.

Each applicant may submit *one essay only* to participate in the competition.

Timelines:

The essay competition starts on **6 October 2025**.

The submission deadline is **10 December 2025**, at 00:00 EET. Late submissions will not be accepted.

The result of the contest will be communicated on **12 January 2026** via:

- NATO Liaison Office Facebook Page - [NATO Liaison Office in the Republic of Moldova](#)
- The winners will be also notified by email and/or phone.

The period of the information visit to NATO HQ and its duration will be determined by the organisers and will be communicated to the winners of the essay contest in due time, following the announcement of the results.

Requirements for essay writing

The essay must be written either in English or French, the two official languages of the Alliance. The length of the essay has to be between 2,000 – 2,500 words. The format of the essay has to be in Word, Times New Roman, size 12.

The essay must be an original piece of work and the sole creation of the applicant.

Quotations are acceptable, but shall not exceed 20 % of the entire text, and must be properly referenced in footnotes. The content will be verified by a specialised anti-plagiarism software.

Any use of artificial intelligence (AI)s is prohibited and will be subject to strict verification.

The submissions that fail to comply with these requirements will be automatically disqualified from the competition.

The essay front page will contain the following information:

- Name and surname of the author;
- Date of birth;
- University, faculty/master's specialization/year of study.

For sending, the document will be saved under the name: "NLO_essay_contest_name_surname".

How to participate

The essay must be submitted electronically, in the format and by the deadline indicated, at office@nlo-moldova.hq.nato.int

Evaluation criteria and assessment of proposals

Eligible participants' entries will be evaluated in separate categories by a Selection Board. The essays will be assessed based on the following, but not limited to, criteria,:

- Relevance of the essay to the established theme;

- Coherence and a well-defined line of argument;
- Originality of research and evidence of independent thinking on essay-topic.

The decisions of the organisers, the members of the evaluation panel, regarding the conduct of the competition and the determination of the winners are definitive and therefore, not subject to any forms of appeal.

Contest prizes

Five fully sponsored information visits for one person each, to NATO HQ in Brussels, Belgium.

- Undergraduate students: 3 prizes
- Master's students: 2 prizes

The period of the information visit to NATO HQ and its duration will be determined by the organisers and will be communicated to the winners of the contest in due time. The decision of the organisers cannot be subject to appeal or revision.

Other

By entering the competition, i.e. by sending the essay to the address of the organizer (NLO), participants hereby consent to allow the organizers to use their personal data for the following purposes:

- processing their applications;
- assessing their eligibility under the competition rules;
- contacting participants;
- for communication, publicity or promotional purposes.

Prizes may not be exchanged for any other prize or cash value.

Contact:

NATO Liaison Office in the Republic of Moldova

office@nlo-moldova.hq.nato.int

DISCLAIMER:

Participation in the essay competition takes place on a voluntary basis and NATO is not liable for any expenses incurred as a result of participation.

Participation in the competition does not constitute any form of endorsement by NATO of the ideas presented. The NLO shall not be liable for any failure or delay in delivering the winners package to the extent that such failure or delays is caused by a Force Majeure Event.

The NLO reserves the right to modify the terms of reference of the essay competition at any time.