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Separation and immersion: the changing role of the armed forces in Northwestern liberal democracies

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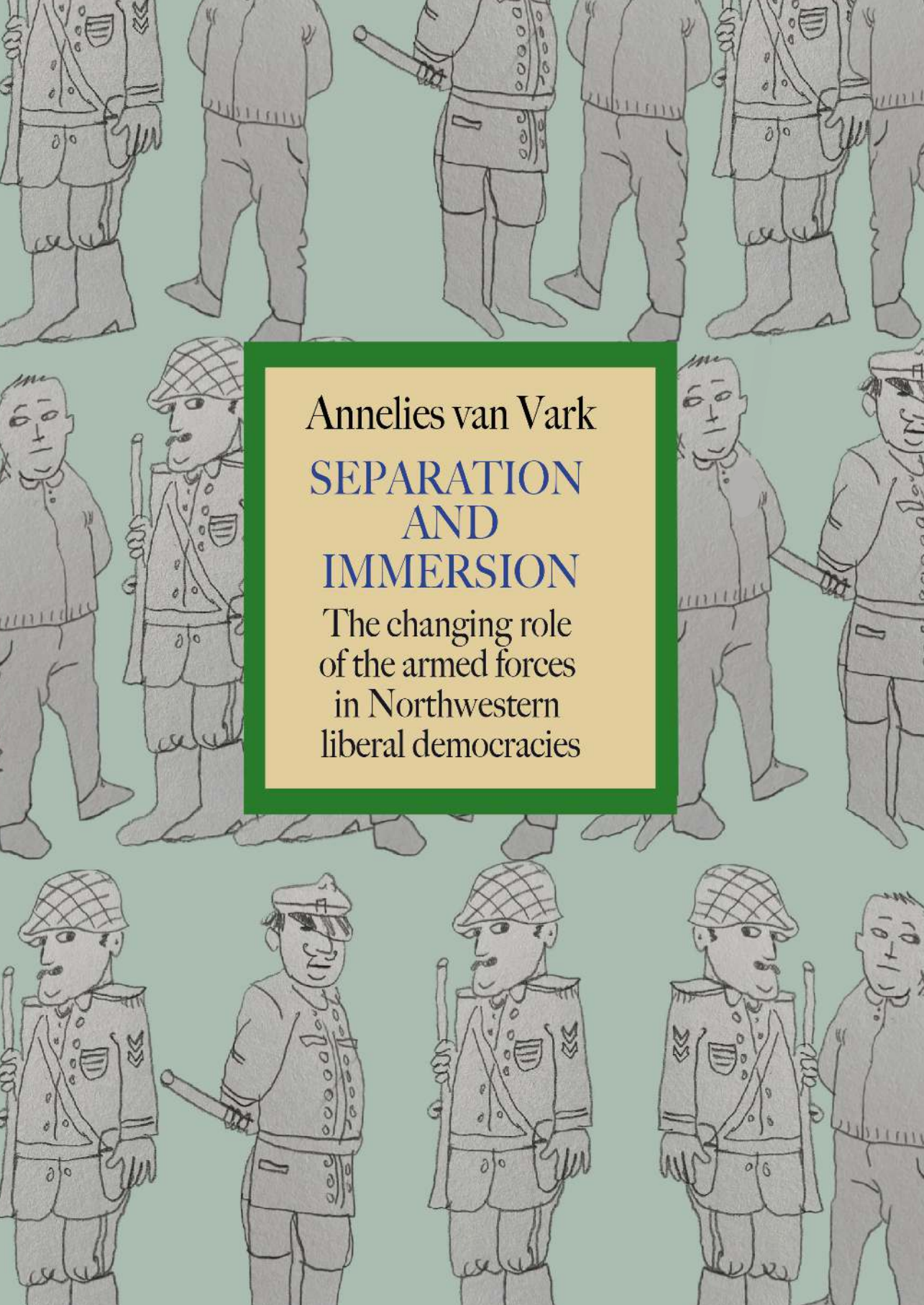
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Annelies van Vark

SEPARATION AND IMMERSION

The changing role
of the armed forces
in Northwestern
liberal democracies

Separation and Immersion

The changing role of the armed forces in
Northwestern liberal democracies

Annelies van Vark

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SEPARATION AND IMMERSION
The changing role of the armed forces in
Northwestern liberal democracies

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dr. J. Kalkman (Nederlandse Defensie Academie)

To my daughters, Eva and Noa

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1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is about the possible role of the armed forces¹ in strengthening the stability of liberal democracy in Northwestern Europe and the consequences for civil-military relations in theory and practice.

Various authors have in recent years pointed at a gradual decline in liberal democracy in the Global North. In books with catchy titles such as *How Democracies Die* (Levitsky & Ziblatt, 2018), *The People vs Democracy* (Mounk, 2018) and *Rupture. The Crisis of Liberal Democracy* (Castells, 2019), they point at factors such as dissatisfaction with mainstream political parties, a rise in populism, a decline in social cohesion, pressure on the rule of law, media rights and civil rights, as well as fragmentation of state institutions and a declining trust of citizens in democratic government.

Reading the newspapers in recent years, the impression seems to be that the stability of liberal democracy is being challenged. A few examples illustrate this:

Example 1: COVID-19

In the early 2020's, the coronavirus pandemic was raging around the world and, especially in the first year of the pandemic, governments worldwide were taking measures to 'flatten the curve', to prevent their health systems from being overwhelmed, all the while trying to vaccinate as many citizens as possible to re-open society. These measures infringed on civil liberties: lockdown measures aimed to keep people at home and government apps monitored people's movement to control the spread of the virus. Law scholars in some countries complained that emergency measures had no sufficient basis in the law (Marijnissen. H., 2020; United Nations, 2020). At the same time, western governments relied on expert advice in determining policy and were hardly challenged in parliament – if it convened at all – which invoked the image of a technocracy, rather than a democracy (Boersema, 2020).

Example 2: The growing influence of organized crime

There are signs that European liberal democracies are being undermined by international organized crime, which is increasingly challenging government authorities by using violence amongst each other and against the government. In recent years we have seen violent payoffs, violence against first responders, threats against politicians and public officials and against certain professions, such as journalists, lawyers, and judges. Lam, Van der Wal, and Kop call this the 'creeping poison' that is undermining the foundations

1 The terms 'armed forces', 'military forces', and 'military' are used interchangeably in this dissertation.

of the constitutional state (Lam et al., 2018; Tops & Tromp, 2017). In 2021, the Europol Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA) report concluded that serious and organized crime deeply affects all layers of society and undermines the economy, state institutions and the rule of law (Europol, 2021).

Example 3: Parallel societies and social unrest

In some European cities, parallel societies are emerging of groups of people that pull back from society, while making their own societal arrangements. Government influence in these areas is declining. These areas are attractive to criminal organizations. Consequently, criminal subcultures can emerge, where a neighborhood is effectively run by a criminal organization (Lam et al., 2018). In extreme cases, zones are being created where the government has lost (most of) its authority, as has been said about the banlieues of Paris and certain neighborhoods of Swedish cities (Åberg, 2019). On the other side of the spectrum, the wealthy elite moves to gated communities, guarded by all sorts of technology and private security guards. At the same time, many western liberal democracies have seen outbursts of social unrest: from the yellow vests (*gilets jaunes*) in France to the farmer's protests in the Netherlands to the storming of the Capitol in the United States to Extinction Rebellion blocking roads in Helsinki. People seem to be increasingly dissatisfied with government decisions and are taking to the streets to show their dissatisfaction (facilitated by social media) and in some cases using violence against the authorities.

To what extent are these examples representative of an underlying trend?

In the first empirical part of this dissertation (chapter 4), I will investigate the stability of liberal democracy in Northwestern Europe (specifically in Finland, the Netherlands and Sweden)² and the security and stability related challenges liberal democracy is confronted with. Some use terms like *undermining* or *subversion* to describe the processes which lead to an erosion of liberal democracy. Others talk about *democratic backsliding*. I will explore these processes with document analysis. I will also use secondary analysis of quantitative databases on the quality and stability of liberal democracy. This dissertation specifically focuses on security and stability related challenges and relates them to the role of the armed forces in liberal democracies. This focus means that other challenges to liberal democracy, stemming from, for example, electoral developments or the quality of political institutions, are not studied in this dissertation.

2 The choice for this region and the specific countries within this region will be explained in chapter 3 on methodology.

Why link this topic of the stability of liberal democracy to the role of the armed forces? When studying stability and security, it makes sense to think of the organizations involved in providing security and stability, particularly the armed forces (which traditionally focus on security and stability related threats originating outside the country) and the police (which traditionally focus on threats originating from within the country). This dissertation focuses specifically on the role of the armed forces, although the role of the police is also discussed. Recent years have seen a rise in the use of the armed forces in a domestic context, especially in case of transborder security threats, when the police were overburdened, or when a more robust performance by the authorities was deemed necessary. Looking at the examples mentioned above, some changes can be identified. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the armed forces heavily supported the civilian authorities in many liberal democracies, varying from logistical support to hospitals in the Netherlands and the use of Army personnel to restore public order and enforce lockdown measures on the Dutch Caribbean Island of Curaçao, to border control and enforcement of lockdown measures in Southern Europe but also in Finland, for example.

The police have been confronted with social unrest during the pandemic but in other instances as well, such as the farmer's protests or yellow vests mentioned above. In dealing with this unrest, they have sometimes been supported by gendarmeries (when available) or (other parts of) the armed forces. A good example are the farmers protests in the Netherlands, where military trucks were used to cordon off certain areas.

In the external context, the armed forces of many liberal democracies have been involved in stability operations in post-conflict areas, de facto performing police tasks in some cases and thus acquiring capabilities that can be of use in a domestic context as well. For the Netherlands, the search capabilities developed by the armed forces when searching for IED's in Afghanistan have led to these capabilities being used in a domestic context in support of the police to look for drug laboratories, in the fight against organized crime. Other examples include the use of the armed forces in the fight against terrorism, and the management of migration flows. *Opération Sentinelle* has seen 10.000 French soldiers deployed on the streets as part of a military operation to protect the population from terrorism. Several other European countries, including Belgium, Italy, and the United Kingdom (UK), have similarly deployed the armed forces.

My assumption is that this evolving domestic role of the armed forces in European countries is related to the undermining of liberal democracy. In the second part of this dissertation (chapter 5-9), I will therefore relate these challenges to the stability of liberal democracy to the domestic role of the armed forces. I will explore recent changes in the

domestic role of the armed forces, possible explanations for this change, and future policy options for the contribution of the armed forces to the stability of liberal democracy. Based on their broad training and specific capabilities, I assume that the armed forces can contribute to a strengthening of liberal democracy in Northwestern Europe. In many cases, this concerns a dual use of capabilities that have been developed for use outside of the country, for example in the context of stability operations. The earlier mentioned Army search teams in the Netherlands that have been trained to search for explosives in Afghanistan but are now used to search for drug laboratories in the Netherlands, are a good example of such dual use. Other examples could be public order capabilities, cyber capabilities, and intel capabilities. Furthermore, within the realm of crisis management, the armed forces may be able to do more to support civilian authorities.

While the armed forces, on the one hand, can contribute to the stability of liberal democracy, it is important to acknowledge that they can also undermine its stability if their position would become stronger than is fitting in a liberal democracy. This dissertation will study both possibilities based on civil-military relations (CMR) theory. In CMR, there is a dilemma between separation (military and civil domain separated) and immersion (military and civil domain immersed). In western liberal democracies, the military and civil domain have traditionally been mostly separated. In CMR theory, this is considered the ideal model for a liberal democracy. The armed forces are used for external security, while internal security is the responsibility of the police. With the separation between both domains becoming less distinct, this could possibly lead to a change regarding the CMR dilemma of immersion and separation.

A larger role for the armed forces in a domestic context in liberal democracies would entail a move in the direction of immersion. Ironically, such a larger role could eventually undermine the stability of liberal democracy as well. This could happen when the role of the armed forces becomes too strong, leading to an erosion of civilian control of the armed forces and – worst case – to an undermining of civil rights and to the civilian authorities being compromised, which would lead to a delegitimization of the state. The ultimate consequence of such a development would be a military dictatorship. The objective of this research is to examine the potential of the military to enhance the stability of liberal democracy, while also considering the associated risks, limitations, and factors that may influence such a contribution.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTION

As explained in the introduction, liberal democracy in Northwestern Europe may be under pressure. After investigating this assumption, it will be analyzed in relation to the domestic role of the armed forces.

This leads to the following research question:

How can the armed forces in Northwestern Europe strengthen liberal democracy and what are the consequences for civil-military relations in theory and practice?

In answering this question, focus will lie on both the potential for the armed forces to strengthen liberal democracy and on the constraints on the role of the armed forces inherent in a liberal democracy.

The following sub-questions will be answered to answer the research question:

1. To what extent is liberal democracy in Northwestern Europe under pressure and what are the security and stability related challenges undermining it? (Chapter 4)
2. What is the current position of the armed forces in Northwestern Europe on the CMR dilemma, to what extent has this position changed in recent years and how can these changes be explained? (Chapter 2 for a general overview, chapters 5-7 for the case studies, chapter 8 for a comparative analysis)
3. What policy options can be developed for the future role of the armed forces in a domestic context in Northwestern Europe and how will this change the domestic role of the armed forces? (Chapter 5-7 for the case studies and chapter 8 for a comparative analysis)
4. What would be the consequences of a changing domestic role for civil-military relations in Northwestern Europe in theory and practice? (Chapter 8)
5. To what extent could a changing domestic role of the armed forces and a new balance in civil-military relations either contribute to the stability of liberal democracy in Northwestern Europe, or alternatively, detract from its stability? What are the opportunities and caveats for a new balance? (Chapter 8)

1.3 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This section briefly defines and explains the theoretical concepts used in this dissertation, with a focus on the research gaps this dissertation aims to fill. The section starts with the concept of liberal democracy and the process of undermining. Subsequently, the field of civil-military relations and the main concepts of separation and immersion are explained, followed by a short introduction to the hybridization of the armed forces and the police. Chapter 2 will further elaborate on the theoretical background of this dissertation.

Liberal democracy under pressure

Liberal democracy is a contested concept. Its meaning has evolved over time and is defined differently in different regions of the world. This dissertation uses Mounk's definition, who states that

- A *democracy* is a set of binding electoral institutions that effectively translates popular views into public policy.
- *Liberal* institutions effectively protect the rule of law and guarantee individual rights such as freedom of speech, worship, press, and association to all citizens (including ethnic and religious minorities).
- A *liberal democracy* is simply a political system that is both liberal and democratic – one that both protects individual rights and translates popular views into public policy (Mounk, 2018).

The term 'liberal' as it is used in this dissertation should not be confused with 'liberalism', which is a political ideology. Liberal, defined by Mounk, refers to institutions that protect the rule of law and guarantee individual rights.

After the Cold War, liberal democracy seemed to become the dominant regime form around the world. Francis Fukuyama in a famous essay spoke about the universalization of liberal democracy as the final form of human government and called this "the end of History". Democratic consolidation was thought to be a one-way street and once liberal democracy would be achieved the political system would be forever stable (Fukuyama, 2012, 2018; Mounk, 2018). However, as has been pointed out by many authors, Mounk and Fukuyama among them, 'democracy' and 'liberal' are not inseparable concepts and democratic consolidation does not seem to be a one-way street after all.

As Foa and Mounk have shown, the support for the democratic form of government and for liberal institutions is declining in western liberal democracies (Foa & Mounk,

2017).³ They conclude that the long-time assumption of political scientists that 'democratic consolidation' is a one-way street may not be correct and that deconsolidation (or democratic backsliding) may take place when a sizable minority of citizens loses their belief in democracy.

It is this process of deconsolidation of liberal democracies that this dissertation focuses on. As it is a relatively recent development, it has not been researched extensively. This dissertation aims to establish whether liberal democracies in a very stable region of the world, Northwestern Europe, are indeed under pressure from stability and security related challenges. It will subsequently relate the stability of liberal democracy to the domestic role of the armed forces. This part of the dissertation is based on the field of civil-military relations, which will be briefly explained in the next section.

Civil-military relations

The concept of civil-military relations encompasses several different civilian and military relationships, such as those between the military and society, between the military and other government bureaucracies and between leaders and their organizations within the military (Brooks, 2019). Many scholars assume that militaries are special actors because of the complex role they play in both government and state security. On the one hand, the military is a government and state's main protector; on the other hand, it is the government and state's main threat and source of insecurity (Brooks, 2019). Feaver calls this the civil-military 'problematique' (Feaver, 1999). This 'problematique' has to do with the concept of civilian control: how do you make the government strong enough to protect its citizens, but not so strong that it becomes tyrannical? How can a society assure itself that the armed forces of that society will do what society wants them to do? In other words, who guards the guardians? (Feaver, 1999, 2005).

The two opposing solutions in this debate are separation and immersion. On the separation side, the classical work is Huntington's *The Soldier and the State* (Huntington, 1957). Huntington propagates objective control, by which he means a separation of authority and domains of responsibility into a military and a political sphere. Proponents of separation state that civil and military domains should remain strictly separated. They argue that using the military in a domestic context may undermine the stability and strength of state institutions because it implies a loss of civilian control and compromises civilian authorities (Stevenson, 2006; T. Weiss, 2011).

3 Chapter 4 will provide the corresponding data for Finland, the Netherlands and Sweden.

The risk of the separation position is that military and civilian actors grow apart, and that military expertise and threat analyses are ignored. Research has shown there is a significant civil-military gap (Rahbek-Clemmensen et al., 2012).

On the other side of the debate is immersion or subjective civilian control, with the classical work being written by Janowitz (Janowitz, 1960). Proponents of immersion propose an active military citizenship, whereby the armed forces are immersed in society to such a degree that they want to do what society demands. These proponents point at the contribution the armed forces can make to improve security in the domestic context, at the same time preventing the militarization of regular domestic security forces (Schnabel & Krupanski, 2018).

A large part of the civil-military relations literature focuses on countries moving from a non-democratic to a democratic model. Recent analyses focus on countries in South America and Eastern Europe (Burk, 2002; Cottey et al., 2002; Pion-Berlin et al., 2017a, 2017b) and not on established liberal democracies that are less stable now than in the past.

As these developments are relatively new in Western liberal democracies, there is a gap in scientific research in this area. This dissertation aims to fill (part of) this gap, studying whether the above-mentioned ideal-types are sufficiently suitable for civil-military relations in established liberal democracies that have recently come under pressure. Is Huntington's model of separation still appropriate for liberal democracies in current times? If not, is immersion the answer? And how much immersion is then appropriate in a liberal democracy?

Current state of civil-military relations: hybridization of the armed forces and the police

As has been discussed in section 1.2, the clear separation between the armed forces and the police in a domestic context in liberal democracies seems to have disappeared in recent years. In this section this so-called hybridization of the armed forces and the police will be further explored.

In the international context, western armed forces have been increasingly deployed in crisis response operations. In the security gap right after fighting has stopped but before civilian authorities are capable of providing security, this has often led to the armed forces (mainly Army personnel, but also Marines) performing police tasks such as restoring public order, crowd and riot control and stability policing (Stingo et al., 2017). This phenomenon has been defined as a constabularization of the armed forces (Hovens,

2017; P. Neuteboom, 2014). The performance of police tasks in crisis response operations has the potential to enhance the military forces' capacity to operate effectively in a domestic context.

On the police side, a certain militarization seems to be taking place in western liberal democracies. This militarization is particularly visible in the United States but can be found in Europe as well (Campbell & Campbell, 2010; Kraska & Kappeler, 1997; Lutterbeck, 2005). Hovens and Neuteboom point at centralizing tendencies in the police, the use of more robust gear and means and the development of a more military mindset, which is stimulated by the authorities' using military metaphors for police work (war on drugs, war on terror) (P. Neuteboom & Hovens, 2018). In the international context, civilian police are increasingly participating in crisis response operations, though usually on a voluntary basis.

Some western countries have an intermediary or hybrid force in between the armed forces and the police. These so-called 'gendarmerie-type' forces combine police and military characteristics and have historically only formed in continental Europe, not in Scandinavia or Anglo-Saxon countries. They usually perform police tasks related to the security of the state, which require a higher level of robustness than regular (community-related) police tasks. They may be part of the ministry of Defense or of the ministry of the Interior (or Security), but in either case usually have military training, organization, and competencies. The blurring of internal and external security has led to a fast growth in these gendarmerie-type forces (Bigo, 2006; Lutterbeck, 2004).

This process whereby police forces and armed forces seem to grow closer together has been defined as hybridization. This dissertation will compare hybridization processes in Northwestern Europe and look for explanations for similarities and differences between the three countries, thereby enriching the existing scientific literature on hybridization.

1.4 DISSERTATION STRUCTURE

This dissertation consists of nine chapters. Chapter 2 is the theoretical chapter of this dissertation. It consists of a description of the definitions and theoretical concepts used in this dissertation, focusing on liberal democracy, civil-military relations and the hybridization of the armed forces and the police. It builds on the short introduction to these topics given in this introductory chapter. Chapter 2 includes the theoretical model for this dissertation.

In chapter 3, this model is operationalized and the methodology used for the research is described. This dissertation is based on case study research and consists of qualitative research. Chapter 3 explains and elaborates on this choice and the specific case selection, data collection and data analysis. It also contains a personal reflection on the research process.

Chapter 4 delves into the hypothesis that liberal democracy is under pressure and, based on both document analysis and secondary analysis of relevant databases results in three security and stability related challenges which are undermining liberal democracy.

Chapters 5 to 7 are devoted to the results of the individual case studies. These three chapters have a similar outline. They start with a description of the armed forces of that specific country, its tasks and legal framework, the relations between military and society, and the current state of civil-military relations. Subsequently, specific security challenges and threats are described. Following that, recent changes in the domestic role of the armed forces (including explanations) are described, followed by an exploration of future policy options. After that, the balance between separation and immersion is discussed. Finally, all three chapters conclude with an analysis of that specific case study, which facilitates the comparative analysis made in chapter 8.

In chapter 8, a comparative analysis of the three case studies is made. It starts with an analysis of similarities and differences, followed by explanations based on civil-military relations theory. The second part of the chapter is more future-oriented, as trends for policy options are defined and connected with civil-military relations theory, focusing on the direction in which civil-military relations in Northwest European liberal democracies are expected to develop. In the final part of the chapter, the research question on the stability of liberal democracy is answered, focusing on the effect that a changing role of the armed forces and a new balance on civil-military relations have on the stability of liberal democracy.

The final chapter, chapter 9, is devoted to identifying the theoretical contributions of this research, its limitations, and recent developments. It will also include suggestions for further research and practical implications.



2

**THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE:
LIBERAL DEMOCRACY,
CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS,
AND THE HYBRIDIZATION OF THE
ARMED FORCES AND THE POLICE**

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter elaborates on the main theoretical concepts used in this dissertation: liberal democracy, civil-military relations, and the hybridization of the armed forces and the police. The purpose of this chapter is to introduce and discuss the theoretical concepts relevant to this dissertation and to identify the gaps in the existing literature. This chapter also includes the conceptual model for this dissertation.

Section 2.2 will cover the concept of liberal democracy and elaborate on the ‘undermining’ of liberal democracy. This section is followed by section 2.3 on civil-military relations. Section 2.4 and 2.5 will focus on two major developments relevant to military and society and civil-military relations since the end of the Cold War, namely the creation of all-volunteer forces in most western liberal democracies in section 2.4 and the concept of hybridization of the armed forces and the police in section 2.5.

2.2 LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

As explained in chapter 1, the definition for liberal democracy used in this dissertation comes from Mounk, who has defined it as ‘simply a political system that is both liberal and democratic – one that both protects individual rights and translates popular views into public policy’ (Mounk, 2018).

A related concept is that of the *democratic legal order*. In the Dutch context, this concept is used to describe the combination of a political system (namely, a liberal democracy) and a way of living together (namely, an open society). In this definition, liberal democracy describes the vertical relations between the government and its citizens, while open society describes the horizontal relations between citizens.

As mentioned in chapter 1, after the Cold War most western states expected liberal democracies to become the dominant regime form around the world. Democratic consolidation was thought to be a one-way street, and once liberal democracy would be achieved, the political system would be forever stable (Fukuyama, 2012, 2018; Mounk, 2018). Foa has pointed at both the ‘intrinsic’ (human desire for dignity and recognition) and ‘instrumental’ (economic development and high standards of living) appeal of a liberal democracy (Foa, 2018).

But as other authors - including Mounk and Fukuyama - have shown, ‘democracy’ and ‘liberal’ are not inseparable concepts and democratic consolidation appears not to be a

one-way street after all. It is possible to have regimes that are liberal but not democratic, for example Singapore and Hong Kong in the late 20th century. At the same time, some democratic regimes are not liberal. Some Eastern European states, particularly Hungary, are rapidly moving in that direction (Fukuyama, 2020b; Mounk, 2018).

Foa has shown that proving the instrumental advantages of liberal democracy has become more difficult with the faltering economic performance of liberal democracies and the rapidly rising living standards in various authoritarian regimes (Foa, 2018). Authoritarian regimes such as Russia and China have adopted the Western economic model (capitalism), while rejecting its system of political and social freedoms, and have become increasingly successful.

Foa and Mounk have found that support for the democratic form of government and for liberal institutions is declining in western liberal democracies. Their research shows that millennials are a lot less convinced that it is essential to live in a democracy and a growing number of people would support 'a strong leader' or 'an authoritarian government' running their country (Foa & Mounk, 2017).⁴ Foa and Mounk conclude that the long-time assumption of political scientists that 'democratic consolidation' is a one-way street may not be correct and that deconsolidation and democratic backsliding may take place when a sizable minority of citizens lose their belief in democracy. Mounk's research shows that three big developments have influenced this trend: the decades long rise in living standards has come to a standstill, mass migration has changed societies and has led to a part of society feeling threatened and resentful, and finally, means of mass communication have become available to everyone, making it easier to communicate extreme views (Mounk, 2018).

Before delving into the possible ways liberal democracy is undermined, it should be noted that instability and liberal democracy belong together to a certain extent. In the words of the French philosopher Claude Lefort, democracy is 'institutionalized uncertainty (or: indeterminacy)' (Ellian & Rijpkema, 2017). The dynamics of liberal democracy constitute a constant movement between finding consensus and organizing dissensus.

The next section will elaborate on democratic backsliding mentioned above. Based on the work of Boutellier (Boutellier et al., 2020), I will introduce three categories for the possible ways that liberal democracy is undermined. Chapter 4 will further delve into these three categories, based on both a literature review and secondary analysis of relevant databases. It is important to note at this stage this dissertation does not cover

4 In chapter 4 I will provide the corresponding data for Finland, the Netherlands and Sweden.

the whole scientific debate on the topic of liberal democracy. It focuses specifically on democratic backsliding in western liberal democracies and relates this process to the role of the armed forces. This research thereby aims to fill a gap in the existing literature studying the role of the armed forces in liberal democracies that mainly focuses on new, consolidating democracies instead of the opposite process.

Undermining of liberal democracy

The term 'undermining' has in recent years been extensively used by policymakers and researchers alike to describe various problems and perceived risks for liberal democracy as well as threats to the system. For example, the undermining of local government by criminal organizations, ideological undermining by extremist groups aiming for parallel authorities, and 'long-arm-tactics' by foreign state actors aiming to undermine western societies by influencing their diaspora.

In the Dutch context, some authors have pointed out that 'undermining' seems to have become the new buzzword in Dutch politics and security policy (Boutellier et al., 2020). According to Boutellier, undermining is a recent example of securitization⁵ with a strong mobilizing effect, and in this sense, he speaks about 'ondermijnering', which could be translated as 'underminization' (Boutellier et al., 2020). This confusion makes it even more necessary to look at the term more closely and try to define it. The aim of this section is to do so and specify how undermining is defined in this dissertation.

Boutellier speaks about two discourses in undermining, a vertical discourse focusing on organized crime and a horizontal discourse focusing on problematic behavior damaging the social quality of society, such as religious extremism. While the first form of undermining is usually aimed at economic gains (and undermining is in that sense a consequence, but not necessarily an intended effect), the second form is characterized by ideological motives or political and societal discontent with the government and / or the ruling elite (Boutellier et al., 2020).

Boutellier states that in the fight against organized crime, there is a risk of the state itself undermining liberal democracy. As will be further explored in chapter 4, the same can be said about counter-terrorism measures. In addition to the two discourses used by Boutellier in his analysis (vertical and horizontal undermining), this dissertation includes an extra category that is not in the original framework of Boutellier: undermining **by** the state. The three categories are depicted in a below.

5 Securitization theory will be explained extensively in chapter 4. In short, the theory states security threats are socially constructed and emerge through a discursive process that dramatizes and prioritizes them

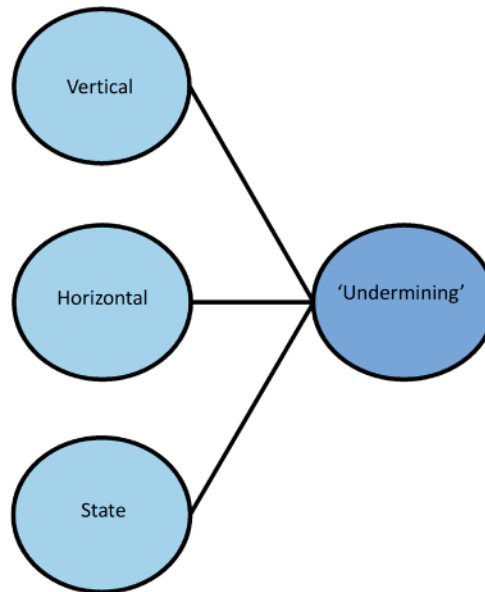


Figure 2.1: Three forms of undermining

Relations between categories of undermining and the role of external actors

These forms of undermining (vertical, horizontal and state) are presumably related. Strong counter-terrorism measures that stigmatize certain population groups may lead to radicalization in those groups. More generally, when the government is curtailing civil liberties, this may lead to people losing trust in the government. People who do not trust the government may be more inclined to fend for themselves and start organizing themselves within their own neighborhood or community (horizontal undermining). As will be explained in chapter 4 based on the work of Risse, this form of undermining may eventually create a form of limited statehood, creating opportunities for other organizations, including criminal organizations, to fill this vacuum (Börzel & Risse, 2016; Krasner & Risse, 2014; Noordanus, 2020; Risse & Stollenwerk, 2018; Steen et al., 2016).

External actors may play a role in undermining as well. There are indications that polarization can be exacerbated by foreign interference, often attempted at influencing members of a country's diaspora, so-called 'long arm' tactics (Nationaal Coördinator voor Terrorismebestrijding en Veiligheid, 2019). Disinformation campaigns try to exploit the distrust of certain population groups and thereby have the potential to undermine social cohesion and ultimately the functioning of the democratic legal order (Bennett & Livingston, 2018). A recent report by the Dutch general and military intelligence service and the National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism shows that while no external actors are ex-

pected to have the combination of capabilities and intention to disrupt national security in the short term (2 years), the developments for the medium and long term are worrying (Algemene Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst et al., 2021). Along with the link between external actors and horizontal forms of undermining, there may also be a link between external actors and vertical forms of undermining. However, at least in the Dutch context, this connection has thus far not been found. The expected role of external actors has been added to the model in figure 2.2. As the focus for this dissertation lies with the domestic role of the armed forces, external actors will only play a minor role in this dissertation.

After this short introduction on the concepts of liberal democracy and democratic backsliding, the next section will focus on the main theoretical basis for this dissertation, namely the concept of civil-military relations.

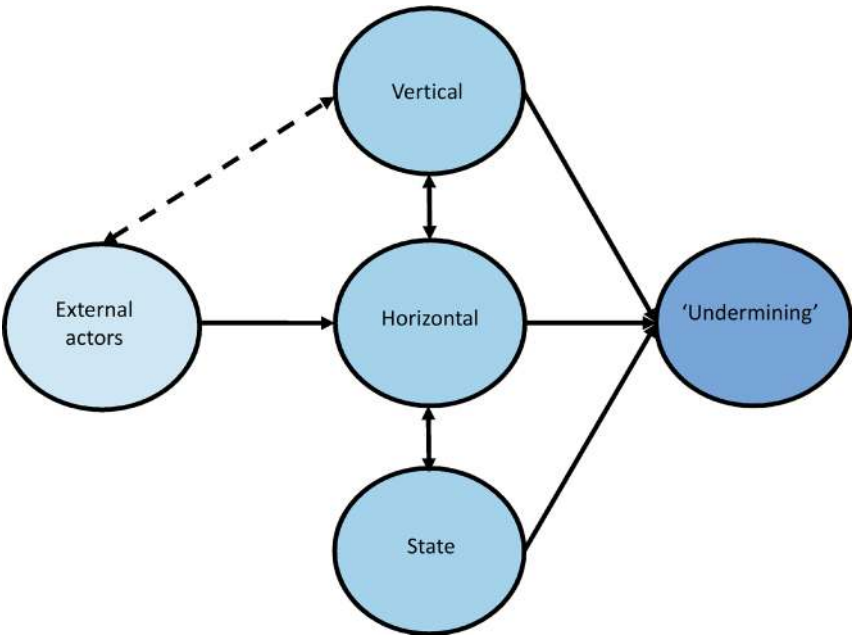


Figure 2.2: Undermining explained

2.3 CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

This section explains the concept of civil-military relations, which is one of the key subfields of study within the field of 'military and society'. It provides an overview of the most important concepts used in this field and explains why these concepts are important to the topic of this dissertation. It also aims to identify the gaps in the existing literature.

The military and society interact and shape each other and the field of 'military and society' seeks to understand and explain that interaction (Shields, 2020). It studies both the role of the military in society and the responsibility of the society to the military. The role of the armed forces is to protect the society it serves and both the military and society have developed norms, rules and theories concerning this relationship (Shields, 2020). A well-known example is Thomas Hobbes' notion of the social contract between the population and its rulers, in which the population obtains security from the rulers in exchange for obeying the rulers laws (Burk, 2002).

This perspective would assume that what it means to be 'civil' or 'military' is in the end a political choice. Without these categories, the state would not be able to differentiate between war and peace, as the state must be able to allow some deadly violence (by the military, in war times) and ban other deadly violence like crime. The distinction between civil and military in that sense upholds a particular form of domestic order, namely the state. Without this distinction, a Hobbesian state of nature would be the result (Angstrom, 2013).

Two disciplines - political science and sociology - have mainly influenced the field of 'military and society', with the two classical authors being Samuel Huntington (political scientist) and Morris Janowitz (sociologist). Their work from the 1950s and 1960s is still influential in the field today and will be discussed in the next section. Stemming from political science, civil-military relations basically concern the relationship between military and civil domains and authorities. Other subfields of 'military and society', mainly based on military sociology, concern topics such as veterans, military families, recruitment, and minority representation in the military.

Civil-military relations can be defined as the relationship between civil and military authorities (Shields, 2020). Many scholars assume that militaries are special actors because of the complex role they play in both regime and state security: on the one hand, the military is a regime and state's main protector and, in that sense, provides stability; on the other hand, it is the regime and state's main threat and source of insecurity (Blake McMahon & Slantchev, 2015; Brooks, 2019). How can a society assure itself that the armed forces of that society will do what society wants them to do? In other words who guards the guardians? Feaver calls this the civil-military 'problematic' (Feaver, 1999, 2005); McMahon and Slantchev talk about the 'Guardianship Dilemma' (Blake McMahon & Slantchev, 2015).

This section will start with a description of the two classical works in civil-military relations, written by Huntington and Janowitz. Subsequently, several ideal types for civil-

military relations will be described, followed by a discussion of some central themes in civil-military relations literature, namely civilian control, military defection, and coups. The final part of this section will focus on limitations to civil-military relations research and will introduce some alternative perspectives.

Classical works: Huntington and Janowitz

In his classical work in civil-military relations, *The Soldier and the State* (1957), Huntington focuses on the paradox that a military strong enough to protect the state and the people could also use that power against them. Huntington propagates objective control, by which he means a separation of authority and domains of responsibility into a military and a political sphere. In this division of labour politicians, in other words, civilians, are responsible for policy and goal setting, while the military is responsible for implementation. In matters of implementation, the military has autonomy to manage its own affairs. This requires a strong professional ethos in the officer corps (Shields, 2020).

Huntington distinguishes objective control from subjective control. The aim of subjective control is to limit military power and the capacity of the officer corps to influence politics. Huntington is of the opinion that this type of control makes the military more civilian by turning them into a mirror of the state, which leads to a decline in military professionalism (Bruneau, 2018).

Bruneau identifies three main flaws in Huntington's proposition. The first flaw is that Huntington's argument for professionalism in the officer corps can be considered a tautology. Citing Feaver, Bruneau explains that in Huntington's theory, military autonomy leads to professionalization, which leads to political neutrality and voluntary subordination of the military to civil authorities, which leads to secure civil authority. For Huntington, the link between professionalism and voluntary subordination is not a relationship of cause and effect, but a definition: a professional military obeys civil authority, and a military that does not obey is not professional (Bruneau, 2018; Feaver, 2005).

A second flaw identified by Bruneau concerns the nature of professionalism. For Huntington, this is a static variable, while for Bruneau, it is a dynamic variable that can change through programs of education. A third flaw identified by Bruneau is the exclusive focus on control. As Peter Feaver also states in a much-cited 1999 review article,

Although civil-military relations is a very broad subject, encompassing the entire range of relationships between the military and civilian society at every level, the field largely focuses on the control or direction of the military by the highest civilian authorities in the nation state (Feaver, 1999, p. 211).

The topic of civilian control will be further discussed in this section.

The second classical work is by sociologist Morris Janowitz (Janowitz, 1960). Janowitz describes changes in the use of force in international relations in the nuclear era. He considers these changes to make it appropriate to speak of constabulary forces rather than of military forces. He bases his ideas on the British model of 'imperial policing' which the British used after the Second World War to deal with insurgency in its colonies (P. Neuteboom, 2010). Janowitz states that Western armed forces are undergoing a process of constabularization by using limited force in small conflicts to quickly re-establish stability, resulting in armed forces resembling police forces (Dahlberg & Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2020). In Janowitz' words,

The military establishment becomes a constabulary force when it is continuously prepared to act, committed to the minimum use of forces, and seeks viable international relations, rather than victory, because it has incorporated a protective military posture (Janowitz, 1960, p. 418).

Janowitz' constabulary force includes all forms of military forces, from weapons of mass destruction at the highest spectrum of conflict to paramilitary operations at the lower spectrum. His concept eliminates the distinction between peacetime and wartime military establishment and draws on the police concept.

Neuteboom clarifies that Janowitz's approach is not about establishing a new military structure but rather about the necessity for new military missions in the nuclear era. During the Second World War, the main role model was that of the 'heroic leader'. In the nuclear age, this model could be replaced by that of the 'military technologist', which would transform the function of military professionals into 'controllers of a machine'. Janowitz proposes a new role of military manager with traits common to civilian managers to create a balance between the heroic leader (who will always aim for victory) and the military technologist (who is preoccupied with the highest level of force) (P. Neuteboom, 2010).

The key elements of Janowitz' constabulary force are its operational and organizational readiness and the minimum use of force. These elements are commonly associated to the police. However, it is important to note that Janowitz did not intend for the military to be involved in domestic police tasks, except as a reserve instrument, because it would hinder the development of the constabulary force in international relations (Janowitz, 1960). As noted by Neuteboom, he only based the constabulary force on the police concept to emphasize the need for a responsive, standing organization without the tra-

ditional distinction between a peacetime and a wartime establishment, thus integrating preparation and operational activities (P. Neuteboom, 2010). Another point of difference between Janowitz and Huntington is that while Huntington propagates objective control, Janowitz supports subjective control. In his words:

The constabulary force is designed to be compatible with the traditional goals of democratic political control. The constabulary officer performs his duties, which include fighting, because he is a professional with a sense of self-esteem and moral worth. Civilian society permits him to maintain his professional skills. He is amenable to civilian political control because he recognizes that civilians appreciate and understand the tasks and responsibilities of the constabulary force. He is integrated into the civilian society because he shares its common values (Janowitz, 1960, p. 440).

Neuteboom doubts the feasibility of this model, as policing requires decentralization and empowerment of lower levels, while the military traditionally is a hierarchical top-down organization (P. Neuteboom, 2010).

According to Haltiner, for the military to be able to accomplish this, it should evolve to a network organization with less hierarchy and a flexible, modular structure, without losing its combat power on a macro level (Haltiner, 2001). At the same time, from a functional perspective, the question can be asked whether the military is best suited to fulfil police tasks in an expeditionary context (P. Neuteboom, 2010).

Feaver describes Janowitz' theory from the perspective of civilian control, focusing on his concern that the politicization of the military may challenge civilian supremacy. According to Feaver, such a military may try to influence civilians and resist unwelcome policy directives (Feaver, 1999). For Janowitz the answer to this potential problem is greater civilian oversight at many more levels of military affairs. As has been shown, Huntington is of the opinion that this may harm military professionalism. Muller highlights the risk that using the military in civilian affairs may result in it becoming subject to the whims of politics (Muller, Eekelen, et al., 2017). The distinction between the civil and the military domains becomes less clear, and the loyalty of the military is put to a test if missions are based on small majority decisions in parliament, and even more so if these decisions do not include the necessary preconditions for a successful mission (Muller, Eekelen, et al., 2017).

Ideal-types for civil-military relations

Apart from the Hobbesian state of nature described before, where there is no distinction between civil and military at all, Angstrom defines four ideal-types for civil-military relations, namely civilian supremacy over the military, military supremacy over the civil-

ians, civil and military parity and intertwining of civil and military (Angstrom, 2013). In the first type, civil and military are separated and there is civilian supremacy over the military. This ideal-type represents the inherent norm in civil-military relations literature for a democratic regime, in which the military should be accountable and subordinate to democratic civilian leadership. Proponents of this separation standpoint come from Huntington's tradition (Huntington, 1957).

Proponents of separation state that civil and military domains should remain strictly separated. This has consequences for the domestic role of the armed forces as well. In a democratic regime, there usually is a clear distinction between the organizations responsible for internal security (the police) and external security (the armed forces) (Muller, Eekelen, et al., 2017; Schnabel & Krupanski, 2018). Only in very specific circumstances the armed forces assist the civil authorities (for example, disasters or crises). The risk, however, of the separation standpoint is that military and civil actors grow apart, and that military expertise and threat analyses are ignored. Research has shown there is a significant civil-military gap (Rahbek-Clemmensen et al., 2012; Wallenius et al., 2019a).

An alternative to Huntington's model is Janowitz' model of subjective civilian control, as described above (Janowitz, 1960). This model matches the fourth ideal type identified by Angstrom, namely what he calls the intertwining of civil and military and what others would call 'immersion'. There is a distinction of civil and military in this model, but the expectation would exist for civilian positions within the armed forces and vice versa. The model relies on exclusive expertise but is structured such that the respective competence of civil and military authorities can be applied in the strategic decision-making process to yield the best results (Angstrom, 2013). Proponents of immersion propose an active military citizenship, whereby the armed forces are immersed in society to such an extent that they want to do what society demands.

A related concept relevant to this dissertation is militarization, which could be the consequence of a blurring of military and civilian domains, and is usually considered as something negative in liberal democracies (Schulzke, 2018). A recent paper written by Schulzke, however, distinguishes between necessary and surplus militarization. Schulzke describes militarization as a process 'characterized by the spread of military influence or values into domains that are thought to constitute a separate civil sphere.' (Schulzke, 2018) He distinguishes militarization from militarism, which he defines as '*uncritical enthusiasm for the military, which is linked to nationalism and a desire to use military force to secure foreign policy objectives*' and is not fitting in a liberal democracy (Schulzke, 2018). Within the concept of militarization, two separate processes can be

distinguished, namely material processes (such as the use of military vehicles in policing) and ideational processes (such as using the language of war in ordinary life).

Schulzke bases his theory on necessary and surplus militarization on Herbert Marcuse's theory on necessary and surplus repression. Schulzke argues that both repression and militarization are coercive practices involving the use of force. These concepts overlap to some degree (militarization may include or excuse repression and repression is often enacted with help of the military) and surplus militarization and repression are alike in their pervasiveness (Schulzke, 2018).

Schulzke argues that some militarization (and therefore, some form of immersion) may be useful for two reasons. Firstly, contact between civil and military spheres can prevent the military from becoming detached from society and guarantees that civilian values have a place in military life, which is basically Janowitz's argument as well. Militarization can foster legitimacy and popular support, which ensures mutual trust between civilians and soldiers, a requirement for civilian control (Schulzke, 2018). Contact between civil and military spheres can help the citizenry to evaluate policy decisions concerning the military and by consequence be useful in civilian oversight.

Secondly, according to Schulzke, some militarization may be unavoidable for national security reasons, depending on the threats a particular country faces at a certain point in time. He points to recruitment issues (promoting the military in society may be necessary to get enough recruits), militarization of the police that may be necessary to a certain extent (see also section 2.5), and military service as a unifying experience (see also section 2.4). As for police militarization, Schulzke considers the use of military protective equipment as reasonable (necessary militarization) when operating in dangerous circumstances, while the use of offensive weapons and tactics would be excessive (surplus militarization) (Schulzke, 2018). Schulzke's ideas are relevant for this dissertation, as they both explain the need for immersion and a certain amount of militarization and the limits that are appropriate in a liberal democracy.

As will be discussed in section 2.5, a process of hybridization of military and civilian forces is taking place in several Western European countries. This process may impact civil-military relations and more specifically the balance between separation and immersion as well (Bollen, 2019).

Coming back to Angstrom's typology, in addition to these two ideal types (civilian supremacy over the military and the intertwining of civil and military), he defines two additional ideal types. The first one is military supremacy over civilians, which means a

traditional military dictatorship. The military-led juntas in Latin-America in the second half of the 20th century stand as a prime example. The second additional ideal type is civil and military parity, where neither military nor civilians have exclusive spheres of knowledge and neither can set their own standards (Angstrom, 2013).

As often is the case with ideal types, none of them exactly match the situation of the three cases in this dissertation, nor should the term 'ideal' be read in a normative way. As will be shown in later chapters, each case is in fact a mix of Angstrom's ideal types, particularly civilian supremacy over the military and intertwining of civil and military. In chapter 1, the assumption was made that the balance between separation and immersion, that tilts towards separation now, may change in the direction of immersion to better be able to deal with the challenges to liberal democracy. Considering the models and critiques to these models presented in this section, it is important to keep the basic premises of a liberal democracy into account in this balancing act. Too much separation may lead to a growing civil-military gap and make it more difficult for the state to deal with the challenges identified, with a negative impact on the stability of liberal democracy. Too much immersion may help in dealing with the challenges but may also have a negative impact on the stability of liberal democracy.

A different perspective on the balance between separation and immersion is offered by Rebecca Schiff. In her concordance theory, she focuses on the relationship between three elements, namely the military, the political elite and the population, and states that these three should aim for a cooperative relationship. This relationship may involve separation, but it does not require it (Schiff, 1995). Schiff is of the opinion that separation theory is too focused on institutional aspects of the relation between the military and civil domain and fails to consider cultural and historical conditions that may be present in a state. She argues that *"the entire concept of 'civil' is a Western European experience later adopted by American culture"*, which cannot be directly applied to countries in other parts of the world (Schiff, 1996, p. 282). According to Schiff, cultural factors *"have tremendous influence on the absence or prevalence of domestic military intervention."* (Schiff, 1995, p. 11)

She describes four indicators, namely the social composition of the officer corps (representative of the nation or not), the political decision-making process (how decisions on budget, size, etc. of the armed forces are made), the recruitment method (coercive or persuasive), and military style (*"what it looks like, what ethos drives it, and what people think about it"*) (Schiff, 1995, p. 15). According to Schiff, if the military, political elite, and population agree on these four indicators, this makes domestic intervention by the military less likely, which is the main reason for the focus on civilian control of the military. Schiff illustrates her theory with case studies of Israel and India, two democratic

countries that do not resemble the traditional separation model between the military and civil domain, but still have never seen a military coup. Schiff, in short, considers the dichotomy between separation and immersion too limiting, and argues for more diversity, taking cultural aspects into account. Schiff uses her theory to explain the likelihood of domestic intervention by the military. Her concordance theory will be applied to the case studies in this dissertation as well, but with a different purpose, namely to determine whether it can explain the differences in the separation-immersion balance between the three case studies based on cultural aspects. Secondly, her theory will be applied within each case study, to determine whether it can explain the assumed development from separation to immersion in these countries.

In a later article, Schiff introduces the concept of 'targeted partnership', which focuses on agreement between the military, politicians, and society for a limited purpose and amount of time and on a specific indicator, namely the political decision-making process. During such a period, normal boundaries between the domains may blur, even when separation is the norm. She illustrates this with counterinsurgency strategy in the United States, stating that this topic required military experts to take a larger role than would usually be acceptable in US civil-military relations, in order to explore potential strategies together with policy makers and political elites. The most pressing need for targeted partnerships according to Schiff occurs in wartime scenarios. According to Schiff, *"targeted partnership does not undermine civilian control; rather, it enables the military to collaborate, share expertise, and participate in formulating effective strategy alternatives."* (Schiff, 2012, p. 335)

This section has provided insights in the ideal-types for civil-military relations and the inherent limitations of using such ideal-types, as illustrated by the work of Schiff. The ideal-types and the alternative concordance theory of Schiff will be used in chapters 5 to 7 to analyse the three case studies.

Civilian control, military defection, and coups

The concept of civilian control has already been referred to in the above analysis. Considering its importance in civil-military relations and the relevance for this dissertation (namely: that a growing domestic role of the armed forces may impact civilian control and thereby the stability of liberal democracy) it will be further explained and analyzed in the following section.

As shown, in Western thinking 'civilian control' is an essential aspect of civil-military relations in a democratic regime (Kohn, 1997). While a military coup signifies the ultimate loss of civilian control, divergence in point of view between civil authorities and the

military can undermine civil-military relations in the long run as well. Authors like Feaver and Kohn also point out that this means top military officers cannot resign from office, as it would be “a public political act of defiance” (Kohn, 2017, p. 44).

Bland identifies four problems in civil-military relations related to control issues, namely 1) the need to control the military establishment, 2) how to make sure the military does not harm the government or citizens, for example through indiscipline, 3) how to make sure the government does not abuse the military for their own partisan interests and 4) how the government can control the military experts while lacking that expertise themselves (Bland, 1999).

Croissant et al. have developed a five-dimensional concept of civilian control. They define civilian control as

That distribution of decision-making power in which civilians alone have the authority to decide on national politics and their implementation. Under civilian control civilians can freely choose to delegate decision-making power and the implementation of certain policies to the military while the military has no autonomous decision-making power outside those areas specifically defined by civilians. Furthermore, it is civilians alone who determine which particular policies, or policy aspects, the military implements, and civilians also define the boundaries between policymaking and policy-implementation. Moreover, civilian authorities must possess sanctioning power vis-à-vis the military; and they can – in principle – revise their decisions at any time (Croissant et al., 2010, p. 955).

They subsequently distinguish five decision-making areas for which the distribution of decision-making power can be assessed: elite recruitment, public policy, internal security, national defense, and military organization. Based on an assessment of all five areas, the degree of civilian control in any given country can be assessed.

Five relatively recent (compared with the classical works of Huntington and Janowitz) influential writers on civilian control are Feaver, Desch, Levy, Bland and Travis. The work of Desch, Levy, and Travis is of particular relevance for this dissertation, as it links civilian control to the threat context, with these authors expecting a declining external threat having a negative impact on civilian control of the military. If this is the case, it could be part of the explanation for a changing (and growing) role of the armed forces after the end of the Cold War.

Feaver developed a theory of civil-military relations based on principal-agent theory (Feaver, 2005). In this theory, the principals (civil authorities) develop policies, which then must be implemented by the agents (the military). When preferences of the civil authorities and the military align, the military usually does as it is asked. However, if preferences do not align, the military has an incentive to 'shirk' from the instructions.

Desch, a firm advocate of Huntington's ideas, has studied civilian control in the period after the Cold War and presents a model relating it to internal and external threats. For Desch, the main indicator for civilian control is which preferences (civil or military) prevail in case of disagreement. When military preferences often prevail, civilian control is weak. In his model, a state with a high external threat and a low internal threat should have the strongest civilian control of the military, as the military is focused on the external threat and has no time to mingle in domestic politics (Desch, 1998). According to Desch, civilian control in Europe and North America has been strong because these countries have mainly faced external threats. In contrast, Desch argues that civilian control is most likely weak in a regime facing high internal and low external threats, as civilian institutions are most likely weak and divided. He illustrates this by pointing at 'Third World' countries where civilian control of the military has been relatively weak.

For the other two possibilities (high internal and external threats, or low internal and external threats) the outcome for civil-military relations is less certain. With the high external threat disappearing for western countries after the end of the Cold War, Desch expected civilian control to weaken in these countries (Desch, 1998), an interesting aspect to consider in the three case studies presented in this dissertation.

Another theory on civilian control was created by Yagil Levy. He argues that the extent to which civilian control is effective depends on two relations of exchange:

"(1) the republican exchange, wherein the state provides its citizens with rights in exchange for their military sacrifice; and (2) the control exchange, in which the military subordinates itself to civilian rulers in exchange for resources (material and symbolic) the state possesses and provides to the military."(Levy, 2012, p. 530)

According to Levy's theory, civilian control requires these two exchanges to be in balance and perceptions play an important role; in a balanced relationship, both sides feel similarly committed to it and therefore, civilian control is firmly in place (Levy, 2012). Levy states that a diminishing external threat may lead to an imbalance in the republican exchange, as citizens may feel their sacrifice to be too high. The state may then employ four different strategies to achieve a balance again: militarization (which

aims to justify the level of sacrifice), rights allocation (for example better payment to the military), cost reduction (shrinking the military, which also means providing less security for citizens), or burden redistribution (for example abolishing conscription, or relying more on private contractors). The extent to which these strategies have been employed by governments in Sweden, Finland and the Netherlands will be discussed in chapters 5 to 7. In a more recent publication, Kuehn and Levy emphasize the importance of militarization as a mediating factor in the interplay of threats and control, adding to Desch's theory (Kuehn & Levy, 2021a). These authors argue that a high external threat, when combined with militarization, will increase military autonomy, unless war preparations require the mobilization of large groups in society. In that case, civilian control is enhanced "as it encourages monitoring of the military by the sacrificing groups." (Kuehn & Levy, 2021a)

Levy considers the interplay between the exchanges as a better predictor for the conditions under which politicians, the military and society can agree than the concordance indicators that Schiff proposes, as Schiff's theory, in his opinion, does not cover how changes in concordance affect civil-military relations or how the two sides bargain to achieve balance again (Levy, 2012). This theory will be tested in chapters 5 to 7 for the three case studies of this research. Regarding Feaver's principle-agent theory, Levy provides the conditions under which the principle-agent interactions take place.

Control of the military according to Levy must be distinguished from control over militarization, which *"deals with controlling the mechanisms that legitimize the use of force, first and foremost military force."* (Levy, 2016, p. 76) Scholars disagree on the question whether strong civilian control leads to military restraint or not, with some claiming it does and others claiming it does not. For example, Huntington claims that the military is more conservative than civilians concerning the use of force. In the words of Levy, *"the legitimacy to use force relates to the extent to which the state's legal mode of using armed force against an external adversary is socially accepted as a normal, pervasive, and enduring strategic preference."* (Levy, 2016, p. 79) This legitimacy can be evaluated on a spectrum ranging from pacifism on one side to militarism at the other side. Instrumental use of force would lie in the middle of the spectrum. According to Levy, it is difficult to operationalize control of militarization. Public debates on manpower, the essence of the use of force, the nature of the threat, domestic interests, and costs influence the political culture and thereby the legitimacy of the use of force.

Control of the military and control of militarization can be plotted against each other. Levy claims that the combination of high control of the military and low control of militarization is typical for democracies. Militarization then becomes a tool for legiti-

mizing sacrifice, which is another relevant hypothesis to investigate when studying the hybridization of the armed forces and the police, as will be done in this research.

Bland proposes a theory of shared responsibility in which "*civil control of the military is managed and maintained through the sharing of responsibility for control between civilian leaders and military officers.*" (Bland, 1999, p. 9) His theory assumes that although civil control must be at the basis of civil-military relations, it is a dynamic process which can take different shapes following from cultural developments and the threat environment. He recognizes that the participation of the military in political decision-making regarding national defense is inevitable and that theory should reflect this practice. This concerns all levels of political decision-making, which he categorizes in strategic (ends and means of defense), organizational (arrangement of resources), social (armed forces and society), and operational (employment of the armed forces) (Bland, 1999). Accordingly, Bland suggests dropping the term of civilian control and replacing it with 'civilian direction' of the military. He considers an effective accountability mechanism to be an essential element of such a model. According to Bland, effective direction of the armed forces will also reinforce the connection with the population because it will strengthen the population's conviction that the armed forces are acting in the interest of the country and according to its rules, which will in turn according to Bland contribute to military strength and a strong national defense (Bland, 2001). His argument is in line with that of Bruneau described in the next section, who suggests focussing less on control and more on the requirements needed for the military to be effective.

Travis has in a way translated Janowitz' thoughts to modern times, as he considers the rise of grey zone threats to be comparable with the trends leading to constabularization in Janowitz' time. He proposes what he calls 'pragmatic civilian control' as the preferred model for these times (Travis, 2017, 2019). The pragmatism he proposes is based on four principles, namely practical, pluralistic, participatory, and provisional. In his opinion, relationships between civil and military actors should be adaptive and practice inclusion (provisional and participatory) to stay effective and they should be determined by the kind of conflict and the context (practical) (Travis, 2017). He bases his model on three assumptions, namely 1) separating the soldier from society will have a negative impact on the soldier's will to fight, 2) the military operates as a pluralistic system in pluralistic political environment, and 3) if the military wants to stay effective, it needs its own sphere of competency (Travis, 2017).

Travis emphasizes three ways in which pragmatic control differs from the objective control propagated by Huntington. In his model, the military interacts with politicians in policymaking (in line with Schiff's targeted partnership). Secondly, the military does not

abstain from politics, but “*embraces the political arena as an inescapable challenge.*” (Travis, 2017, p. 403) Lastly, while Huntington spoke about a single legitimate authority governing the military, Travis is of the opinion that the military must deal with a variety of civilian leaders at different levels of authority.

Travis subsequently relates civilian control to the intensity of conflict. He argues that the more intense the conflict becomes, the more need there is for objective control.

The insights of these authors will be used in chapters 5 to 7 to analyze the three cases studied in this dissertation. The case studies in that sense serve as test cases for these theories on civilian control.

When civilian control weakens, as has been stated by Brooks, the military may decide to defect, for example in deciding to abstain from using force to disperse mass unarmed protests that threaten a regime (Brooks, 2019). Recent literature has focused on the Arab uprisings in 2011. However, a recent case as well is the storming of the US Capitol in January 2021 by supporters of former president Donald Trump. A week after the riots, the US military’s Joint Chiefs of Staff put out a rare message to their personnel stating that the riots were ‘a direct assault on the US Congress, the Capitol building, and our Constitutional process’, adding that the military remained committed to protecting and defending the Constitution: *‘As service members, we must embody the values and ideals of the nation. We support and defend the Constitution. Any act to disrupt the Constitutional process is not only against our traditions, values and oath; it is against the law.’* (Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2021) Even more recently, a similar process took place in Brazil where, after losing the presidential elections, former president Bolsonaro claimed the elections had been fraudulent and apparently aimed (in vain) for military support so that he could stay in power (Downie, 2022; Villegas et al., 2022).

The ultimate form of defection is a military coup. Research on the likeliness of military coups in democracies is not consistent. Some state that coups are extremely rare in mature democracies, and that autocracies and other types of unstable states run a greater risk (Shields, 2020). Others show that democracies are just as vulnerable to coups as autocratic regimes and even that in democracies, they are more likely to succeed (Bell, 2016). In a related matter, Brooks has stated that as normative pressures against coups could abate with democratic backsliding, coups might increase in incidence (Brooks, 2019). This correlates with research by Mounk and Foa, who show that support for military rule is growing in western liberal democracies, especially among younger generations (Foa & Mounk, 2016). However, research also shows that most coups after the end of the Cold War, as opposed to the period before, have been followed by competitive elections. In

that sense, the new generation of coups has been far less harmful for democracy than their historical predecessors (Marinov & Goemans, 2013). Feaver argues that coups are a problematic focus for civil-military relations because it can underestimate military influence. A coup may indicate military strength but military weakness as well, as apparently the military failed in achieving its goals through the normal political process (Feaver, 1999). Military influence, however, is much harder to measure.

This section has elaborated on the topic of civilian control and the ultimate consequences if civilian control fails (military defection and coups). It has presented the work of several authors that have studied these issues and have theorized about the impact of a changing threat environment on civilian control. Their insights will be applied to the case studies in chapter 5 to 7. Finishing the discussion in this chapter on civil-military relations, the following section will focus on limitations to civil-military relations.

Limitations to civil-military relations research

The study of civil-military relations in the west has been dominated by research in the US and the UK (Angstrom, 2013). The question of control over the military is at the heart of many of these studies, even though some authors have proposed different forms of civilian control, speaking about 'civilian direction' or 'pragmatic civilian control'; as explained in the previous section. Some authors consider this heavy focus on control as misplaced, certainly in established liberal democracies, and suggest studying other dimensions as well, such as military roles and missions (what are the armed forces for?) and military effectiveness and efficiency (Bruneau, 2018; Bruneau & Matei, 2008; Edmunds, 2006). Bruneau and Matei in this respect argue that *"...control, in and of itself, is not much use if the instruments of security – military, police, and intelligence – are not effective in achieving the roles and missions assigned them by the civilian leadership."* (Bruneau & Matei, 2008, p. 924) According to Bruneau, Matei and Sakoda, a National Security Council can be a crucial component in democratic civil-military relations as it can both improve civilian control and the effective implementation of roles and missions (Bruneau et al., 2009).

Brooks suggests normalizing the military's role in politics. According to her, the military has long been treated as an exceptional actor, because it controls the most lethal forms of armed force in a state. However, there are other ways in which the military can influence politics and exercise power. Focusing on the exceptional may lead to overlooking other means of influence. Large militaries often have bureaucratic power within state institutions and senior military leaders can exercise influence by shirking from their duties. Military leaders and organizations can also work with organized interest groups in society to advance their interests, etc. (Brooks, 2019).

Both Bruneau's and Brooks' ideas will be used in this dissertation as well. The dissertation's focus on how the armed forces can strengthen liberal democracy matches Bruneau's suggestion to focus on the necessary requirements for the military to be effective while remaining under civilian control. Normalizing the military's role in politics as Brooks suggests may be helpful in that respect.

A further limitation concerns the fact that a large part of the civil-military relations literature focuses on countries moving from a non-democratic to a democratic model (Bruneau & Matei, 2008). Recent analyses focus on countries in South America and Eastern Europe (Burk, 2002; Cottey et al., 2002; Pion-Berlin et al., 2017a, 2017b) and not on established liberal democracies that are less stable now than in the past. This dissertation will specifically focus on established liberal democracies that are becoming less stable because of new challenges (organized crime, pandemics, etc.) and study the civil-military relations dilemma of separation versus immersion from that perspective. In line with Bruneau, the question can be asked whether the strong focus on civilian control of the military in established liberal democracies may have a negative impact on its effectiveness in dealing with new challenges and thereby on the stability of liberal democracy.

The focus of this dissertation is the period after the end of the Cold War, and more in particular developments in the 21st century. Two major developments have impacted the armed forces in western liberal democracies in this period. The first one is the move from conscription (a model in which – usually – the male population serves a certain period in the armed forces) to an all-volunteer force, making western militaries considerably smaller. The second development found in the literature, and relevant to this dissertation, is the growing hybridization of the armed forces and the police, both in the international context and the national context, that is having an impact on the tasks of militaries. These major developments will be described in the next two sections. Although treated separately, they are not unrelated. In short, as after the end of the Cold War interstate war was considered less likely, western militaries have increasingly been deployed in out-of-area crisis response operations. It was not deemed appropriate to send relatively little trained conscripts to these missions. At the same time, it did not seem necessary to most western countries to keep a large army (partly filled with conscripts and reservists) to defend the own territory.

2.4 CONSCRIPTION AND THE ALL-VOLUNTEER FORCE

An important development which has impacted the armed forces of western liberal democracies since the end of the Cold War is the transformation of many of those armed forces from a conscription system to an all-volunteer force. In this section this development will be described, as well as its impact on civil-military relations and the relations between military and society in general. The topic of conscription is not only important for this dissertation because of the impact of its abolishment (or suspension) on the armed forces, but also because of the possible link between conscription and social cohesion and civic responsibility. Social cohesion, as will be discussed in chapter 4, is an important factor in the stability of liberal democracy. Whether there is indeed such a link (with conscription having a positive effect on social cohesion and civic responsibility) will be discussed further on in this section. As will be explained in chapter 3, the three different models in the case studies of this dissertation (general conscription for men in Finland, limited conscription for men and women in Sweden, and an all-voluntary force in the Netherlands) make it possible to make a qualitative comparison between, on the one hand, these three models and their impact on the balance between separation and immersion and the stability of liberal democracy on the other.

From conscription to an all-volunteer force

The recruitment method of a country, volunteer, or draft is usually related to the level of threat it perceives (Shields, 2020). Almost all western liberal democracies have abolished or suspended conscription after the end of the Cold War, one of the notable exceptions being Finland. The main reason for abolishing conscription was the perceived lower level of threat of large-scale interstate war. However, looking at Levy's argument on the balance between the republican exchange and the control exchange presented in the previous section, another factor may have been the imbalance in the republican exchange caused by the lower threat level. There are certainly indications in the Netherlands that support for conscription was dwindling towards the end of the Cold War (Hoffenaar, 2017). The suspension of conscription could then be a form of burden redistribution and cost reduction aimed at again achieving balance in the republican exchange again.

This was the era when Fukuyama wrote his famous book 'The end of history' and optimism reigned that the world was moving to a model of liberal democracy. As liberal democracies tend not to fight each other it was assumed that there was no need for large armies. Conscription programmes were expensive and an all-volunteer force was expected to increase the qualitative output of the armed forces. In this era, peace and stability operations were on the rise and it was generally accepted that conscripts could not be sent to participate in stability operations. The justification for this is that

conscripts are normally utilized for territorial defense, complex international operations require professional skills and the risk of casualties among conscripts, which could spark domestic political unrest, was deemed too high. This was another argument for a professional army (Bieri, 2015; Boëne, 2011). As for the case studies in this dissertation, Finland, being until recently a non-aligned country with a very long border with Russia and a history of war with its big neighbor, has never abolished general conscription for men. Women can serve on a voluntary basis. The Finns also claim that conscription may lead to improved resilience in society because during the conscription period citizens train to survive in exceptional circumstances (Kaikkosen, 2020).

Since the rise of geopolitical tensions, starting with the Russian taking of Crimea and culminating in 2022 with the Russian invasion of Ukraine, several western countries have taken measures to reinstate at least some form of conscription. Sweden, for instance, calls up the eligible group available for military service for an online assessment. Around 20% of the generation is subsequently invited for medical testing and around 6.000 yearly serve as conscripts (out of a total of around 106.000 young men and women). Norway has a similar model. It is not only the threat of war that could necessitate a form of conscription. Some authors point at other threats, such as terrorism, climate change, environmental degradation, and mass migration, that could require a larger military than could be provided in an all-volunteer system (Hauser, 2018). In 2022, the Dutch Ministry of Defence has released a new White Paper, introducing a 'right to serve' in the armed forces for young people wishing to do so (Ministerie van Defensie, 2022c).

In addition to the perceived level of threat, the reinstatement of conscription is debated in some countries for another reason, namely its perceived contribution to social cohesion and civic responsibility (Bieri, 2015). The Dutch Christian-democrats have proposed re-introducing (social) conscription for the whole age group for this reason (Sanders, 2023; Winterman, 2023).

Impact on civil-military relations and the relations between military and society

Does conscription indeed contribute to more social cohesion and civic responsibility? Authors disagree on this impact of conscription, both on the individual conscript and on society. Some scholars claim that conscription has a positive effect on social cohesion because young people from all layers of society serve together, the so-called contact hypothesis (Galston et al., 2005; Hauser, 2018; Irondelle, 2003). This is an intended effect of the military, that wants its personnel to perform well as a group and if necessary even die for each other (Rosman, 2020). If this mechanism works, conscription in the long term could have the effect of a 'school for the nation'. In a study of undergraduates in

Israel that have completed conscription, Rosman found that service with people from different backgrounds influenced the social perception of conscripts in both positive and negative ways. The majority of her respondents stated that their military duty helped them develop their social skills and that they now felt “more open” to Israeli society, other people’s experiences, and part of a collective than they did before serving. (Rosman, 2020). Rosman’s research also shows that the beliefs of the conscripts play an important role in this respect: social change only takes place if they ‘want to believe their service changed their social identity and are willing to act accordingly in the civilian sphere.’ (Rosman, 2020)

In a recent paper on this topic, Weiss studied data from fifteen European countries after the transformation from conscription to an all-volunteer force. Comparing men in Europe that have performed conscription duties with men that were exempt from mandatory service he concluded that the abolishment or suspension of conscription has led to higher levels of affective polarization (the gap between positive feelings of citizens towards their own party and negative feelings towards other parties) (C. M. Weiss, 2022). Ronconi and Ramos-Toro have studied 29 cohorts of conscripts in Argentina, comparing them with citizens that have not performed conscription duties (which is based on a lottery system in Argentina) and come to comparable conclusions. They find that conscription leads to both a stronger national identity and more positive feelings towards other citizens (Ronconi & Ramos-Toro, 2022). Finseraas and Kotsadam have performed a field experiment among conscripts in Norway, not with the specific purpose of researching the effects of conscription, but how close personal contact, in general, affects views on immigration. Specifically, they have explored whether majority members serving, working, and living together with minority members affects their views on immigration, immigrants’ work ethics and welfare dualism (lower social assistance benefits for immigrants than for natives). They find a substantive effect on views on immigrants’ work ethics, but not on support for welfare dualism or views on immigration in general (Finseraas & Kotsadam, 2017).

Other scholars have shown that conscription has a positive effect on citizenship and civic responsibility, showing that former conscripts for example have a higher turn-out in elections (Fize & Louis-Sidois, 2017; Hauser, 2018). Other research however denies this correlation (R. Garcia, 2010; R. J. B. Garcia, 2014; Krebs, 2004). Ronconi and Ramos-Toro, mentioned above, find that conscription does not influence civic values and conclude that allegiance to the nation (for example a strong national identity) is not necessarily connected with allegiance to the state (Ronconi & Ramos-Toro, 2022). Bove, Di Leo and Giani, who have studied conscription reforms in 15 European countries, find that men drafted just before the abolishment or suspension of conscription show lower levels of

institutional trust than men that were just exempted from conscription, suggesting that a reintroduction of conscription to foster civic virtues could in fact have the opposite effect (Bove et al., 2024). They conclude that while not fostering civic virtues, conscription does foster military virtues and exposes conscripts to military interests, shaping the identity of conscripts according to military norms. According to the authors, this strong identification with the armed forces could clash with loyalty towards democratic institutions (Bove et al., 2024). It must be noted that these researchers studied very specific generations, just before and just after conscription was abolished or suspended. It is conceivable that the last generation serving during a time that people believed in the end of history and large militaries were considered unnecessary developed a certain resentment towards the government for forcing them to serve.

Other authors use more fundamental arguments about conscription. Some claim that conscription is an anomaly in liberal democracies, where nobody should be forced to serve in the armed forces, or state that conscription should only be used for national defense purposes, not for hoped-for civic by-products (Galston et al., 2005; Liebert & Golby, 2018; Pfaffenzeller, 2010). Others consider conscription, if only obligatory for male citizens, as incompatible with the principle of equality before the law (Pfaffenzeller, 2010).

A different set of arguments concerns the impact of a volunteer system on the relation between the armed forces and society. A volunteer system may lead to a disconnect between the military and society, which could lead to an isolated military which is unrepresentative of the population it serves (Boëne, 2011; Hauser, 2018; Shields, 2020). A declining proportion of civilian elites in countries that have abolished conscription has first-hand experience of military life, which is a potential source for misunderstanding and may hamper civil-military cooperation (Boëne, 2011). For example, some argue that civilian elites would make better foreign policy decisions when their own children would have to suffer in wars (Hauser, 2018). However, other research concerning the US shows that members of Congress with close family and friends serving in the military do not vote differently than those without (Liebert & Golby, 2018).

According to Wallenius et al., a representative democracy faces the challenge of balancing defense spending against other societal demands and institutions as well as ensuring that the public's values are reflected in the government's decisions. This requires that the public is familiar with the armed forces and its mission, that it has confidence that the armed forces act in accordance with the politically defined mission and that it has confidence that the armed forces reflect the values of civil society. They define this as societal anchoring of the armed forces and show that this societal anchoring for the

Swedish military was indeed hampered post-conscription, which could lead to recruitment problems and have a negative effect on the public understanding of the armed forces (Wallenius et al., 2019a).

However, there are other ways to foster societal anchoring, without resorting to a reinstatement of the draft. One could think of more outgoing communication by the armed forces about the purposes and benefits of military defense, increased visibility in the community, support to the civil authorities in case of crises, etc. (Wallenius et al., 2019a).

A different option considered in the literature would be some form of non-compulsory national service or social conscription, where serving in the military could be one of the options (Liebert & Golby, 2018).

Concluding, this section has shown that conscription may have a positive impact on social cohesion. In addition, it facilitates social anchoring of the military in society. The impact on civic responsibility is not so clear, with some authors showing a positive impact while others show it does not. This is relevant information for this dissertation, as the existence of a conscription system may, on the one hand, impact the immersion of the armed forces in society and on the other hand, through its impact on social cohesion, may have an impact on the stability of liberal democracy as well (see chapter 4).

The next section will discuss the second important development impacting the role of the armed forces in western liberal democracies after the Cold War, namely the hybridization of the armed forces and the police. It describes the changing role of the armed forces in liberal democracies. This is important information for this dissertation, as this hybridization may impact the balance between separation and immersion as well as the stability of liberal democracy.

2.5 CURRENT STATE OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS: HYBRIDIZATION OF THE ARMED FORCES AND THE POLICE

In recent years, scholars have noted that the clear separation between the armed forces and the police in a domestic context in liberal democracies seems to have disappeared (Dahlberg & Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2020; Esterhuysen, 2019). In this section this so-called hybridization of the armed forces and the police will be explored further. The first part of this section will describe the specific developments - the constabularization of the armed forces, the militarization of the police and the growth of intermediary forces (such as gendarmeries) – which have led to a hybridization of the armed forces and the

police. This section will focus on developments in Europe but will pay some attention to other parts of the world as well, especially Latin America, where these developments have gone further than in Europe. In the second part of this section, this process of hybridization and its drivers, opportunities, and risks, will be further analyzed.

Constabularization of the armed forces

In the international context, after the end of the Cold War, western armed forces have been increasingly deployed in crisis response operations. In the security gap right after fighting has stopped but before civilian authorities are capable to provide security, this has often led to the armed forces (mainly Army personnel, but also Marines) performing police tasks such as restoring public order, crowd and riot control and stability policing (Stingo et al., 2017). This phenomenon has been defined as a constabularization of the armed forces (Hovens, 2017; P. Neuteboom, 2014). As has been noted by several authors, the performance of these tasks and the cooperation with civilian organizations requires the armed forces to develop a different mindset (Kasselman, 2012). Thus far, this process of constabularization has been recognized by researchers, but has hardly impacted military doctrine or training (P. Neuteboom, 2014). The performance of police tasks in crisis response operations might make the armed forces better equipped to perform in a domestic context, which makes it a relevant topic for this dissertation. Even though the context is completely different, the methods used may be comparable. Also, the comprehensive approach that has been developed with stability operations in mind, could be applicable in a domestic context (Jermalavičius et al., 2014).

In the domestic context, recent years have seen a rise in the use of the armed forces, especially in case of transborder security threats, when the police were overburdened or a more robust performance by the authorities was deemed necessary (Edmunds, 2006). Recent examples in the Netherlands include the use of Army search teams in counter-drug operations and the use of armed forces materiel to block the parliament area for farmers protesters. In France, Opération Sentinelle, launched in 2015, deployed up to 10.000 French soldiers on the streets as part of a military operation to protect the population from terrorism. The UK has on several occasions deployed troops to support police officers after terrorist attacks in Operation Temperer (Murray & Taylor, 2019). Other European countries, such as Belgium and Italy have also deployed the armed forces for this reason. In the Belgian operation Vigilant Guardian soldiers were deployed to patrol airports, train stations and metro stations. After the initial deployment in 2015, it took until 2021 to scale down and eventually completely stop this operation. At its height, 1,828 troops were deployed right after the Brussels attacks of 22 March 2016 (Claerman, 2018). Even more recently, the Dutch armed forces and the police teamed up to guard an Amsterdam court building in a high-profile crime trial (Ministerie van Defensie, 2022a).

In the early 2020s, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to the use of the armed forces in a domestic context as well, in support of police and civilian authorities. This support varied from logistical support to hospitals, testing, the vaccination campaign in the Netherlands and the use of armed forces personnel to restore public order and enforce lockdown measures on the Dutch Caribbean island of Curaçao to the building of field hospitals in Sweden, to border control and enforcement of lockdown measures in Southern Europe but also in Finland and Norway, for example.

After studying internal military functions and responsibilities in fifteen western liberal democracies, Schnabel and Krupanski produced five distinct task groups: law-enforcement related tasks (public order, counterterrorism, border control, crime investigation, building and personnel security, intelligence gathering, etc.), disaster-assistance related tasks, environmental-assistance related tasks, cross-over tasks (search and rescue, training, equipment and facility provision, etc.) and miscellaneous community assistance (such as providing a guard for parades) (Schnabel & Krupanski, 2018).

Schnabel and Krupanski have also studied what factors determine the variation in the domestic role of the armed forces between different countries and have identified ten significant factors: type of political system (monarchy vs. republic), presence or absence of a constitution, extent of constitutional restrictions, historical context, military history, presence of gendarmeries or home guards, presence of services within the armed forces with explicit internal roles, external determinants (e.g. geographical conditions), recent or ongoing internal conflicts and membership in military alliances or regional bodies (Schnabel & Krupanski, 2018). In addition to variation, they have identified three common traits across their case studies as well: in none of the countries are the armed forces the primary internal security provider, in every country a role for the armed forces in case of natural or humanitarian disasters is undisputed and lastly, the threat of terrorism is an important factor that has reshaped the role of the armed forces in recent years (Schnabel & Krupanski, 2018). The case studies in this dissertation will try to explain developments in Finland, Sweden, and The Netherlands as well.

Militarization of the police

On the police side, a certain militarization seems to be taking place. This militarization is particularly visible in the United States but can be found in Europe as well (Campbell & Campbell, 2010; Kraska & Kappeler, 1997; Lutterbeck, 2005; Murray & Taylor, 2019). Hovens and Neuteboom point at centralizing tendencies in the police, the use of more robust gear and means and the development of a more military mindset, which is stimulated using war metaphors for police work (war on drugs, war on terror) by the authorities (P. Neuteboom & Hovens, 2018). Policing is also increasingly intelligence-led

and aimed at preventing and predicting crime, which makes it resemble military work to a larger extent (Dahlberg & Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2020). In the international context, civilian police are increasingly participating in crisis response operations, though usually on a voluntary basis.

Gendarmerie-type forces

Some western countries have an intermediary or hybrid force between the armed forces and the police. The most common kind is a so-called 'gendarmerie-type' force although some countries have different kinds of hybrid forces, such as the Finnish Border Guard in Finland (see chapter 7). Gendarmeries combine police and military characteristics and have historically only formed in continental Europe, not in Scandinavia or Anglo-Saxon countries. The gendarmerie model originates from the French police tradition and spread over parts of Europe in the late 1700s and early 1800s. The absence of gendarmeries in Scandinavia and Anglo-Saxon countries is usually explained by the fact that the government's authority in the emerging nation-state met with less resistance, and that national identity was not forged by the conquest of one region by another (Lutterbeck, 2004). Historically, gendarmeries were tasked with keeping law and order in rural areas. Some of them have demilitarized, for example the gendarmeries of Austria and Belgium (P. Neuteboom, 2010).

Gendarmeries usually perform police tasks related to the security of the state, which require a higher level of robustness than regular (community-related) police tasks. They may be part of the ministry of Defense or of the ministry of the Interior (or Security), but in either case usually have military training, organization, and competencies (Lutterbeck, 2004). It is important to emphasize that there is no one-size-fits-all model for a gendarmerie. The Royal Netherlands Marechaussee is certainly not the same organization as the Italian Carabinieri, the French Gendarmerie Nationale, or the Spanish Guardia Civil. The gendarmeries differ in tasks, focus, competencies, etc. However, they do all combine military and police characteristics and, in that sense, can be seen as a form of hybridization.

Gendarmeries must be distinguished from Military Police forces. Their character and mission differ. As Neuteboom explains, a gendarmerie is a police organization with a military background, while the Military Police is a military organization with police tasks. Second, gendarmeries have national police tasks, are used to working with civilian communities and serving under civilian control. The policing role of the Military Police, on the other hand, is specifically limited to military personnel and military property.

Besides these differences, gendarmeries and Military Police have traits in common as well. Both gendarmeries and Military Police get military training and can perform public

order and law enforcement tasks in peace support operations (for example, crowd and riot control, detainment of criminals) (P. Neuteboom, 2010).

Recent years have seen a fast growth in gendarmerie-type forces, even in times when the armed forces in general were shrinking (Bigo, 2006; Lutterbeck, 2004). They operate at the intersection of internal and external security and because of that have been able to ‘profit’ from the rise of new security threats caused by the blurring of internal and external security (Lutterbeck, 2004).

I assume that the three forms of hybridization described above can be related to the three forms of undermining of liberal democracy, with the armed forces increasingly being used for example in the fight against organized crime (vertical undermining), to deal with social unrest (horizontal undermining) and in the fight against terrorism (vertical undermining and/or state undermining). The expected links between categories of undermining and hybridization of the armed forces and the police are shown in figure 2.3.

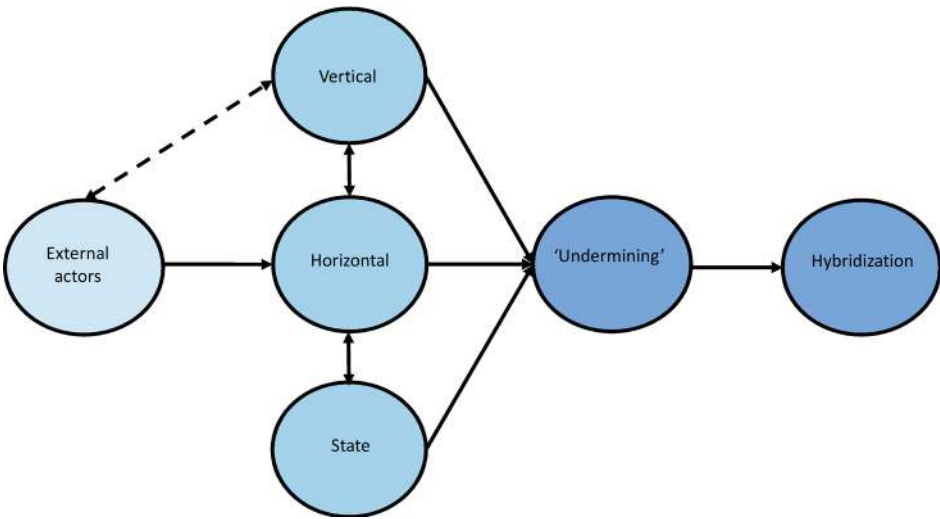


Figure 2.3: Undermining leading to hybridization

Developments outside of Europe

Some non-European democratic countries have already moved in the direction of a larger role for the armed forces in a domestic context, for example South Africa (Jensen, 2010) or South American countries such as Colombia, Brazil, and Mexico (Passos, 2018; Passos & Acácio, 2021; Rodríguez Sánchez Lara & Aguilar Romero, 2020; Voeten, 2018). In

a case study of Brazil and Mexico, Passos shows how the narrative of growing insecurity has led to the domestic use of the armed forces against organized crime and drug trafficking. This has resulted in reduced crime rates during the operations but failed to have a long-term effect. After the military operations were ended, levels of violent crime went up again (Passos, 2018). Rodriguez shows how the Colombian police, over the years, has been completely militarized and its roles and missions have become intertwined with those of the military, up to the point where for the average citizen it has become very difficult to differentiate between the police and the military (Rodriguez, 2018). Rodríguez Sánchez Lara and Aguilar Romero show how path dependence leads to a growing involvement of the Mexican armed forces in public security (Rodríguez Sánchez Lara & Aguilar Romero, 2020).

Drivers for hybridization

Different explanations and drivers for hybridization can be found in the literature. Kalkman distinguishes between functional and political reasons for this process (Kalkman, 2019).

As for functional reasons, authors point at 'new' security challenges caused by the blurring of internal and external security, such as terrorism and the threat of cross-border organized crime. This blurring of internal and external security has led to a fast growth in gendarmerie-type forces as well, even in times when the armed forces in general were shrinking (Bigo, 2006; Esterhuyse, 2019; Lutterbeck, 2004). This growth has been attributed to the fact that gendarmeries operate at the intersection of internal and external security.

Schnabel and Krupanski point at the demand to assist civilian authorities that are temporarily unable to fulfil their tasks effectively or adequately, usually as a last resort. Secondly, they point at the comparative advantage of the armed forces in terms of possession of proper equipment, skills, manpower and unhindered access to all parts of the country. Lastly, they name the ability of the armed forces to serve as a national unifying mechanism that reaches across all communities and classes of society, especially in countries with general conscription (Schnabel & Krupanski, 2018).

As for political reasons, authors point at institutional interests (leading to a certain framing of new security challenges in such a way that it supports a larger role for themselves), mainly caused by the fact that after the Cold War the armed forces needed a new cause to justify their existence and rebuild societal support (Bigo, 2001, 2006; Bigo & Tsoukala, 2008; Dahlberg & Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2020; Edmunds, 2006; Erickson et al., 2023; Kalkman & de Waard, 2017; Lutterbeck, 2005). Kuehn and Levy argue that militarization of the security discourse can be an important element in the legitimization of military involvement in domestic tasks (Kuehn & Levy, 2021b). Other authors emphasize a process of

‘institutional mimicry’, whereby armed forces and police forces increasingly look and behave alike (Dahlberg & Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2020).

Opportunities and risks

How should the hybridization of the armed forces and the police be assessed? Neuteboom and Hovens conclude that at least in the Dutch context, this hybridization has thus far been quite limited. At the same time, they conclude that a further hybridization would not be problematic, as also within a liberal democracy governments should look for an optimal mix of capabilities and competencies (P. Neuteboom & Hovens, 2018). Proponents of a larger role of the armed forces in a domestic context emphasize the contribution this could make to security while at the same time preventing the militarization of regular domestic security forces, such as the police (Schnabel & Krupanski, 2018). Some state the armed forces should be used only as a resource of last resort, when efforts are required to respond to exceptional circumstances (Schnabel & Krupanski, 2018).

Others state that a more intensive role for the armed forces in a domestic context, for example in the fight against organized crime or in the reintegration of criminal youngsters, can contribute to the legitimacy of the armed forces (Muller, 2006). Yet others state that the armed forces could contribute in public order management, which is like crowd control in peace operations, or the protection of vital infrastructure (Welten, 2006).

Gendarmeries constitute a specific case. Because of their military education and training and their robust gear, they can perform at the higher end of the spectrum of force. At the same time, gendarmeries, because of their police education, training, and tasks, have more experience in dealing with civilians than other parts of the armed forces.

Some point at their ability to deal with large or complex crises in a domestic context, as well as with the security gap in post-conflict situations (Braw, 2020; Gobinet, 2008). Because of their military status, they can be quickly deployed by the government and are trained to act in groups, unlike the police that usually acts on an individual level. In addition, gendarmeries form an extra step in the escalation ladder from the police to the armed forces (Gobinet, 2008) and are well adapted to bridging the gap between military and law enforcement approaches to using force (Clarke, 2005). In deploying a gendarmerie, the militarization of the police may be prevented because there is an alternative in case a robust performance is asked for. That alternative works at the upper side of the spectrum of force as well, as the Belgian situation illustrates. The Belgian *Rijkswacht*, a gendarmerie, was demilitarized in 1992 and abolished in 2001. As described above, after the terrorist attacks in 2015, the Belgian government saw no other alternative than to deploy the armed forces to the streets to provide security to the population. It turned

out to be quite difficult to scale down and eventually abolish the use of the military for these purposes; it took until 2021 to do so (Defensie, 2022).

Where the proponents of the gendarmerie model emphasize the advantages of using a gendarmerie instead of using other parts of the armed forces, others see the existence of this model as a form of immersion that should be avoided in a liberal democracy. Some scholars state that these organizations, motivated by institutional interests, frame security threats in such a way that it implies a larger role for themselves (Bigo, 2001, 2006; Bigo & Tsoukala, 2008).

The proponents of a larger domestic role of the armed forces do emphasize that this role cannot be boundless. Safeguards must be built in so that civilian control remains intact (Croissant & Kuehn, 2011; Muller, 2006). Croissant for example states that military activities in a domestic context always must be under civilian command (Croissant et al., 2010).

However, not everyone is positive about the hybridization of the armed forces and the police. Some authors fear a politicization of the officer corps and are of the opinion that armed forces should never be used against their own population (Brooks, 2002; Kohn, 2003). Steinert contrasts principles of peacekeeping (that characterize the police) with principles of warfare (that characterize the armed forces). He states that in many encounters between police and protest movements the principles of peacekeeping are superseded and he fears 'pre-emptive strikes' against crime and justification of 'collateral damage' inflicted as a result (Steinert, 2003). Arguments like this one can be related to the undermining of liberal democracy by the state.

Using the military in a domestic context may undermine the long-term goals of stability and strengthening of state institutions because it implies a loss of civilian control and compromises civilian authorities (Banks, 2007; Stevenson, 2006; T. Weiss, 2011). As some authors argue, liberal democracies need to maintain both order and legitimacy, which is why domestic police forces always aim to de-escalate and use minimum force, and which is also why police work is very closely regulated. The armed forces, on the other hand, need to possess what is called 'escalation dominance' to be able to win a war, and that may include the use of maximum force. Because of this, they cannot be expected to have the same sensitivity to civil liberties as police forces (Esterhuysen, 2019; T. Weiss, 2011, 2013). Kalkman is of the opinion that an increased dependence of civil authorities on the armed forces when it comes to domestic security could gradually upset the balance of power between civil and military authorities (Kalkman, 2019).

Some fear misconduct by the armed forces because they are not accustomed to dealing with the civilian population or the erosion of preparedness for core functions of national defense (Passos & Acácio, 2021; Schnabel & Krupanski, 2018). Others point at the differences in culture, norms and worldview of police forces and armed forces. While police forces “serve, protect, gather evidence and arrest suspects”, the armed forces “overwhelm, kill and destroy” (Dahlberg & Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2020). Armed forces are trained for a role that does not in general require the ability to deal with the complexities of conflict resolution on an individual level, and questions of reasonable use of force and proportionality are not core considerations in the military context (Murray & Taylor, 2019).

Other factors to be considered are risk (putting soldiers on the street might make them vulnerable), readiness (the primary mission of the armed forces is national defense), cost and appropriateness (is it right to use the armed forces or seen by the public as being right) (Clarke, 2005; Kohn, 2003). With respect to this last point, a larger role for the armed forces in a domestic context would be less controversial for tasks in crimefighting or logistical support than for public order tasks, as has been suggested by Bollen (Bollen, 2019), although other research shows that 70% of democracies used the military for coercive tasks during the COVID-19 pandemic (Erickson et al., 2023). Military interventions in large crises or disasters are usually considered acceptable, while intervention in smaller crises this would be less accepted (Bollen & Kalkman, 2022).

Morale of the armed forces could also be affected, as most of individuals who enlisted did so to be in military and international operations, not for domestic tasks such as security and surveillance, crowd and riot control or patrolling the streets (Dahlberg & Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2020). On the other hand, contributing to domestic security may also be seen as highly meaningful work, for example in the period after a terrorist attack or during a pandemic, and armed forces personnel may prefer this as a form of ‘real-life training’ instead of practicing somewhere out in the field. As Kalkman has shown, there is a lack of systematic research into how the members of the armed forces perceive domestic tasks in terms of their meaningfulness, so the exact effect on morale cannot be determined (Kalkman, 2019).

Lastly, some authors have questioned the utility of using the armed forces in a domestic context, especially for counter-terrorism purposes. They state that militarizing the handling of terrorism would play into the terrorists’ war rhetoric, making it easier for them to recruit new terrorists. They also indicate it may be difficult to scale down the visible use of the armed forces in counterterrorism as was evident in Belgium with Operation

Vigilant Guardian (Dahlberg & Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2020; Edmunds, 2006; Erickson et al., 2023; Esterhuyse, 2019; Kohn, 2003).

It should be noted that many of the arguments mentioned above are theoretical arguments, and that empirical evidence is limited (Dahlberg & Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2020). This dissertation provides three in-depth case studies to explore the practice of hybridization, its benefits, and risks in the context of different countries and thus fill this research gap. Chapters 5 to 7 will analyze the amount of hybridization in the three countries researched and its impact on civil-military relations.

2.6 HYBRIDIZATION AND THE STABILITY OF LIBERAL DEMOCRACY: CONCEPTUAL MODEL

In the previous part of this chapter, I have defined three categories of undermining which can be linked to the hybridization of the armed forces and the police. As discussed in section 2.5, this hybridization of the armed forces and the police may both strengthen or weaken the stability of liberal democracy.

This dissertation will explore specific policy options for further hybridization, such as:

- The pooling of cyber capabilities of the police and the armed forces.
- The use of the armed forces for security and surveillance operations in a higher level of force, in support of the police.
- The introduction of (social or regular) conscription to strengthen social cohesion.

Hybridization of the armed forces and the police constitutes a form of immersion of the military and civil domain, and thus a move away from the separation paradigm associated with liberal democracies, as has been discussed in section 2.3 (see figure 2.4 below). However, this dissertation will not only look at hybridization of tasks. It will study other

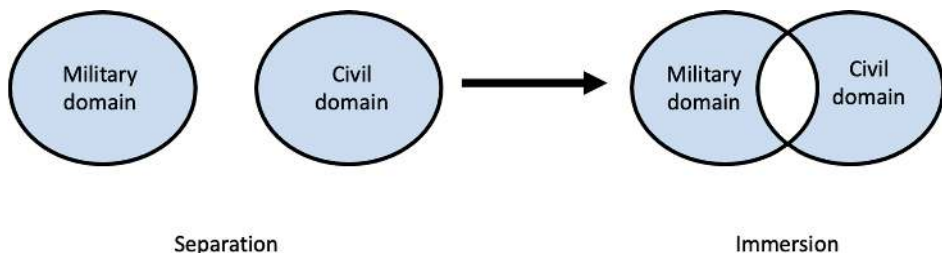


Figure 2.4: From separation to immersion

dimensions to determine the amount of immersion as well, namely 1) society, 2) public administration and government strategy, and 3) law.

Further hybridization, implementing certain policy options and leading to more immersion, may counter forms of vertical and horizontal undermining and consequently could strengthen the stability of liberal democracy. However, the hybridization of the armed forces and the police in a liberal democracy, and consequently the amount of immersion, cannot be unlimited. If the domestic role of the armed forces becomes too strong (either in tasks, position in society, public administration and government strategy, and/or the law), this may lead to an erosion of civilian control of the armed forces and – worst case – to an undermining of civil rights and to the civilian authorities being compromised. That would lead to a delegitimization of the state and weaken the stability of liberal democracy.

The various theories and concepts of civil-military relations, as explained in this chapter, will be used to explore a new balance in the separation versus immersion dichotomy that is fitting in a liberal democracy in general, but also in the specific situation of liberal democracies that are undermined by security and stability related challenges.

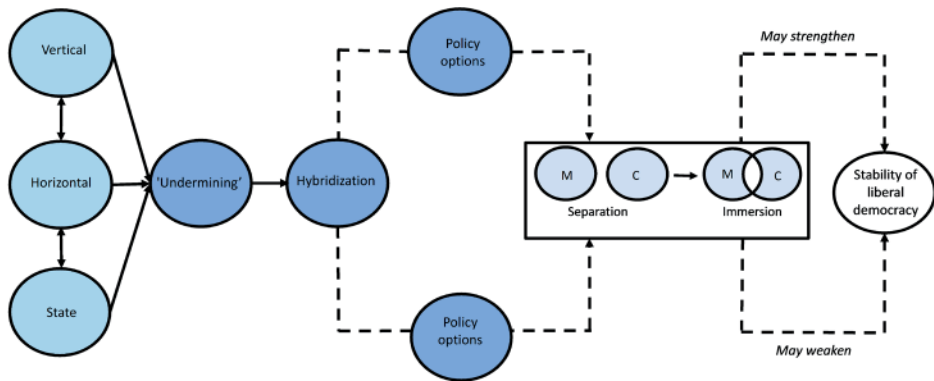


Figure 2.5: Hybridization and the stability of liberal democracy

2.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter has started with defining liberal democracy and recent developments in the stability of liberal democracy in western countries followed by a discussion of three categories of the ‘undermining’ of liberal democracy, namely vertical undermining, horizontal undermining, and undermining by the state. This section has identified a

gap in the literature on the role of the armed forces in liberal democracies, namely the fact that this literature focuses on new democracies, rather than on established liberal democracies faced with democratic backsliding, which is the focus of this dissertation. This gap will be further explored in chapter 4, based on both an extensive document analysis and a quantitative analysis.

Subsequently, the broad field of military and society and the subfield of civil-military relations were discussed. Based on a discussion of two classical works, Huntington's *The Soldier and the State* and Janowitz's *The Professional Soldier*, followed by a review of the work of more recent authors in the field of civil-military relations, the dilemma between separation and immersion of civil and military spheres was defined. For a long time, in western liberal democracies this was a theoretical dilemma, as in practice the police were responsible for domestic security, while international security was the domain of the armed forces.

However, this distinction has become less clear after the Cold War. A process of hybridization of the armed forces and the police is currently taking place. Three relevant developments are taking place, namely a constabularization of the armed forces, a militarization of the police and the growth of gendarmerie-type forces, which share both military and police characteristics and therefore can be seen as a form of hybridization themselves. Some scholars attribute these developments to changes in the threat environment related to the blurring of internal and external security and the rise of new threats such as terrorism. Others emphasize the institutional interests of the armed forces and gendarmeries in expanding their responsibilities and, consequently, their budgets.

The hybridization of the armed forces and the police has both proponents and opponents. As this is a recent development, empirical evidence is limited, both concerning the actual developments and its effects. This leads to various questions, that will be explored in the chapters to come. Is liberal democracy in the west indeed under pressure? What are the main security and stability related challenges for liberal democracy in the west? Is the domestic role of the armed forces indeed growing in western liberal democracies? Is hybridization of the armed forces and the police taking place in these countries? To what extent can these developments be seen as a move from separation to immersion and to what extent is or would such a change be problematic from a perspective of civil-military relations in a liberal democracy? To what extent can democratic civilian control over the military and military effectiveness in new roles and missions go together? To what extent would this lead to a changing balance between civil and military authorities? If this would lead to unwanted side-effects, how can these effects

be mitigated or prevented? Or should the aim be to keep civil and military spheres as separated as possible?

Chapter 4 to 7 will delve into these questions, describing the results of a secondary database analysis and literature review on liberal democracy (chapter 4), and three in-depth case studies of the Netherlands, Finland, and Sweden (chapters 5-7). These individual chapters will focus on the developments in these countries concerning the domestic role of the armed forces and the hybridization of the armed forces and the police and the explanations for these developments. Each of these chapters will describe how the process of hybridization in these specific countries may continue and what would be the impact on civil-military relations in these countries. Each chapter contains a short paragraph in which developments are analyzed based on the theoretical concepts elaborated on in this chapter. In that sense, the case studies will be used as test cases for the theoretical concepts presented in this chapter. Is there evidence for Schiff's concordance theory? Or can Levy's theory of the interplay between the republican exchange and the control exchange be used to explain developments in the three countries concerning the role of the armed forces? A comparison between the three countries will be made in chapter 8, leading to an overall assessment of the impact of a changing role of the armed forces on civil-military relations and on the stability of liberal democracy and an answer to the research question.

To summarize, this research will address three gaps in the literature that follow from the analysis presented in this chapter. Firstly, it will address the link between the stability of liberal democracy and the role of the armed forces in cases of democratic backsliding. Earlier research addressing the connection between liberal democracy and the armed forces has focused on the role of armed forces in new democracies. Secondly, this research will try to explain the development from separation to immersion in liberal democracies. Thirdly, this research will explore how separation and immersion may exist at the same time in a liberal democracy and what that means for civil-military relations, including the workings of civilian control of the military.



3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will describe the research methodology used for this dissertation. The next section will explain the research design, including the choice for qualitative research based on case studies and will elaborate on the selection of the cases chosen. Section 3.3 will then discuss the process of data collection, followed by a section on the operationalization of the research question and the conceptual model developed in chapter 2. Subsequently, section 3.5 will focus on data analysis and validation and section 3.6 contains a personal reflection on the research process.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Qualitative research

This dissertation is based on qualitative exploratory case study research. One of the main characteristics of qualitative research is the open and flexible methodology, which allows for the research design to be adjusted during the research based on the data (J. Evers, 2016). Typical of an exploratory approach is its flexibility and openness towards the phenomenon that is being studied. No hypotheses are formulated in advance and research decisions follow the data. In following this bottom-up approach, a theory can be developed. Glaser and Strauss call this a 'grounded theory' (Glaser, 1967). Grounded theory has the following characteristics (Strauss, 1998; Swanborn, 2010):

- A rejection of thinking in terms of variables and instead a preference for holism.
- Data collection and data analysis are not separated in time.
- Insights develop because of a constant comparison between cases.
- There is a strong emphasis on an inductive, exploratory approach.
- The assumption that in studying a case one or a few central concepts 'arise from the data'.
- 'Theory' refers to the elaboration of aspects and relations of a central concept.

However, in this specific study, certain existing concepts from civil-military relations literature are used, such as the dichotomy between separation and immersion and the concept of civilian control over the military. In that sense, this research project combines both deductive and inductive elements and can in fact be characterized as abductive (Gioia et al., 2013). Timmermans and Tavory have defined abductive research as "...a creative inferential process aimed at producing new hypotheses and theories based on surprising research evidence." (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012, p. 167) The approach "...rests on the cultivation of anomalous and surprising empirical findings against a background of multiple existing sociological theories and through systematic methodological analysis."

(Timmermans & Tavory, 2012, p. 169) The abductive method considers the position the researcher has in the world they study, that will inevitably influence the way they perform the research. Abductive analysis rests on the researcher's position and his or her theoretical background, that help to identify surprising observations in the research data. (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012) In the words of Reichertz, the challenge is to create *"a state of preparedness for being taken unprepared."* (Reichertz, 2009, p. 221) New concepts can subsequently be developed to account for these surprises. Timmermans and Tavory prefer this method over grounded theory as they state *"not taking current scholarship into consideration risks not only ignorance but also the rediscovery of a well-developed domain."* (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012, p. 181)

This study uses well-established concepts from civil-military relations theory to study new empirical developments (hybridization of the armed forces and the police, the immersion of civil and military domains) in a changing context (democratic backsliding instead of democratic consolidation) and a changing threat environment. This makes the abductive method an appropriate method for this study.

It should be emphasized that with only a few cases as a starting point, the researcher should be very careful in generalizing findings since the concept of representativeness has a different meaning in qualitative research than in quantitative research (Swanborn, 2010). Qualitative research aims to paint a complete picture of all the possible variants in opinions, attitudes, and behavior in a certain population (Dinklo, 2006). Another point of attention in exploratory research is that because of continuously adjusting the research design, the risk for the researcher's biases influencing the research result is increased (see paragraph 3.6).

Case study research

This qualitative study follows a case study design. Swanborn (Swanborn, 2010) has defined a case study as the study of a social phenomenon:

- In one, or only a few, of its manifestations.
- In its natural surroundings.
- During a certain period.
- That focuses on detailed descriptions, interpretations, and explanations that several categories of participants in the system attach to the social process.
- In which the researcher starts with a broad research question on an ongoing social process and uses available theories but abstains from pre-fixed procedures of data collection and data analysis and always keeps an eye open to the newly gathered data to flexibly adjust subsequent research steps.
- That uses several sources of data (informants, documents, observatory notes).

- In which sometimes the participants in the case studied are engaged in a process of confrontation with the explanations, views, and behaviors of other participants and with the resulting preliminary results of the researcher.

Swanborn states that case study research is a fitting approach if the impetus for the research project lies in broad questions on a social process (Swanborn, 2010). As described by Yin, case studies have a distinct advantage over other research methods when a 'how' or 'why' question is being asked about a contemporary set of events over which a researcher has little or no control (Yin, 2018). This dissertation's research question on the possible contribution of the armed forces to the stability of liberal democracy in Northwestern Europe is a broad question that contains both 'how' and 'why' elements, it concerns the present and future, over which the researcher has no control, and therefore the case study method was chosen for this research.

As the research focuses on liberal democracies in Northwestern Europe, the armed forces in three countries from this region were selected as cases. This is the only unit of analysis. Therefore, a holistic multiple-case study design as defined by Yin has been chosen (Yin, 2018). The advantage of a multiple-case study design is that the evidence from multiple cases is often considered more compelling, which makes the overall study regarded as being more robust.

To gain a deeper insight in the possible contribution of the armed forces to the stability of liberal democracy, a total of three cases were selected, instead of just focusing on the Netherlands. As Yin suggests, multiple-case studies should ideally follow a "replication" design (Yin, 2018). In this research, a replication design was used, although there were some small differences in data collection between the three cases (see section 3.3).

A small part of the research is based on quantitative data: in chapter 4, the stability of liberal democracy in the three cases is explored. This research is based on an analysis of relevant existing databases on the stability and quality of liberal democracy.

Case selection

According to Swanborn, there are four methods to select cases (Swanborn, 2010):

- No selection at all (include all cases in the targeted domain).
- Random selection (mostly applicable to survey research).
- Pragmatic grounds (available time, budget, personal interests, etc.).
- Substantive criteria (criteria related to the substantive properties of the cases themselves).

Normally, not more than four or five cases are selected (Swanborn, 2010).

In this research, the cases were selected based on a combination of substantive criteria and pragmatic grounds. The cases are the armed forces in The Netherlands, Sweden, and Finland. As for substantive criteria, the armed forces of these specific three countries were selected because they are sufficiently similar to be compared, but when looking at the position of their armed forces in society they are at the same time sufficiently different.

Similarities:

- All three countries belong to the top of the most stable countries in the world and have been liberal democracies for a long time. This distinguishes them from relatively new liberal democracies on the European continent, such as Poland, Hungary or Spain.
- However, in all three countries, the stability of liberal democracy has declined in recent years.
- The three countries share cultural similarities in the way they view the domestic role of their armed forces, being reluctant to using the armed forces in public order management, to patrol the streets, etc. This distinguishes these countries from countries in southern Europe, such as France or Spain, or even Belgium, that have used the armed forces, for example, to patrol the streets and railway stations after terror attacks.
- The three countries are similar in the way they view the role of the police as well, with all three countries using a community policing model.
- In all three countries, there appears to be a tendency to enlarge the role of the armed forces in a domestic context, although they differ in the position of their armed forces in society.
- The armed forces of all countries have participated in stability operations in recent years and they can therefore be expected to have developed certain policing capabilities during those operations.

Differences:

- The Netherlands has a hybrid force (the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee), Sweden and Finland do not, although Finland does have a Border Guard with hybrid elements.
- In Finland, the armed forces are actively involved in society, in Sweden and the Netherlands they are not.
- The threat perception in Sweden and Finland has been different from the threat perception in the Netherlands, with the first two countries feeling threatened by Russia much more. This has resulted in a 'total defense' model in Finland and Sweden, which has implications for the domestic role of the armed forces. Consequently, the 'willingness to fight for your country' in these countries is much higher than in the Netherlands.

- Finland has a conscription system and Sweden has recently decided to partially reinstate a conscription system, while the Netherlands does not.

These similarities and differences will be considered in the analysis.

As for pragmatic grounds, because of time constraints the research was limited to three cases. Other practical considerations were the availability of contacts in both Sweden and Finland and the availability of enough documentation in these countries, either in English, or easily translatable.

With the benefit of hindsight, the selection of cases turned out to be highly relevant. Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the Netherlands has increasingly looked at the Swedish and Finnish models to learn from in building its own version of a whole-of-society approach, in which all of society (not only the government, but also businesses, NGO's and individual citizens) has the responsibility to contribute to national security (see also the Epilogue to this dissertation).

3.3 DATA COLLECTION

Ideally, case studies rely on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion (Yin, 2018). A major reason to use several sources of evidence in case study research is related to the reason for choosing case study research as a method in the first place: to gain in-depth knowledge of a phenomenon in its real-world context. Being both in-depth and contextual means collecting a variety of relevant data and thus relying on different sources (Yin, 2018). In this research, the following sources were used:

Document analysis

In addition to scientific articles and books, relevant reports, policy documents and articles from the media from all three countries were collected. These documents were found through a search on government websites, through recommendations by respondents and using search engines. For Sweden and Finland, some reports and policy documents were only available in the original language. Where possible, these documents were translated with Google Translate. In other cases, only a summary in English was used. For each country, around 35-40 sources were used, including 15-20 policy reports.

Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews with respondents from all three countries were carried out.⁶ The interviews took on average between 45 and 60 minutes. Before starting each interview, the purpose of the research and the respondent's rights were explained to the respondent, based on an information sheet that the respondent received before the interview took place. The respondent filled in the consent form, which was then signed by both the respondent and the researcher. Due to the COVID-19 measures, most interviews were conducted online, mainly through MS Teams and Webex. For these online interviews, the respondent's answers to the consent questions were recorded. All interviews were recorded and transcribed by the researcher⁷.

In the Netherlands, 48 expert interviews were conducted. Respondents were selected at both the national level and the local levels, the strategic and tactical⁸ levels, and included policy makers. Most of the respondents were experts working at the higher management level of their organization and can therefore be qualified as elites (see also section 3.6 for a reflection on elite interviewing). In total, 28 respondents from the armed forces, the police, and the intelligence services, working at the strategic or tactical levels were interviewed. Within the armed forces, respondents from all parts of the armed forces (Army, Air Force, Navy, Marechaussee), based in different parts of the country were interviewed. In addition, 7 respondents working at the higher management level in all relevant ministries (Defense, Interior, Justice and Security, Social Affairs) were interviewed. At the local level, 4 mayors and 2 city managers were interviewed, from medium-sized and large cities geographically spread around the country. Finally, 7 representatives from the academic community with expertise in the themes of the research were interviewed.

The interviews focused on 4 different topics related to the sub-questions of the research. At the start of each interview, the respondents were questioned on the security and stability related challenges to liberal democracy in Northwestern Europe. Next, the researcher focused on the position of the armed forces, first asking about the current position of the armed forces and recent changes. Then, questions were asked about policy options for the future role of the armed forces in a domestic context. Finally, questions were asked about the consequences of these policy options for civil-military relations and the position of the armed forces in the security domain. Following the

6 See appendix for the interview protocol and consent form used in this research.

7 Two respondents did not give permission to record the interview; at these interviews the researcher took notes and wrote a transcript afterwards. In both cases, the transcript was sent to the respondents for approval. This led to minor textual adjustments in one of the transcripts.

8 The author defines the 'tactical level' as the level between the strategic level and the operational level.

snowball-method, at the end of each interview, each respondent was asked for other respondents that could be approached for interviews.

The tree model, as described by Evers, was used to design the interviews. In each interview, key questions, follow-up questions and analytical questions were combined, using a topic list in order not to forget any necessary elements. As a result, the transcripts are comparable in structure even though of course the follow-up questions have differed (J. Evers, 2015).

In addition to these general questions, some interviews focused on the specific expertise of the respondent in one of the relevant themes of this research, for example undermining organized crime, civil unrest, or crisis management.

In Sweden, 21 interviews were conducted with respondents from the armed forces, police, National Defense College, other academic institutions, and government ministries. The interview questions were the same as those used for interviews in the Netherlands.

In Finland, 21 interviews were conducted with respondents from the armed forces, Border Force, police, National Defense University, other academic institutions, and government ministries. The interview questions were the same as those used for interviews in the Netherlands.

Group interviews

In the Netherlands, in addition to 48 individual interviews, 2 group interviews were conducted with military liaisons to the Dutch Safety Regions. Safety Regions are crisis management networks that bring together the expertise and capabilities of various emergency services on a regional level. They are responsible for crisis prevention, preparation, and response. The military liaisons are responsible for the facilitation of the military support to the crisis management activities of the Safety Regions.

One group interview was conducted with 5 military liaisons from the south of the Netherlands and the other interview was conducted with 6 military liaisons from the north of the Netherlands. The first group interview was conducted in a live setting; the second group interview was conducted on MS Teams. Both interviews were recorded and transcribed. Subsequently, they were sent to the respondents for their approval. In the first case, this led to minor adjustments in the transcript.

In these group interviews, the respondents were questioned on different themes, focusing on both their views on the contribution of the armed forces to the Safety Regions

and on their personal experience as military liaison. As for the contribution of the armed forces, the focus of the interview was on the changes in the last 20 years that have taken place, the current situation, differences between the Safety Regions and whether the armed forces are seen as a 'last resort' or a 'structural partner'. As for their personal experiences, the respondents were questioned about their motivation to work as a military liaison and the consequences of this specific placement for their future careers.

In Sweden and Finland, no group interviews were conducted due to time constraints and a smaller network of the researcher in these countries. Therefore, the Dutch case study provides the richest data in this research.

Database analysis

As mentioned before, chapter 4 is partly based on the analysis of several quantitative databases on the stability and quality of liberal democracy. It includes the following databases: the World Values Survey, two high standard databases on liberal democracy developed by V-Dem Institute and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), the Worldwide Governance Indicators produced by the World Bank, and the Fund for Peace data on state fragility. In this chapter, the relevant data from these databases are compared with the results of a document analysis on the stability and quality of liberal democracy.

The respondents from all three countries were questioned about this topic as well and in the case-study chapters (chapters 5, 6 and 7) their views are compared with the results of chapter 4.

It must be noted that most data for the case studies were collected between April 2019 (start of the dissertation project) and March 2022. The interviews in the Netherlands were conducted between July 2020 and January 2021. The interviews in Finland were conducted between September and December 2021. The interviews in Sweden were conducted between December 2021 and March 2022. The cut-off date for new policy documents and other reports was 1 July 2023, with some exceptions for highly relevant documents and reports that were published after that date and were brought to the attention of the researcher.

3.4 OPERATIONALIZATION

As defined in chapter 1, the research question for this dissertation reads as follows:

How can the armed forces in Northwestern Europe strengthen liberal democracy and what are the consequences for civil-military relations in theory and practice?

The following sub-questions will be studied to answer this main research question:

1. To what extent is liberal democracy in Northwestern Europe under pressure and what are the security and stability related challenges undermining liberal democracy in Northwestern Europe?
2. What is the current position of the armed forces in Northwestern Europe on the CMR dilemma, to what extent has this position changed in recent years and how can these changes be explained?
3. What policy options can be developed for the future role of the armed forces in a domestic context in Northwestern Europe and how will this change the domestic role of the armed forces?
4. What would be the consequences of a changing domestic role for civil-military relations in Northwestern Europe in theory and practice?
5. To what extent could a changing domestic role of the armed forces and a new balance in civil-military relations either contribute to the stability of liberal democracy in Northwestern Europe, or alternatively, detract from its stability? What are the opportunities and caveats for a new balance?

Based on a study of relevant theoretical concepts in chapter 2, I have developed the conceptual model for this dissertation, which is reproduced in figure 3.1 below.

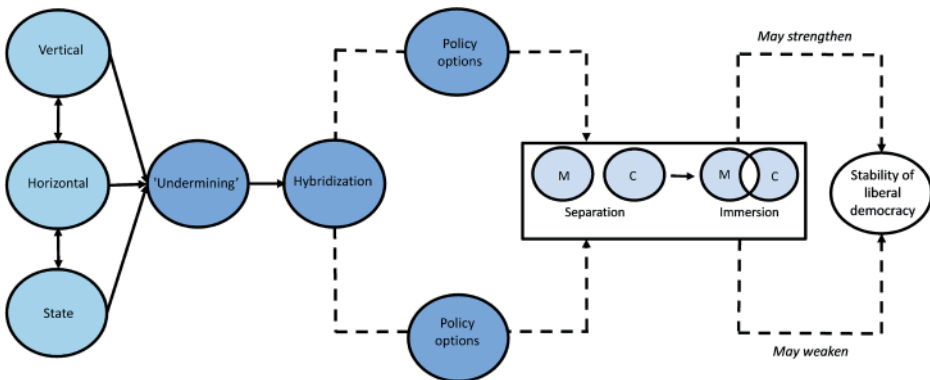


Figure 3.1: Hybridization and the stability of liberal democracy

The relevant concepts will be operationalized as follows.

The stability of liberal democracy (chapter 4) is measured (using existing databases) by looking at the following variables:

- Support for democracy in different age groups.
- Liberal Democracy Index used by the Swedish V-Dem Institute to measure the quality of democracy.
- The Global State of Democracy Indices used by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance to measure democratic performance using five indicators: representative government, fundamental rights, checks on government, impartial administration, and participatory engagement.
- Worldwide Governance Indicators used by the World Bank to measure six dimensions of governance. Three dimensions (political stability, rule of law, and control of corruption) will be used for this research.
- Fund for Peace cohesion indicators to measure state fragility.

The undermining of liberal democracy is operationalized by studying three security and stability related threats that undermine liberal democracy:

- The blurring of internal and external security and the rise of new security threats (vertical undermining).
- Declining social cohesion and the rise of social unrest and parallel societies (horizontal undermining).
- Undermining of liberal democracy by the state (state undermining).

Chapters 5-7 contain the results of the three case studies. These chapters will elaborate on the undermining of liberal democracy in the specific country investigated, the extent of hybridization, policy options, and the balance between separation and immersion. To do this, these chapters will study:

1. The context:
 - o Domestic tasks and roles of the armed forces.
 - o The legal framework concerning these domestic tasks and roles.
 - o The position of the armed forces in society, looking at the following variables:
 - § Size of the armed forces
 - § Conscription
 - § Support for the armed forces in society
 - o Civil-military relations, looking at the following variables:
 - § Ideal-type for CMR
 - § Civilian control

- o Civil-military cooperation (framework for cooperation between civil and military authorities).
- 2. Security challenges and threats, looking at the three threats defined in chapter 4:
 - o The blurring of internal and external security and the rise of new security threats (vertical undermining).
 - o Declining social cohesion and the rise of social unrest and parallel societies (horizontal undermining).
 - o Undermining of liberal democracy by the state (state undermining).
- 3. Recent changes in the domestic role and explanations (ergo: the extent of hybridization), looking at the following variables:
 - o Policy changes since the end of the Cold War.
 - o Changes in practice as perceived by the respondents.
 - o Changes in practice based on research (where available).
 - o Explanations for changes as perceived by the respondents.
- 4. Policy options for a changing domestic role, looking at the following variables:
 - o Policy options named by the respondents. For each policy option, both descriptive elements (what domain and what task does the policy option entail) and normative elements (why, or why not the armed forces should have a role, and under what conditions) were explored.
 - o The respondents' opinion on policy options named by the researcher (normative).
- 5. The balance between separation and immersion, looking at 4 dimensions:
 - o Immersion in society.
 - o Immersion in public administration and government strategy.
 - o Immersion in performance.
 - o Immersion in the law.
- 6. Analysis, looking at the following variables:
 - o The extent of undermining / prevalence of the three security and stability related challenges.
 - o The extent of hybridization (both looking back and future-oriented) + explanatory factors, using the work of Bruneau on effective use of the capabilities of the armed forces in a domestic context.
 - o The extent of immersion + explanatory factors, using the concepts explained in chapter 2 (concordance theory, Levy's exchange model, Desch's model on internal versus external threats, Travis model on the intensity of conflict).

Chapter 8 contains a comparative analysis of the three case studies, using the same concepts as in the case study chapters to verify whether these can explain similarities and differences between the three case studies.

Subsequently, the research question on the stability of liberal democracy is answered, by focusing in on the effect of a changing role of the armed forces and a new balance in civil-military relations on the stability of liberal democracy.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS AND VALIDATION

Data analysis

The data analysis is based on 'thick analysis'. The aim of thick analysis is to enhance the depth and breadth of data analysis by creatively combining several analysis methods, allowing for a more comprehensive analysis (J. C. Evers, 2016). Thick analysis has some similarities with 'grounded theory'. However, it combines several analysis methods in an eclectic manner and therefore encompasses more than the grounded theory method. In addition, because thick analysis methods do not have fixed or regulated procedures, it taps into the creative spirit of the researcher, who can choose a combination of analysis methods that fit the specific dataset and research question (J. C. Evers, 2016). In that sense, thick analysis fits with the abductive methodology mentioned earlier (Gioia et al., 2013; Timmermans & Tavory, 2012). Thick analysis requires an intensive coding process, comparing the data with existing theoretical concepts, and finding anomalies and surprises that require the researcher to develop tentative new theories. One such a surprise found in the Dutch data was the use of metaphors by the respondents (see below), requiring a new round of coding and revisiting the data.

In this project, a combination of analytic techniques was used, specifically open coding, thematic coding, and axial coding. As for analytic tactics used to connect the various codes, descriptive analysis, causal analysis, pattern analysis, metaphor analysis and frame analysis were used. Finally, the analytic strategy used combined elements of descriptive and explanatory strategy and theory construction.

The data from the interviews, group interviews and documents were coded by means of qualitative data analysis software (Atlas.ti). Such software allows the researcher to analyze qualitative data in a systematic and transparent way without precluding openness. It saves time and makes it possible for a third person to double-check findings, thereby contributing to the quality of qualitative research (Friese, 2019). The coding process was started with thematic coding (following the structure of the interview questions) and open coding, thereby combining deductive and inductive elements. Axial coding subsequently resulted in 132 codes. In this process, the open codes describing similar aspects were combined to create new, broader codes, and subsequently code groups. In this last step important concepts used in this research project were used as well, leading

to a combination of 'informant-centric codes or 1st order codes' and 'researcher-centric concepts or 2nd order codes' and thus a form of abductive research as mentioned by Gioia (Gioia et al., 2013). This resulted, for example, in a code group 'CMR', that combined codes related in one way or the other to civil-military relations. Examples of codes in this code group are 'distance between armed forces and society', 'criteria for domestic role armed forces', 'limits to domestic role armed forces', 'military mindset', 'civilian control' and 'visibility armed forces', all resulting from open coding.⁹

An example for a combination of thematic and open coding is the coding of policy options. During the interviews, the respondents were asked about their views on specific policy options. Their answers were coded using thematic coding. At the same time, they could name different policy options, and these were coded through open coding, resulting in two additional policy options: 'border control' and 'expert support'.

During the open coding process of the Dutch data, it was noted that the respondents frequently used metaphors to describe the armed forces and their role, such as 'green on the streets', 'customer-supplier relationship', 'last resort', and 'structural partner'. Therefore, it was decided to include a metaphor analysis in the project. However, this only turned out to be relevant for the Dutch data. This may be related to the fact that the interviews with Swedish and Finnish respondents was done in English. When interviewed in their mother tongue, these respondents may have used metaphors as well.

Using the 'memo' function in Atlas.ti, the data per code and per code group were further analyzed, facilitating the process of counting how many respondents shared the same views on the topics discussed. In the presentation of the findings, in the chapters 5-7, many respondents quotes are used to illustrate the results, as suggested by Gioia (Gioia et al., 2013).

Validation

As has been mentioned before, the results from case studies cannot be generalized in the same fashion as can be done in extensive research. Swanborn, in this respect, states that in case studies there is no sample-to-population logic, but it is possible to generalize from case results to a theory or model, which could then subsequently be applied to other cases (Swanborn, 2010). Timmermans and Tavory propose talking to other scholars and presenting at conferences as a necessary step for creative theory development. (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012)

9 See appendix for the code book and code groups used in the analysis.

The research results were validated in different ways. First, as mentioned above, several data sources were used to be able to perform methodological triangulation. In the data analysis phase, several analysis methods were used to perform data analysis triangulation. As explained by Evers, triangulation is a way a researcher can verify their understanding of the researched reality, as it is not so simple to truly understand the social reality and one's own biases (J. Evers, 2016).

Second, (partial) results were presented at several seminars and meetings at the Ministry of Defense, several conferences, and seminars in the Netherlands, and three international academic conferences, organized by the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society in the United States (2021) and Canada (2022), and by the European Research Group on Military and Society (2024). Presentations were followed by an interactive discussion with the participants in which they gave their feedback on the research results. This can be seen as member validation (J. Evers, 2016; Swanborn, 2010).

Third, ample time was devoted by the researcher to personal reflection, as described in the next paragraph.

3.6 PERSONAL REFLECTION

Reflexivity in research involves reflection on self, process, and representation, and critically examining power relations and politics in the research process as well as researcher accountability in data collection and interpretation (Sultana, 2007). Berger defines it as the process of a continual dialogue and critical self-evaluation of the researcher's positionality as well as active acknowledgement and explicit recognition that this position may affect the research process and outcome (Berger, 2015). Reflexivity is used in qualitative research mainly to secure credibility, trustworthiness, and non-exploitative research. The researcher scrutinizes the lens through which the researcher views the phenomenon studied (Berger, 2015). Transparency about the researcher's position and potential biases and assumptions is vital in judging accounts of qualitative research and the authenticity of the findings (Reid et al., 2018).

Relevant researcher's positioning includes personal characteristics (such as gender, race, age), personal experiences, beliefs, biases, political and ideological stances, and emotional responses to the respondent. These positions may impact the research in three major ways: they can affect access to the field, they may shape the nature of the researcher-researched relationship and as a consequence affect the information that participants are willing to share, and finally, the worldview and background of the researcher

may shape their lens for filtering the information and thus may shape the findings and conclusions of the study (Berger, 2015). One goal of reflexivity is to monitor such effects and thus enhance the accuracy of the research and the credibility of the findings.

In my position as a senior advisor working for the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee¹⁰ and studying the armed forces at the same time, I must be constantly aware of my position, the way I view and categorize respondents and conversely, the way I am viewed and categorized, and the way that this may impact my research. As pointed out by Maxey, it is impossible to distinguish clearly between these roles. My role as researcher influences my work as senior advisor and vice versa. Therefore, I must accept the fluidity of the different roles I fulfil (Maxey, 1999).

For example, in interviewing respondents within the Ministry of Defense, I am both an insider (working for the ministry as well) as an outsider (being non-military). It has been argued that having an insider status may give advantages such as easier access, easier rapport with respondents and understanding nuanced reactions of the respondents. On the other hand, outsiders might make different observations that an insider may overlook (Berger, 2015; Mason-Bish, 2019).

Most of my respondents were experts working at the higher management level of their organization and can therefore be qualified as elites. For elite interviewing, the literature emphasizes the need to overcome the reticence of the respondent to either take part in the study or their reluctance to disclose information (Mason-Bish, 2019). The insider/outsider dynamic may influence this as well. As explained by Mason-Bish, it is important to try to neutralize the status imbalance between researcher and researched by being knowledgeable about the background of the interviewee (Mason-Bish, 2019). However, the interviewer should be aware that sometimes they know more about the subject than the interviewee and this could lead to the interviewee attempting to gain the interviewer's views and knowledge. The effect of that could be a conflict of professional roles.

As pointed out by Sultana, knowledge is always partial and representations of knowledge produced through field research embody power relations that the researcher must be aware of in undertaking ethical research (Sultana, 2007). For a female researcher doing research in a male-dominated, patriarchal organization, there is a risk of falling into the 'classical male-female pattern', where the male interviewee is broadcasting his opinions, relatively unchallenged by the researcher. Though I have found myself in this position a

10 During the writing process, I switched jobs, and currently I am working at the Defense Staff at the Ministry of Defense.

few times, I have also experienced the opposite situation, where I had to force myself to remain focused with an older male interviewee that I had subconsciously already classified as 'typical-older-male-without-interesting-ideas'. All in all, I found it easier to find the right balance between the interviewee and me when the interviewee was female. Being self-reflective helps in becoming aware of these patterns. This is very important in content analysis and reporting as well because it helps the researcher to alert themselves to 'unconscious editing' because of their own sensitivities and thus enable fuller engagement and more in-depth comprehensive analysis of the data (Berger, 2015).

In addition to constantly reminding myself of my positionality and reflecting on the possible impact on my research work, I have taken some more tangible measures to avoid a conflict of interest that could potentially arise as I am doing research on the organization that I also work for.

First, at the start of my PhD research a contract has been drawn up and signed by my employer, the university and myself, stating that my employer will respect academic freedom, has no right to see unfinished parts of the dissertation and will allow me to spend 12 hours of my working time each week on my research. At no point during my research process have I experienced any pressure from my employer concerning my research results. At the final stage of my research, following the contract, my employer has had the opportunity to check the manuscript for factual inaccuracies. This has resulted in minor textual adjustments of the manuscript.¹¹ Additionally, throughout the research process I have held regular peer review meetings with colleagues in a similar position, to exchange ideas. I have discussed the potentiality of a conflict of interest with my supervisors on a regular basis as well.

In the research itself, I have drafted a research question looking at both the possible contribution the armed forces could make to the stability of liberal democracy and the limits of such a contribution within a liberal democracy. Therefore, I have chosen not only to look at possibilities, but also the limitations. Furthermore, in my selection of respondents I have consciously selected some respondents that I knew to be critical of the armed forces in general and / or of a potential domestic role for the armed forces, based on their political background, position within the security domain, academic work or personal opinions.

11 Three textual adjustments have been made. On page 38, in the section about support to civilian authorities on the island of Curacao during the COVID pandemic, the word 'Army' was changed into 'armed forces', as Navy personnel contributed as well. On page 89, the text concerning the 'Korps Politietroepen' was adjusted; this was a military police force, while it was called a civilian police force in the draft manuscript. Finally, on page 103, the text concerning changes in the Police law was updated. During the time of writing the draft, the change in the Law was debated in Parliament, but at the time the draft manuscript was checked by the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee, the Law was passed already.



4

LIBERAL DEMOCRACY UNDER PRESSURE¹²

¹² This chapter is based on an article published as Van Vark, A. (2021). Under Pressure: Security and Stability Related Challenges for Liberal Democracy in North-western Europe. *Democracy and Security*, 17(3), 296–323. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17419166.2021.1920930>

4.1 INTRODUCTION

As explained in chapter 1, the main purpose of this dissertation is to explore the possible contribution of the armed forces to the stability of liberal democracy in Northwestern Europe, specifically in the Netherlands, Sweden, and Finland. I assume that liberal democracy in Northwestern Europe is under pressure from several security and stability related challenges that undermine its stability. When studying stability and security the organizations that come to mind are the armed forces and the police. This dissertation focuses specifically on the role of the armed forces.

This chapter sets up the empirical part of this dissertation by researching the assumption that liberal democracy in Northwestern Europe is under pressure. Many authors have recently stated that there is a gradual decline in liberal democracy in the western world. Several authoritative indices in recent years point in the same direction and show a decline in the quality and/or stability of liberal democracy in the western world. How can this decline be explained? In this chapter, the security and stability related challenges that may undermine liberal democracy in Northwestern Europe will be explored, focusing on the three categories of undermining that have been defined in chapter 1 (vertical, horizontal, and state undermining). In the second part of this chapter, the hypothesis will be further investigated in relevant databases focusing on liberal democracy, governance, and stability.

The focus on security and stability means that other challenges for liberal democracy, following, for example, from electoral developments or the quality of political institutions, or the literature studying liberal democracy from a philosophical perspective, are not included in this dissertation.

4.2 DOCUMENT ANALYSIS: SECURITY AND STABILITY RELATED CHALLENGES UNDERMINING LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

This section, focusing on developments in Europe in the past 20 years, provides the results of a literature review. It shows that the security and stability related challenges to liberal democracy may rise from the blurring of internal and external security and the rise of new security threats (resulting in vertical undermining) and from declining social cohesion in Northwestern European society (resulting in horizontal undermining). Finally, the state itself may play a role in the pressure on liberal democracy (state undermining).

Vertical undermining explained: the blurring of internal and external security and the rise of new security threats

Several authors have concluded that since the end of the Cold War, there has been a blurring of internal security and external security. Before that period, and in fact since the birth of the modern nation state in the West, there was a clear distinction between the two, which in most liberal democracies also led to a clear distinction between the two main organizations responsible for security. The armed forces were responsible for external security (safeguarding the state and its population from external threats) and the police were responsible for internal security (safeguarding the population from crime). This clear distinction has disappeared after the Cold War.

What does this blurring of internal and external security mean? Firstly, traditional wars between states are on the decline.¹³ At the same time, intra-state conflicts and failing states are on the rise (Carter, 2013). Since the end of the Cold War, regular interstate wars – characterized by states trying to defeat another state – have been increasingly replaced by states intervening in conflicts between or within other states, without their own territory being involved. These interventions are mainly aimed at controlling or directing that specific conflict instead of at the conquest of territory. The idea of security is expanded to include human security, and intervening powers seek to stabilize the affected countries (Beken, 2011). European states have played a big role in peace building and stabilization operations in the past 20 years, mainly in the Balkans, Afghanistan, and the Middle East.

At the same time, the definition of internal security has changed as well. Traditionally, public order management and crime fighting were important elements of internal security. The main actors were police services and their opponents (individual criminals, crime groups, etc.) could be found in the territory of the state. These internal security threats have increasingly been replaced by transnational security threats stemming from international organized crime, irregular migration, terrorism, drug trafficking, cyber threats and, as has been evident since 2020, infectious diseases (Beken, 2011; Eriksson & Rhinard, 2009; Lutterbeck, 2005; Modderkolk, 2019; T. Weiss, 2011; Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid, 2017). These threats all cross borders, which makes it more challenging for a single state to fend them off. States have been struggling to tackle these transnational security threats.

13 The data for this dissertation were collected before the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which has had a profound impact on the security landscape in Europe. This impact will be discussed in the epilogue to this dissertation.

In Europe, the large migration wave in 2015 and the terrorist attacks in the same period have been particularly influential in recent security policies. At the same time, there are signs that European liberal democracies are being undermined by international organized crime (Dziedzic, 2016; Lam et al., 2018; Tops & Tromp, 2017). Lam, Van der Wal, and Kop call this the 'creeping poison' that is undermining the foundations of the constitutional state. Research in the Netherlands has shown that criminal organizations are trying to gain political influence by using figureheads in city councils and infiltrating (local) government (Tromp, 2015).

The yearly Europol Serious Organized Crime and Threat Assessment (SOCTA) concluded in 2021 that serious and organized crime remains a key threat to the internal security of the EU (Europol, 2021). As Europol states, it deeply affects all layers of society and undermines the economy, state institutions and the rule of law. As the report shows, close to 40% of the criminal networks are involved in the trade in illegal drugs and two thirds of criminals use corruption on a regular basis. Additionally, the use of violence by criminals involved in serious and organized crime appears to have increased in both the frequency of use and its severity. Around 60% of the criminal networks in the EU use violence. In recent years, in several European countries there have been violent payoffs, violence against first responders, threats against politicians and public officials and against certain professions, such as journalists, lawyers and judges. For example, in the Netherlands there was the murder of the brother of a crown witness, a lawyer who defended that crown witness in an organized crime trial and the murder of a crime journalist reporting on that same trial. At the time of writing (February 2023), Dutch newspapers report that both the police and the public prosecutor missed important leads on threats against these three men (Marée & Van de Ven, 2023).

Finally, Western liberal democracies must deal with threats in the cyber domain, coming from both state and non-state actors. There have been various incidents over the past years that illustrate the use of cyber capabilities for purposes of manipulation, sabotage, and disinformation. For example, the hacking of the Democratic National Committee in the United States, the hacking attack at the OPCW in 2018 and the hacking attack in Finland in October 2020, where 40.000 medical records were stolen from a psychotherapy center (Heikkilä & Cerulus, 2020). A recent report by Dutch intelligence services states that activities by state actors in the digital domain pose a concrete threat in the form of digital espionage and preparation activities by, amongst others, Russia and Iran for digital disturbance and sabotage (Algemene Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst et al., 2021). The potential repercussions are great.

In a recent report, Europol points at major developments in cybercrime, such as ransomware, DDoS attacks, payment fraud and criminal abuse on the Darkweb (Europol, 2020). Cyber sabotage of critical infrastructure can lead to physical and ecological damage, casualties, and social unrest (Nationaal Coördinator voor Terrorismebestrijding en Veiligheid, 2019). A commonly used phenomenon is ‘trolling’. It involves using disinformation spread on social media by ‘real’ users to mislead the public or incite fear or hatred. Some actors have professionalized this tactic by creating troll factories in which individuals spend their days posting on social media. Troll factories as part of a manipulation campaign can compromise political and social stability. Disinformation campaigns can be particularly successful in a society where (parts of) the population distrusts government, the traditional media and ‘the establishment’ in general. Campaigns of disinformation aim to capitalize on this mistrust, which has the potential to erode social cohesion and, ultimately, the functioning of the democratic legal order (Bennett & Livingston, 2018). As will be discussed in the next section, this is increasingly the case in the area of interest of this dissertation.

A term commonly used to describe these threats in the so-called ‘grey zone’ between war and peace is ‘hybrid threats’ or ‘hybrid warfare’, that the academic literature tends to use interchangeably (Libiseller, 2023). This is a multifaceted and contested concept, which was developed around 2007 by the US Marine Corps and got traction after Russia’s annexation of Crimea, as both Libiseller and Galeotti describe (Galeotti, 2019; Libiseller, 2023).

Hoffman, who was one of the first to use the term, has defined the concept as ‘*Any adversary that simultaneously employs a tailored mix of conventional weapons, irregular tactics, terrorism, and criminal behavior in the same time and battlespace to obtain their political objectives*’ (Hoffman, 2014). In this definition hybrid threats can come from both state actors and non-state actors. He defines ‘hybrid’ as a form of warfare, while recently the term has increasingly been associated with the grey zone, and consequently with non-military aspects before war (Libiseller, 2023, p. 871). Libiseller explains how, through its widespread use, ‘*the concept’s meaning has become increasingly vague and ambiguous*.’ (Libiseller, 2023, p. 858)

This dissertation will predominantly describe and use concrete threats, instead of using the term ‘hybrid threats’. However, as will be evident in the case study chapters, the term is widely used by my respondents.

Before moving on to the next challenge for liberal democracy, it is necessary to provide nuance to this section on ‘new’ security threats. Research in the Netherlands shows that in 2019, compared with 2012, 30% less citizens were a victim of a ‘traditional’ crime such

as a robbery, theft, assault or vandalization. At the same time, cybercrime, drug crimes, and traffic crimes are on the rise. This research also shows that citizens are less likely to report a crime to the police (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2020). Researchers call this the 'enforcement paradox' (*handhavingsparadox*) (Boutellier, 2023). If 'new' security threats are on the rise while 'old' security threats are declining, what does this say about the level of security in a society? The answer depends on the value attached to various security threats and thereby almost becomes an ideological question, that will not be answered in this dissertation. However, it is good to realize that there is a nuance to this security-related challenge.

Based on this literature review on the blurring of internal and external security, it can be concluded that the blurring of internal and external security leads to 'new' security threats, such as undermining organized crime and threats in the cyber domain, that can undermine liberal democracy. Consequently, states struggle to provide security for their citizens. Note that this constitutes a broader definition of vertical undermining than is used by Boutellier, as described in chapter 1, who mainly focuses on undermining organized crime (Boutellier et al., 2020).

It must be noted that with the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, an external threat is felt again in many European states that has not been felt for a long time, particularly in Western and Southern Europe. For most Nordic and Eastern European countries, this threat has always been there.

Horizontal undermining explained: declining social cohesion, social unrest, and parallel societies

As several authors have noted, inequalities in liberal democracies are rising and the middle class is slowly disappearing (Fukuyama, 2012; Guilluy, 2018). Political theorists are convinced that a sizable middle class is necessary for a stable democracy to exist and that societies with extremes of wealth and poverty are more prone to authoritarian rule or populist uprisings (Fukuyama, 2012, 2018). The growing gap between the elite and the masses can in that sense be seen as undermining (Guilluy, 2018). Other authors point out that changing social structures, individualization and the creation of a network society have caused insecurity, unease, and resistance, mainly with population groups on the lower end of the economic spectrum (Boutellier, 2007; Fukuyama, 2020b, 2020a). Rising inequalities also undermine social cohesion (Bekkers, 2023; Tops & Tromp, 2017).

People who feel more socially marginalized are more likely to be alienated from mainstream politics and to support radical parties. These feelings can follow for example from the loss of economic position or from the perception that cultural elites no longer attach

values to their views (Gidron & Hall, 2019). These feelings lead to identity politics and the rise of populism and has the risk of polarizing society. The main characteristic of populism is in fact that society is separated in two distinct groups, 'the pure people' and 'the corrupt elite'. It argues that politics should be an expression of the will of the people (Jones, 2019).

Social polarization can be exacerbated by foreign interference, often aimed at influencing members of a country's diaspora, so-called 'long arm' tactics. However, foreign interference can go much further than that. A recent report by the Dutch government states,

'These are systematic, deliberate and in many cases covert activities on the part of state and non-state actors, which can compromise, weaken, destabilize, undermine or sabotage democracy, the rule of law and the government that bears responsibility for upholding these structures, as a result of the objectives being pursued, the means used or the eventual effect. They also include activities that, on account of the goals being pursued, the tactics used or the resulting effects, cause serious harm to necessary social cohesion by undermining trust and solidarity among members of the public. In many cases this does not lead to direct, acute upheaval, but over the long term it can cause serious disruption to and dysfunction in the democratic legal order and open society.' (Nationaal Coördinator voor Terrorismebestrijding en Veiligheid, 2019)

Another Dutch report points out that social and political stability is harmed by states, like Russia, who attempt to undermine the democratic legal order in other countries and states with active diaspora politics, such as Iran and Turkey. Economic stability in the Netherlands is mainly harmed by Russian and Chinese espionage and other economic activities by China (Algemene Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst et al., 2021). Social media also plays an important role: Facebook and Twitter / X have both confirmed that since 2019 foreign influence operations have taken place on their platforms, coming from China, India, Iran, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi-Arabia, and Venezuela (Bekkers, 2023).

What are the consequences of these developments for the security and the stability of liberal democracy? Several western liberal societies have seen outbursts of civil unrest in recent years. For example, the 'gilets jaunes' ('yellow vests') in France, protesting farmers in the Netherlands, the unrest in the United States after the 2020 presidential elections and resistance and rioting in several countries against government measures in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. A recent Dutch government report speaks of interaction between an activist upper layer that protests in public and a radical undercurrent that speaks out against COVID-19 measures. This has created an environment in which the threshold for extremist behavior has been lowered. (Nationaal Coördinator Terrorismebestrijding en Veiligheid, 2021; Nationaal Coördinator Terrorismebestrijding en Veiligheid, 2021).

Research shows that the number of demonstrations worldwide has risen sharply after 2009 to a level that had not been seen since the 1960's, and research on demonstrations in 9 Dutch cities shows an explosive growth in the number of demonstrations: from 1315 in 2014 to 4227 in 2021 (Stekelenburg, 2023). Stekelenburg, in her research, distinguishes between demonstrations following from horizontal polarization (between groups in society) and vertical polarization (against the authorities). The latter category usually leads to more violent protests (in addition to threats against politicians, administrators, scientists, and journalists) (Stekelenburg, 2023). A complicating factor is the mobilizing potential of social media (Stekelenburg, 2023). Social media may work as a valve, releasing some pressure, but also as a bellows, leading to a hardening of protests, as Stekelenburg describes. Her research shows that demonstrations against the government are in many cases not announced to the authorities beforehand, making it difficult for the authorities (particularly the police) to prepare adequately (Stekelenburg, 2023). In addition, research in the Netherlands shows that police performance in situations of social unrest can differ, based on conditions (such as the location or decisions by the local mayor), impotence (lack of operational possibilities, for example when large groups of farmers protested with heavy material) or reluctance to act (because of sympathizing with the protesters) (Boutellier, 2023).

Other researchers show that social media facilitate the mobilization of large groups of people in such a short time that the police do not have adequate time to build an intelligence position, which makes it more difficult for them to act (Doeleman et al., 2023). Legal obstacles also prevent monitoring of citizens in many cases (Doeleman et al., 2023). This is related to the third security challenge for liberal democracy: the undermining of liberal democracy by the state.

In some cities, parallel societies are emerging of groups of people that pull back from society, organize themselves and their own security. These areas are attractive for criminal organizations, and consequently, criminal subcultures can emerge, where a neighborhood is effectively run by a criminal organization (Lam et al., 2018). For example, there are indications in the Netherlands that bars and restaurants, closed for a long time due to COVID-19 lockdown measures, received financial support from organized crime organizations (Hueck & Lange, 2020).

In extreme cases, zones are being created where the government has lost (most of) its authority, as has been stated about the banlieues of Paris and certain neighborhoods of Swedish cities. Although the use of the term 'no-go zones' remains controversial in Sweden, government authorities and political parties from the left and right agree that there are vulnerable areas in the country where law and order is a problem. Research shows

that deadly street violence is on the rise and organized crime, gang crimes and shootings are a growing problem (Åberg, 2019). Dutch research by Terpstra and Salet speaks about 'hidden neighborhoods' (*verborgen wijken*), in which authorities find it difficult to identify the problems taking place in the neighborhood and to connect with the citizens (Terpstra & Salet, 2023). This problem is mainly seen in so-called 'superdiverse' neighborhoods with a very heterogeneous population, in which citizens have close relations with people abroad and / or people with comparable political or religious ideas. These 'hidden neighborhoods' provide opportunities for the illegal economy (Terpstra & Salet, 2023).

The work of Risse on 'limited statehood' is especially relevant to these developments. Limited statehood, in his words, concerns those areas in a country in which central authorities lack the ability to implement and enforce rules and decisions and/or in which the legitimate monopoly over the means of violence is lacking. In other words, there is no full domestic sovereignty. In these areas, collective goods and services may be provided by a variety of actors, including companies, NGOs, and criminal organizations. Therefore, governance (the provision of rules and regulations as well as of public goods and services) does not necessarily depend on the existence of functioning state institutions. Though it mainly impacts non-Western countries, elements of limited statehood can be found in European liberal democracies as well (Börzel & Risse, 2016; Krasner & Risse, 2014; Risse & Stollenwerk, 2018).

Based on this section, it can be concluded that the declining social cohesion in North-western European societies, leading to instability and social unrest, is undermining liberal democracy (horizontal undermining).

Undermining of liberal democracy by the state

In recent years, governments in the West have taken several measures that can be seen as undermining liberal democracy. For example, De Massol de Rebetz and Van der Woude have looked at the use of criminal and administrative law in the fight against terrorism and conclude that in France, following the 2016 terrorist attacks, the state of emergency was only lifted once new legislation that included state-of-emergency measures was in place (De Massol De Rebetz & Van der Woude, 2019). Van der Woude has also studied Dutch counter-terrorism legislation and concludes that legislative procedure regarding criminal legislation has been greatly affected by the dynamics of the culture of control, leading to a permanent state of exception. In her opinion, a liberal democracy can only thrive if its government is prepared to uphold the rule of law and protects individuals' rights in the law (Van der Woude, 2012).

In other research by Van der Woude on the performance of mobile border checks on the land borders with Germany and Belgium by the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee, she points out the risk of ethnic profiling and of a blurring between the use of immigration law and criminal law, and thereby the risk of a misuse of powers by the organization. This could have an impact on how the Dutch population perceives the procedural justice of state practices (Van der Woude et al., 2016).

Mythen, Walklate and Khan have studied counter-terrorism measures in the UK and conclude that they have led to partial securities where some groups are protected and others are not. They call this the risk/security contradiction: people seen as a risk by the government feel themselves at risk from that government (Mythen et al., 2013). Parmar has studied counter-terrorism measures in the UK as well and concludes that they are based on the concept of pre-emption (act preventively before the enemy does), which is a military based doctrine. In his opinion, feelings of measures being unfair may lead to radicalization, making the measures counterproductive (Parmar, 2011).

Pavone, Santiago Gomez and Jacquet-Chifelle have studied the concept of security and conclude that it has shifted to pre-emptive security. They point at the trade-off approach where any increase in security will lead to a reduction in civil liberties, threatening the roots of democracy, and argue that security and liberty are not mutually exclusive but mutually constitutive of Western democratic societies (Pavone et al., 2016). Hodgson, based on a study of state responses to terrorism in the UK and France, similarly concludes that current political discourse contrasts liberty with security. In her opinion, this contrast is misleading: diminishing liberty also diminishes citizens' security in relation to the state, by allowing for greater executive power. At the same time, it is questionable whether diminishing liberty increases citizens' security against the threat of terrorism (Hodgson, 2013). Richard talks about the intelligence dilemma: security knowledge and technology intended to defend liberal democracy against violence seriously runs the risk of undermining democracy by violating civil liberties (Richards, 2012). In the Netherlands, two recent incidents indicate that government services, both civilian and military, may have used intelligence capabilities to monitor citizens without being authorized to do so (Kouwenhoven et al., 2021; Rosenberg & Berkhout, 2020).

Securitization theory can be seen as an important explanatory factor for undermining by the state. It states that security threats are socially constructed and emerge through a discursive process that dramatizes and prioritizes them. Two main schools of thought can be distinguished, the Copenhagen School and the Paris School. While the Copenhagen School focuses on securitization as the 'politics of exception', the 'Paris School' defines securitization from the notion of a 'politics of unease'.

For the Copenhagen School, the process of securitization usually starts with a speech act. A prime example in the last 20 years is the declaration of the 'war on terror' after the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States. Jackson, in his critical discourse analysis of the 'war on terror', has concluded that the language and the practice of the war on terror poses several challenges to the democratic state, including destabilizing the moral community, weakening democratic values and civic culture, and undermining the legitimacy of democratic institutions (Jackson, 2005). In a recent example, many political leaders, for example the French president Macron, have declared a 'war on COVID-19' (Macron, 2020). The Dutch mayor of Eindhoven, after riots in his city following the establishment of a curfew as a measure to curb the spreading of COVID-19, stated he feared the country was moving towards civil war (NOS Nieuws, 2021). As Steinert states, democratic politicians have learned the value of declaring a crisis in getting things done quickly (Steinert, 2003). Recent research shows that the extent to which disaster response was securitized was the best predictor of domestic use of the military during the COVID-19 pandemic, better than any contextual factor or civilian capacity issues (Erickson et al., 2023).

In the Copenhagen School, the security speech act has performative power. The extraordinary circumstances it illustrates, make it necessary to act quickly, at the cost of the regular democratic process. Securitization calls for *silence* and *speed*. In that sense, the exceptionalism of security is contrasted with the procedural normalcy of democratic politics. Therefore, proponents of this school consider securitization to be bad for democracy, even more so as the proliferation of threats risks extending extraordinary measures and exceptional circumstances to normality (Aradau, 2004). Successfully securitized issues will, according to the Copenhagen School, reflect a national security 'mode' or, as Wæver puts it, a 'logic of war', by which he means a logic of 'challenge-resistance (defense)-escalation-recognition/defeat' (Roe, 2012, p. 258).

The use of a war metaphor may have a different effect as well, namely that the line between warfare and police work becomes blurred (Steinert, 2003). As American general Richard Myers has said "*If you call it a war, then you think of people in uniform as being the solution*" (Stevenson, 2006, p. 48). This process of hybridization of the armed forces and the police has been explored in chapter 2.

The view that securitization is bad for democracy is shared by proponents of the Paris School. The Paris School has focused on how the practices of various agencies, such as the police or border guards, lead to securitization processes without necessarily including a security speech act (Roe, 2012). Bigo, for example, has shown the importance of securitizing practices in addition to discourse (Bigo, 2006). He shows how security professionals exaggerate or provoke existing fears for the purpose of promoting their

own institutional interests (Bigo, 2002, p. 64). Therefore, while the Copenhagen School emphasizes the 'politics of exception', in the Paris School securitization is a consequence of a 'politics of unease'. As stated by Aradau, in the Paris School, "the exceptionalism of security metamorphoses into a different suspension of democratic procedures, a suspension motivated by expert knowledge" (Aradau, 2004, p. 396).

Balzacq calls these securitizing practices the 'tools of securitization', which he defines as activities that by their intrinsic qualities convey the idea to those that observe them that the issue that they are tackling is a security threat (Balzacq et al., 2015, p. 2). This could for example be the case when activities that have traditionally been implemented to tackle security issues and/or can be seen as extraordinary are used on this specific issue. Léonard applies this theory to Frontex and concludes that all main Frontex activities can be seen as securitizing activities, thereby confirming her hypothesis that the issue of migration in Europe has been securitized (Léonard, 2010).

Is securitization indeed bad for democracy? As has been pointed out by Roe, fast-tracking legislation does limit the functioning of normal politics. On the other hand, even though the legislative process is accelerated, some level of examination and oversight is still required to gain approval of the citizens of the state concerned. He also underlines that there can be a good cause to speed up legislation in unusual circumstances (Roe, 2012).

He illustrates this with the UK example, where security laws are often fast-tracked. A 2009 House of Lords report on fast-track legislation shows that although fast-tracking is not restricted solely to the proposed implementation of emergency measures, many of the fast-tracked bills in the UK indeed relate to security issues, and particularly to the threat of terrorism (Roe, 2012). The 2001 Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act (ATCSA) only took a month from the bill's introduction in the House of Commons until it received Royal Assent. However, as Roe does point out, some securitized issues are handled more in accordance with a normal mode of politics; the subsequent Counter Terrorism Act (CTA) of 2008 took 10 months from introduction to Royal Assent.

The COVID-19 crisis provides another example of governments taking swift measures and subsequent legislation being fast-tracked through parliament. Dutch experts in constitutional law have stated that the 'Temporary law measures COVID-19' provides the government with too much power at the expense of the democratic process of passing a law (Dietvorst, 2020). However, with the COVID-19 crisis feeling less acute, the Dutch Senate, in May 2022, refused to extend this temporary law for the fifth time, and in early 2023 refused to speed up the parliamentary procedure to discuss the adjusted Public Health Act, which the Minister of Health had requested (Eerste Kamer, 2022, 2023).

The COVID-19 crisis can also be seen as an example of the 'politics of unease'. As noted above, Bigo has pointed out how security professionals exaggerate or provoke existing fears for the purpose of promoting their own institutional interests (Bigo, 2002). According to Aradau, this leads to a different suspension of democratic procedures, motivated by expert knowledge (Aradau, 2004). This is not to say that in the COVID-19 crisis governments exaggerated or provoked fears, but it has been stated that their trust in experts for determining policies in this crisis has more similarities with a technocracy than with a democracy (Boersema, 2020).

State undermining is not limited to the state taking measures that curtail civil liberties or disturb the normal democratic process. It also has to do with state responsiveness and checks and balances between the executive, legislative and judicial powers. For example, the recent large scandal in the Netherlands that revealed that thousands of parents have been unduly accused of fraud with government allowances for childcare and have been systematically ignored in their attempts to get justice. The scandal is indicative of the legitimacy crisis in government and has led to a growing distrust in the government (Hooven & Ven, 2021). Research shows that the Netherlands has become a low trust society and that trust in Parliament and government have never been this low before (Bekkers, 2023).

In criminology, scandals like this one are defined as 'crimes of the powerful', that are related to a disbalance in power between government actors and citizens, but also between big companies and consumers. Other examples of 'crimes of the powerful' are corruption, institutional racism, but also, for example, war crimes. The term 'crimes of the powerful' can be confusing because many of these events or scandals are not criminalized in legal terms. Therefore, the focus in this subfield of criminology has shifted towards limiting or restoring the harm caused by these actions. This is called the 'social harm' or 'zemiology' approach (van Swaaningen, 2020). If the authorities fail in restoring harm, this may lead to polarization, social unrest, and demonstrations (Stekelenburg, 2023).

Tjeenk Willink argues for checks and balances not only between the powers within the state, but also between the state and society. A democratic government, in his opinion, needs self-conscious citizens and a strong civil society (Hooven & Ven, 2021; Tjeenk Willink, 2018). Politicians plead for a new social contract to restore trust between the government and its citizens (Omtzigt, 2021).

Concluding, this section has, based on the literature, shown that liberal democracy can be undermined vertically, horizontally, and by the state. In the next section, the hypothesis will be tested in several databases on liberal democracy, stability, and governance,

followed by a section where the results from both the literature review and the database analysis are combined.

4.3 LIBERAL DEMOCRACY UNDER PRESSURE: THE DATA

The previous section contained a literature review, providing evidence for the first hypothesis of this dissertation, concerning the undermining of liberal democracy in North-western Europe. In this section, relevant databases will be explored for the same purpose.

Importance of democracy: World Values Survey

Before delving into various databases concerning liberal democracy and different aspects of governance, the World Values Survey provides some interesting data concerning support for democracy. As has been shown by Foa and Mounk, for several liberal democracies across the globe, the percentage of respondents stating it is 'absolutely important' to live in a democracy is much lower for younger respondents than for older respondents (Foa & Mounk, 2017). This may very well indicate a declining popular support for democracy, although a different option would be that support for democracy grows as respondents get older. The data for Finland, The Netherlands and Sweden can be found in figure 4.1.

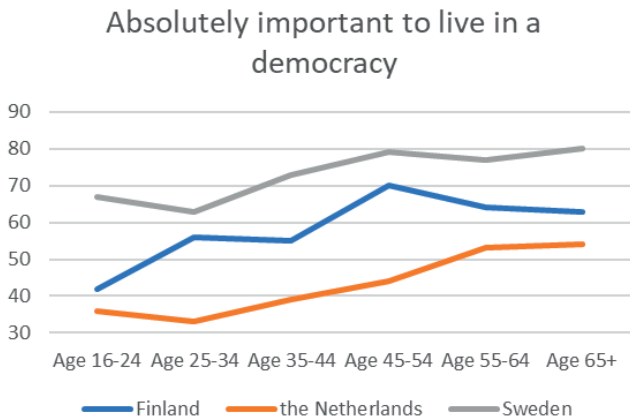


Figure 4.1: Importance of democracy by age intervals

Percentage of respondents rating it 'absolutely important' (a rating of 10 on a 10-point scale) to 'live in a country that is governed democratically' in the World Values Survey, wave 2017-2020 (Haerpfer et al., 2020).

As is clear from these data, a relatively small percentage of young people finds it 'absolutely important' to live in a democracy in the three studied cases. For the Netherlands and

Finland, it is not even a majority. The percentage rises with age. The difference between the countries is visible as well, with Sweden showing the most support for democracy.

Liberal democracy: V-Dem and IDEA

As shown in the previous section, the support for democracy seems to be lower in younger generations than in older generations. This section will focus on liberal democracy itself: based on relevant databases, is liberal democracy under pressure? As has been stated before, this study addresses the last 20 years.

Two high standard databases (Boese, 2019; Landman, 2012; Munck & Verkuilen, 2002) on liberal democracy have been developed by V-Dem Institute and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance:

- The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, an intergovernmental organization with 34 member states, has developed the Global State of Democracy Indices, that measure democratic performance for 158 countries. The conceptual framework consists of five elements: representative government, fundamental rights, checks on government, impartial administration, and participatory engagement (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2019).
- The V-Dem Institute is an independent research institute based at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden. It produces a yearly report on democracy and uses a Liberal Democracy Index to measure the quality of democracy. It aggregates two other indices, namely the Electoral Democracy Index (measuring the democratic part of liberal democracy) and the Liberal Component Index (measuring civil liberties, rule of law and constraints on the executive by the judiciary and legislative).

The IDEA and V-Dem data for Finland, the Netherlands and Sweden can be found in figure 4.2¹⁴.

For V-Dem, only the Liberal Democracy Index itself is presented in figure 4.2. For IDEA, some other indicators from their conceptual framework have been included, as these may shed some extra light on the hypotheses. It is clear from the data that in all three countries, liberal democracy is under pressure. For Finland, all indicators except 'representative government' are declining in the last 10 years. The decline in 'civil liberties' is particularly strong as is the decline in 'impartial administration' in the last 10 years. This may indicate evidence for the undermining of liberal democracy by the government. For the Netherlands, the same indicators stand out, especially in the last 10 years. Sweden in general scores higher than the other two countries, but has a sharp decline in 'funda-

14 The underlying data can be found in Table 4.1 in the appendix to this chapter.

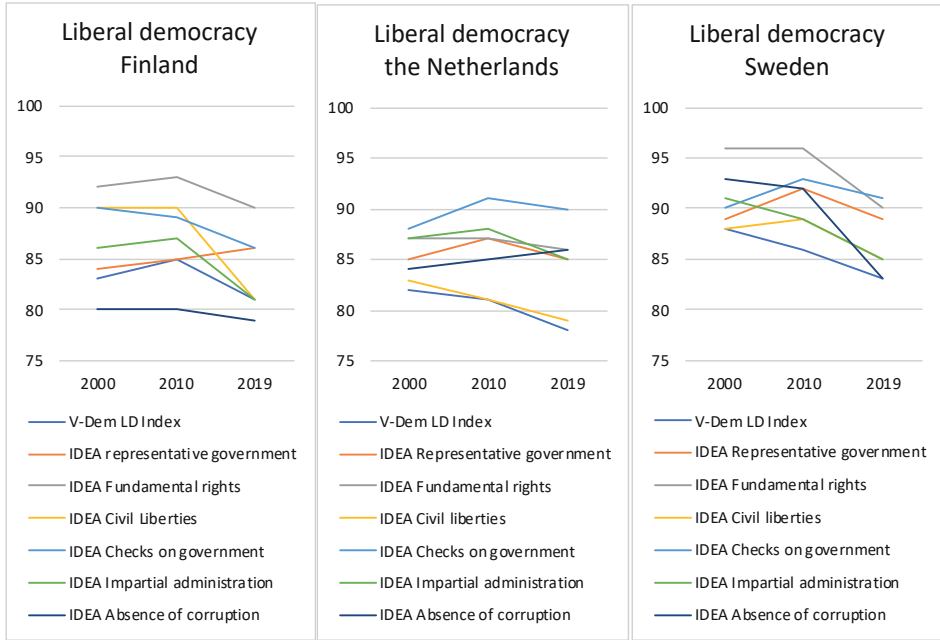


Figure 4.2: Liberal democracy in Finland, the Netherlands and Sweden

mental rights,’ ‘civil liberties,’ as well as ‘absence of corruption.’ The decline in ‘impartial administration’ and ‘representative government’ indicates that part of the population does not feel adequately represented or treated fairly, which could provide evidence for both horizontal and state undermining.

In their last reports, both V-Dem and IDEA shed some extra light on these data. In its 2020 yearly report, the V-Dem Institute notes a global decline in liberal democratic institutions: for the first time since 2001, the world has more autocracies than democracies. According to V-Dem, Hungary is Europe’s first non-democratic member state (V-Dem Institute, 2020).

In its yearly report ‘The Global State of Democracy 2019: Addressing the Ills, Reviving the Promise,’ IDEA concludes that a significant decline in quality affects both old and new democracies (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2019). Older democracies are struggling to guarantee equitable and sustainable economic and social development. Consequently, many high-quality democracies are confronted with populist challengers, which combine exclusionary claims with a disregard for democratic principles. IDEA links the rise of populism to disenchantment with political actors, a perceived inability of political systems to address core societal and economic problems, and

a clash between expectations of what democracy should provide and what it delivers. Migration issues have sparked fears and resentment among socially vulnerable citizens, that question the nation state's ability to protect them against the perceived threats of globalization. Polarization is on the rise. The report states that populists disrespect the accountability institutions that check government, protect political pluralism, and constitute democracy. This propensity for unchecked power makes populism a danger to democracy.

IDEA states that democratic weakness and fragility are closely interlinked, pointing out that two-thirds of fragile democracies are also low-performing weak democracies. Democratic weakness or low democratic quality make democracies more vulnerable to partial or full democratic backsliding or breakdown. As for the high-performing democracies, IDEA states that there are signs that their quality is eroding, especially those aspects which are related to civic space. Information and communication technology and individualization are reshaping civic space, resulting in looser and more fluid types of interactions facilitated by social media. The 'gilets jaunes' and Extinction Rebellion are good examples of these interactions. At the same time, civic space is shrinking because of government measures to combat terrorism, promote law and order and national security.

All in all, IDEA identifies 21 countries with high performance on all their democratic attributes. Among them the three cases of this study.

Governance: World Bank

Since 1996, the World Bank has produced its yearly Worldwide Governance Indicators (Kaufman & Kraay, 2019). It defines 'governance' as the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised. This includes the process by which governments are selected, monitored, and replaced; the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies; and the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them. Although there has been some critique on the construct validity of 'governance', the data are widely used (Kaufmann et al., 2010; Thomas, 2010). The World Bank uses a diversity of data sources, among them the data of Freedom House, V-Dem, and the Bertelsmann Transformation Index. Countries are categorized on a scale of -2,5 (weak) to + 2,5 (strong).

The World Bank distinguishes between six dimensions of governance: voice and accountability, political stability and absence of violence, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law and control of corruption. For this chapter, political stability and the absence of violence, rule of law and control of corruption are most relevant. With the political stability dimension, the World Bank aims to capture perceptions of the

likelihood that the government will be destabilized or overthrown by unconstitutional or violent means, including politically motivated violence and terrorism. The rule of law dimension provides insight in the extent to which agents have confidence in and abide by the rules of society, and in particular the quality of contract enforcement, property rights, the police, and the courts, as well as the likelihood of crime and violence. Control of corruption captures perception of the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, as well as ‘capture’ of the state by elites and private interests.

The relevant data for our three countries can be found in figure 4.3.¹⁵

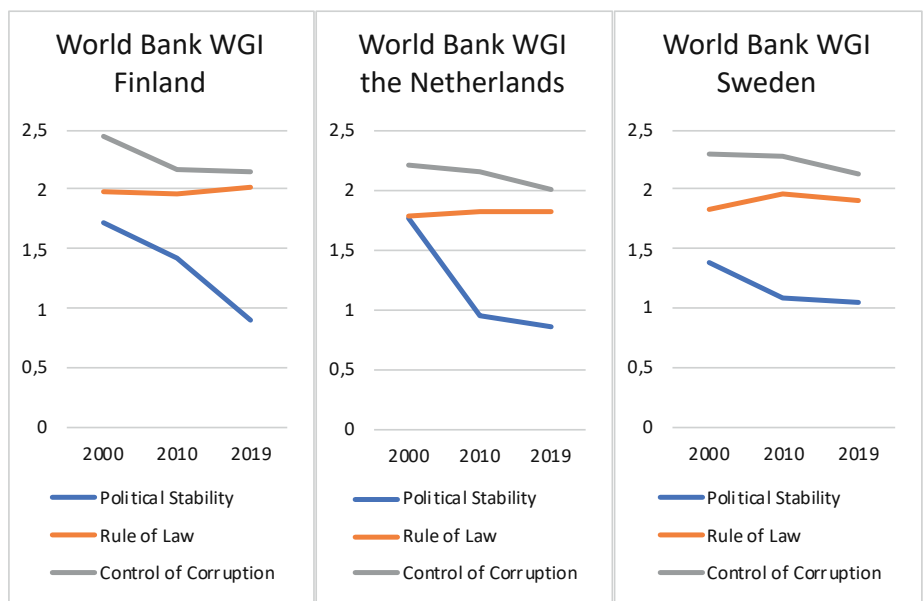


Figure 4.3: World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators

As is clear from figure 4.3, all cases have seen a marked decline in political stability in the last 20 years. As this dimension measures the likelihood of the government being overthrown by violent means, including terrorism, this sharp decline could perhaps be explained by the rising terrorist threat in Europe after the 9/11 attacks in the United States and the following wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. After the annexation of Crimea by Russia and the war in Ukraine this was followed by a rising national security threat, that has certainly been felt in Finland and Sweden. No big change in rule of law can be identified in either of the countries. Control of corruption shows a small decline for all three countries, which is interesting, as the IDEA data showed a marked decline for

15 The underlying data can be found in Table 1 in the appendix to this dissertation.

Sweden in absence of corruption. This could indicate that, while the level of corruption is rising, it is certainly not out of control yet.

Cohesion: Fund for Peace

Fund for Peace is an American non-governmental organization. The Fund for Peace measures state fragility and is based on four categories of indicators: cohesion, economic, political, and social. In its annual 2019 report, the Fund for Peace concluded that democracies are under pressure (Fund for Peace, 2019). Two major shocks in the last 10 years have accelerated the trend. The 2008 financial crisis has led to a rise in populism, while the 2014 refugee crisis has led to xenophobia and anti-immigration sentiment. The third shock taking place since 2020 is the COVID-19 crisis.

Relevant indicators of the Fund for Peace for the purpose of this study are 'security apparatus', 'factionalized elites' and 'group grievance', which are all classified as cohesion indicators. The 'security apparatus' indicator considers security threats to the state, serious criminal factors and perceived trust of citizens in domestic security. The 'factionalized elites' indicator measures the fragmentation of state institutions along ethnic, class, clan, racial or religious lines, as well as brinkmanship and gridlock between ruling elites. It also factors in the use of nationalistic political rhetoric by ruling elites. The 'group grievance' indicator measures divisions and schisms between different groups in society, particularly based on social or political characteristics, and their role in access to services or resources and inclusion in the political process. It also considers whether specific groups are singled out by state authorities or whether there is public scapegoating of groups. The relevant data can be found in figure 4.4.¹⁶



Figure 4.4: Fund for Peace cohesion indicators

16 The underlying data can be found in Table 5.1 in the appendix to this chapter.

As is clear from figure 4.4, all three cases have seen a marked decline in the 'security apparatus' indicator (SA), especially in the last 5 years, which is an indication for the first hypothesis. This could very well be related to the rising national security threat in Sweden and Finland. For all three countries, the large influx of migrants in 2015-2016 may have led to feelings of insecurity rising, as is probably the case for the growing terrorism threat in this period. As for the 'factionalized elites' indicator (FE), the Netherlands and to a lesser extent Finland have worsened, while Sweden has remained stable. This could be an indication for horizontal undermining. On the other hand, 'group grievances' (GG) do not seem to be a major issue in the Nordic countries. The level of group grievances in the Netherlands is a lot higher, though it seems to have declined a bit in recent years.

All in all, the databases considered provide some additional evidence for both the statement that liberal democracy in the three countries studied is under pressure and for the three security and stability related challenges that may explain this pressure. In the next section, the results from both the literature review and the databases will be combined.

4.4 RESULTS

Based on the data, it can be concluded that liberal democracy is under pressure. Both V-Dem and IDEA show a decline on (most of) their indicators for all three countries involved and for the period studied (2000-2019). As we can learn from their reports, this pattern can be found in other Western liberal democracies as well.

As for the hypothesis that liberal democracy is put under pressure by three forms of undermining, based on a document analysis, section 4.2 concluded that the decline may be explained by the struggle by states to provide security in an era where the blurring of internal and external security leads to new security threats (vertical undermining), by the decline of social cohesion in society leading to unrest and instability (horizontal undermining), and by the undermining of liberal democracy by the state (state undermining).

To start with the first kind of undermining, the literature review has identified quite a few security threats in Europe in the 20-year time frame. Examples are the terrorist threat, the organized crime threat, the rise of irregular migration, the resurging national security threat following the annexation of Crimea by Russia, the Ukraine conflict and the rising cyberthreat. What all these threats have in common is that they cross borders. Some confirmation for this form of undermining can be found in the World Bank and Fund for Peace data as well. The World Bank data show a marked decline in political stability, which measures the likelihood of the government being overthrown by violent

means, including terrorism. Fund for Peace shows a marked decline in the 'security apparatus' indicator in all three countries, measuring security threats to the state, serious criminal factors and perceived trust of citizens in domestic security. Based on the IDEA and World Bank data, corruption seems to be a (albeit slowly) growing problem in all three countries. Europol has associated this with the growing influence of organized crime on (local) government.

As for the second kind of undermining, the literature review has shown that inequalities in European liberal democracies are rising and undermine social cohesion. Some groups in society feel increasingly socially marginalized, which can lead to identity politics, polarization, and the rise of populism. There are indications that foreign actors exacerbate this polarization to destabilize Western liberal democracies.

Recent years have seen outbursts of social unrest and the emergence of parallel societies in some cities, leading to situations of limited statehood. From the IDEA data it can be gathered that there has been a decline in representative government (Sweden and the Netherlands) and impartial administration (all three countries), indicating that part of the population might not feel represented or treated fairly by the government, which can be related to both horizontal and state undermining. In its report, IDEA points at economic and social problems leading to discontent in the population, polarization, and the rise of populism. Citizens are increasingly dissatisfied with the results that the democratic system delivers. The Fund for Peace data provide some additional evidence, although they are not completely consistent: while the 'factionalized elites' indicator shows a decline in Finland and the Netherlands, the 'group grievances' indicator does not show a marked decline in any of the countries. However, there is a significant difference between the Netherlands and the Nordic countries, the latter scoring better on this indicator.

As for the third form of undermining, undermining of liberal democracy by the state, the literature review shows that European governments have taken several measures that can be seen as undermining liberal democracy, for example in counterterrorism, COVID-19 measures, the move towards pre-emptive security and the rise of securitization, where all sorts of issues (for example migration) are formulated as a security threat. The databases provide evidence for this hypothesis. IDEA points at signs that the quality of high-performing democracies is eroding, especially those aspects related to civic space. It points out that civic space is shrinking because of government measures to combat terrorism, promote law and order and national security. Consequently, we see a decline in civil liberties in all three countries.

4.5 CONCLUSION

As shown in this chapter, liberal democracy in Northwestern Europe, however stable it is compared to other parts of the world, is under pressure, and both the literature and the relevant quantitative databases indicate that at least part of this pressure can be explained by three parallel but intertwining security and stability related challenges that constitute three categories of undermining.

The undermining of liberal democracy is perhaps not an acute crisis, but rather fits the pattern of a creeping crisis as defined by Boin, Ekengren and Rhinard:

A creeping crisis is a threat to widely shared societal values or life-sustaining systems that evolves over time and space, is foreshadowed by precursor events, subject to varying degrees of political and / or social attention, and impartially or insufficiently addressed by authorities (Boin et al., 2021, p. 3).

The key challenge for such a crisis is to generate enough political and societal attention so that this may lead to action (Boin et al., 2021). This dissertation aims to contribute to that process and generate options for the armed forces to foster the stability of liberal democracy.

In the next chapter, the empirical part of this dissertation will continue with the results of the first case study, the Netherlands.

APPENDIX: TABLE 4.1: DATA ON LIBERAL DEMOCRACY IN NORTHWESTERN EUROPE

	2000	2010	2019
Finland			
V-Dem LD Index	83	85	81
IDEA			
- Representative government	84	85	86
- Fundamental rights	92	93	90
- Civil liberties	90	90	81
- Checks on government	90	89	86
- Impartial administration	86	87	81
- Absence of corruption	80	80	79
World Bank			
- Political Stability	1,72	1,42	0,91
- Rule of Law	1,98	1,97	2,02
- Control of Corruption	2,44	2,16	2,15
Fund for Peace (2006)			
- Overall score	18,2	19,3	16,9
- Security apparatus	1,0	1,0	2,5
- Factionalized elites	1,0	1,0	1,4
- Group Grievances	1,0	1,2	1,2
The Netherlands			
V-Dem LD Index	82	81	78
IDEA			
- Representative government	85	87	85
- Fundamental rights	87	87	86
- Civil liberties	83	81	79
- Checks on government	88	91	90
- Impartial administration	87	88	85
- Absence of corruption	84	85	86
World Bank			
- Political Stability	1,76	0,94	0,86
- Rule of Law	1,77	1,82	1,81
- Control of Corruption	2,21	2,14	2,0
Fund for Peace (2006)			
- Overall score	28,1	27,9	24,8
- Security apparatus	1,0	1,1	2,1
- Factionalized elites	1,0	1,7	3,4
- Group Grievances	4,8	4,7	4,2
Sweden			
V-Dem LD Index	88	86	83
IDEA			

	2000	2010	2019
- Representative government	89	92	89
- Fundamental rights	96	96	90
- Civil liberties	88	89	85
- Checks on government	90	93	91
- Impartial administration	91	89	85
- Absence of corruption	93	92	83
World Bank			
- Political Stability	1,39	1,09	1,05
- Rule of Law	1,83	1,96	1,91
- Control of Corruption	2,3	2,27	2,12
Fund for Peace (2006)			
- Overall score	18,2	20,9	20,3
- Security apparatus	1,0	1,3	2,7
- Factionalized elites	1,0	1,3	1,8
- Group Grievances	1,0	1,3	1,7

NB: V-Dem and IDEA use a 0-1 scale, which I have adjusted to 0-100 for better readability. Higher values correspond to better scores. World Bank uses a -2,5 to +2,5 scale. Higher values correspond to better scores. Fund for Peace uses a 0-120 scale. Lower values correspond to better scores. The overall score is based on 12 items, only 3 of which are used in the table.



5

THE NETHERLANDS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

As shown in chapter 4, liberal democracy in Northwestern Europe, however stable it might be compared to other parts of the world, is under pressure. Both the academic literature and the relevant quantitative databases indicate that at least part of this pressure can be explained by three parallel but intertwining security and stability related challenges that can together be identified as three forms of ‘undermining’. These forms of undermining have in recent years led to the hybridization of the armed forces and the police, a process which is still taking place today. If this process continues, this can be expected to lead to a growing immersion of the military and civil domain. This immersion may enable governments to increase the stability of liberal democracy. At the same time, the risk of state undermining puts a limit to the degree of immersion that is conducive to a liberal democracy. Furthermore, as I have discussed in chapter 2, in civil-military relations theory the inherent norm in a liberal democracy is a model of separation of civil and military domains, with civilian control over the military.

These dynamics and their implications for civil-military relations will be studied empirically in the next three chapters. This chapter will focus on developments in the Netherlands. At first sight, a process of hybridization seems to be taking place in the Netherlands as well. In recent years, Army search teams have been used in counter-drugs operations and armed forces materiel has been used to, for instance, block and protect government locations against protesters. During the pandemic, the armed forces mainly supported civil authorities in health care by offering logistical support to hospitals and transferring patients to other hospitals. They also helped to build test facilities and supported the vaccination campaign. In the domain of law enforcement, military personnel have been used to restore public order and enforce lockdown measures on the Dutch Caribbean Island of Curaçao, and Marechaussee personnel have been involved in protecting vaccine depots as well as checking people at the border for negative testing or proof of vaccination. And recently, the armed forces were tasked to team up with the police to protect a court building in an organized crime trial (Ministerie van Defensie, 2022a; Ministerie van Justitie en Veiligheid, 2022).

The first part of this chapter contains a description of the Dutch armed forces, its tasks and legal framework, the relations between military and society, the current state of civil-military relations and civil-military cooperation in the Netherlands (section 5.2). Section 5.3 focuses on specific security challenges and threats in the Dutch context, in addition to the general analysis provided in chapter 4. In section 5.4, recent changes in the domestic role of the Dutch armed forces and explanations for these changes are explored. The second part of this chapter focuses on the future: what policy options

can be defined for a future domestic role of the armed forces (5.5) and what would implementation of these options mean for civil-military relations in the Netherlands (5.6)? Finally, section 5.7 analyzes the results of this chapter using civil-military relations theory. Together with the analysis sections of chapter 6 on Sweden and chapter 7 on Finland, it will provide the foundation for chapter 8 of this dissertation, the overall analysis of this research. The three individual analysis sections will focus on the undermining of liberal democracy and hybridization in the specific cases, policy options, and the impact on civil-military relations. Chapter 8 will provide a comparison between the three case studies and will answer the research question of this dissertation on how the armed forces can contribute to the stability of liberal democracy.

5.2 THE DUTCH ARMED FORCES

This section focuses on the Dutch armed forces, its tasks, the legal framework for their domestic use as well as civil-military relations and cooperation. In addition, this section contains a description of the position of the Dutch armed forces in society. This will set the baseline for future developments regarding the domestic role of the armed forces and civil-military relations.

The Dutch armed forces consist of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marechaussee. Including the supporting units (the Central Staff, the Joint Support Command, and the Command Materiel and IT) the Ministry of Defense has around 68.500 employees, including both military and civilian personnel. The budget in 2022 was around 12.5 billion euros (Ministerie van Defensie, 2022b). However, after the Russian invasion of Ukraine the government has announced a budget increase of around 5 billion euros per year. Consequently, in 2024 the Netherlands has met the NATO norm for the Defense budget (2% of GDP).

Tasks

The Dutch armed forces have three core tasks (Ministerie van Defensie, 2020):

1. Defense of national and allied territory, including the Caribbean parts of the Kingdom.
2. Promotion and protection of the international legal order and stability.
3. Support to the civil authorities (in all circumstances) in public order management, law enforcement, disaster- and crisis management, both nationally and internationally.

Within the organization, these tasks are commonly referred to as the first, second and third core task. Support to the civil authorities is based on several laws, and elaborate procedures must be followed to request this support. In addition, some specific domestic tasks have been allocated to the armed forces, for example explosives detection,

monitoring airspace and Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear defense (CBRN). All capabilities of the armed forces that are available for national operations are listed in the 'Catalogue National Operations' (Ministerie van Defensie, 2018).

The Marechaussee is a gendarmerie-type force (police organization with military status), which is part of the Ministry of Defense but performs most of its tasks under the authority of other ministries, mainly the Ministry of Justice and Security. The main tasks of the Marechaussee are border control, security and surveillance, and international and military police tasks.

The Marechaussee was created in 1814 and until the Second World War the organization was responsible for policing the countryside and main roads. In the first decades of the 20th century, the organization was also frequently used for public order management tasks in support of the local authorities. After the First World War however, the government decided to create another military police force (the 'Korps Politietroepen') for this task (Smeets & Hovens, 2022). After the Second World War the government decided to reform the police system and make it largely civilian. However, the police system was never completely demilitarized. The Marechaussee remained the police force for the armed forces and was additionally tasked with border control and support to the police. In the '60s, '70s and '80s, the Marechaussee frequently supported the police in public order management, in times of large demonstrations and rioting.

Some questioned the role of the Marechaussee and feared this would lead to a militarization of policing in the Netherlands. However, in 1988 the government decided to formally anchor the position of the Marechaussee in the Police Act. In 1994, the organization received additional tasks: policing the airports, the fight against cross border organized crime and mobile checks in the internal border areas (after implementation of the Schengen accords) (P. C. J. Neuteboom, 2017).

The position of the Marechaussee has not always been uncontroversial (Weger, 2006). Throughout the years, some have questioned the need for a military police organization in addition to the regular police. As part of a government-wide budget cut in 2010, the government evaluated the option to merge the Marechaussee with the national police, that was created at the time. However, it has decided to keep the Marechaussee as a separate organization. Arguments that were used to keep the Marechaussee emphasized the advantages of the gendarmerie model: the combination of military and police characteristics that facilitate a fast and flexible deployment, both nationally and internationally, in a higher spectrum of force and in aggravated circumstances (Rijksfinanciën, 2010).

Legal framework

The role of the Dutch armed forces is based on article 97 of the Constitution, which reads as follows:

Article 97

1. There shall be armed forces for the defense and protection of the interests of the Kingdom, and to maintain and promote the international legal order.
2. The Government shall have supreme authority over the armed forces (The Constitution of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, 2018)

The three core tasks of the Dutch armed forces are based on this article.

Domestic support to civil authorities for police tasks is based on the Police Act 2012 (Politiewet 2012, 2012). Four articles in this law are of particular relevance.

Article 4 sums up the police tasks of the Marechaussee in a limitative way. This concerns the structural police tasks of the Marechaussee. Depending on the task concerned, authority lies with the Public Prosecution Service (for criminal law enforcement), the local mayor (for public order management) or the Minister of Justice and Security (for security and surveillance). Article 57 outlines support by the Marechaussee to the police. Based on this article, the Minister of Justice and Security decides about such support, after consultation with the Minister of Defense.

Support to the civil authorities by other parts of the armed forces is dealt with in article 58 and 59 of the Police Law 2012. Article 58 states that 'in special circumstances' the armed forces can support the civil authorities. The Minister of Justice and Security makes this decision, in agreement with the Minister of Defense.

Article 59 forms the basis for the Special Intervention Service, a combined unit of police and military personnel. This special forces-unit consists of intervention and arrest teams and is used in cases of terrorism or the arrest of high-risk individuals, for which regular police personnel is inadequately trained and equipped.

Domestic support to civil authorities for non-police tasks is based on the 'Law for the Safety Regions' (article 51) and on a ministerial decree, the 'Ministerial decree for military support in the public interest' (Regeling Militaire Steunverlening in Het Openbaar Belang, 2014; Wet Veiligheidsregio's, 2010). This form of military support usually concerns disasters and crises for which the Safety Regions do not have sufficient manpower, means or expertise. Examples are the evacuation of citizens in case of flooding or firefighting in

a nature reserve (P. C. J. Neuteboom, 2017). The Law on the Safety Regions was recently evaluated, and the report concludes there are no specific points for improvement in the legal provisions concerning the armed forces (Evaluatiecommissie Wet veiligheidsregio's, 2020).

Military and society

Two important developments that have impacted the position of the armed forces in Dutch society since the end of the Cold War are the suspension of conscription and the downsizing of the armed forces. Conscription was suspended May 1st, 1997, which means that after that date, Dutch young men were no longer drafted for military service and the Dutch armed forces transformed into an all-volunteer force (Hoffenaar, 2017). Conscription has not been abolished altogether and since 1 January 2020 involves women as well.

As for downsizing, the Dutch armed forces were reduced from 103.000 troops in 1989 to 53.000 in 2005 (R. Moelker, Huiskamp, et al., 2015). This downsizing stemmed from the belief that a traditional war was unlikely, and the traditional task of the defense of the national and allied territory therefore deemed less important. The second and third core tasks, as described above, prevailed. One of the consequences of downsizing is the relative physical absence of the armed forces from large parts of the country, especially the western part, where most large cities are located. Larger barracks are usually found in the outskirts of the country.

Have the suspension of conscription and the downsizing of the armed forces led to a growing gap between the armed forces and society? Research shows that support for the Dutch armed forces has remained at a constant high level since 2017, around 7.1. The Dutch view the armed forces as an essential institution (7.6). At the same time, the level of pride in the armed forces as well as the appreciation of 'moral potential'. The level of appreciation for the three core tasks has also decreased; however, the third core task (7.5) is receiving greater support than the first (6.6) and second (6.8) (Konings & Van Der Grient, 2022). During the COVID-19 pandemic, when the armed forces provided extensive support to the civilian authorities, public support peaked at 7.7 (Siebelhoff & Fastenau, 2022). According to Van der Meulen, this means there is no significant civil-military gap in the Netherlands (Van der Meulen, 2017).

However, as Van der Meulen states, the acknowledgment of necessity is no guarantee for support of a specific mission. It does not lead to a higher budget, nor to more personnel. How people feel about the armed forces, does not say much about their knowledge of the armed forces and interest either (Van der Meulen, 2015). One of the questions in the

World Values Survey concerns the 'willingness to fight for your country'. The most recent survey shows that 46,7% of the Dutch are willing to do so, while 40,9% are not and 11,8% do not know. Compared with, for example, the Nordic countries (Denmark 74,6, Finland 74,8, Norway 87,6, and Sweden 80,5) this figure is remarkably low (Haerpfer et al., 2020).

Muller claims that there seems to be no resistance in Dutch society against a domestic role for the armed forces. He is of the opinion that a more intensive domestic role is desirable and even necessary from a legitimacy and visibility perspective (Muller, 2017; Muller, Bosch, et al., 2017).

Civil-military relations

Looking at the ideal types defined in chapter 2, the Netherlands, at first sight, matches the preferred model for a democratic regime, in which civil and military domains are separated and there is civilian supremacy over the military.

As described in the previous section, based on the Dutch Constitution the government has supreme authority over the armed forces. This means the domestic role of the armed forces takes place under civilian control. As Muller, Van Eekelen and Rosenthal describe, this does not mean that the military cannot influence government policies. They distinguish seven options (Muller, Eekelen, et al., 2017). The most important option is the amount of formal and informal meetings and contacts between the armed forces and the ministers and civil servants of the Ministry of Defense. A second option is the presence of ex-military personnel in political office, such as Minister or Member of Parliament. Thirdly, military personnel are allowed to be a member of a political party. Fourthly, armed forces personnel can unite in labor unions. Fifthly, ex-military personnel are involved in lobby activities concerning military procurement. Sixthly, ex-military personnel commonly speak out in the media. Seventhly, both current and ex-military personnel can influence policies through their involvement in higher education and scientific research.

Notwithstanding these options to influence policies, the Dutch armed forces are generally considered to be very loyal to the government and the Minister of Defense in particular. Some even suggest the armed forces should speak out more in public debate (Muller, Eekelen, et al., 2017; Van Vark, 2021).

Civilian control does not mean that the armed forces have no autonomous decision space whatsoever. While strategic decision-making takes place at the political level, operational matters are generally decided by the armed forces themselves. The crucial question then of course is how to distinguish between strategic and operational matters.

In the current culture at the Ministry of Defense, the tendency is to let most decision-making take place at the political level (Muller, Eekelen, et al., 2017).

Are civil and military spheres completely separated? No, this is certainly not the case in the Netherlands. As has been shown in the previous section, both the Marechaussee and the armed forces can fulfil police tasks, either in a structural way, or in support to the civil authorities. The mere existence of the Marechaussee, a gendarmerie-type force, can be seen as a form of hybridization, as described in chapter 3. In civil-military terms, this can be seen as a form of immersion. In describing the Dutch situation, some authors therefore talk about an incomplete or imperfect demilitarization of the police system (P. C. J. Neuteboom, 2017).

Civil-military cooperation

Civil-military cooperation in the case of crises and disasters usually takes place between the Safety Regions and the armed forces. There are 25 Safety Regions in the Netherlands in which municipalities, the fire department, Regional Medical Assistance Organizations and the police cooperate in cases of crises and disasters. The armed forces have 3 Regional Military Commanders (RMC) and 25 Regional Military Operational Advisors (RMOA's), one for each Safety Region. The RMOA is responsible for advising the civil authorities in their Safety Region and the RMC coordinates the military capabilities that can be used to support the civil authorities (Muller, 2017).

5.3 SECURITY CHALLENGES AND THREATS

In chapter 4, three security and stability related threats that undermine liberal democracy have been defined, namely (1) the blurring of internal and external security and the rise of new security threats, (2) declining social cohesion and the rise of social unrest and parallel societies and (3) undermining of liberal democracy by the state.

How do these challenges and threats play out specifically in the Netherlands? In 2022, the first 'Government-wide Risk Analysis' was published, produced by a network of analysts working for the government (Analistennetwerk Nationale Veiligheid, 2022). It identifies threats with a potential disruptive impact on the aforementioned national security interests: territorial, physical, economic, and ecological security, social and political stability and international legal order and stability. The analysis is based on an all-hazard approach, including both security and safety threats and both internal and external threats. A total of 60 scenarios have been identified, clustered into 9 themes. These have all been analyzed for probability, impact, and the combination of the two.

Looking at these themes, climate- and natural disasters stand out. Examples are scenarios of extreme weather such as heat/droughts, floods, hurricanes in the Caribbean parts of the Netherlands, and wildfires. Climate change is an important driver of these scenarios. A second high risk category concerns pandemics (for example, the flu, and COVID-19). As for economic threats, the Dutch dependence on other countries, not all of them considered friendly, stands out. These risks can become manifest in situations where there are shortages or tensions between actors. Influence operations by foreign actors and cyber threats are also considered high risk threats for the Netherlands. Other risks worth mentioning are possible instability of the EU and the Kingdom of the Netherlands, polarization in Dutch society, and a disturbance of vital infrastructure (such as an electricity black-out). This risk analysis has formed the basis for the first government-wide security strategy, which was published in 2023 (Nationaal Coördinator Terrorismebestrijding en Veiligheid, 2023).

Another relevant recent report, produced by the Dutch intelligence services (both civil and military) and the National Coordinator for Terrorism and Security) focuses on the threat posed by foreign state actors (Algemene Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst et al., 2022). It concludes that the threat posed by foreign state actors is growing and threatening national security interests. The report has four main conclusions. First, the territorial security of the EU, NATO and the Netherlands is increasingly under pressure, in particular because of the Russian war of aggression in Ukraine. Secondly, foreign state actors are continuously interfering with Dutch society. Examples are espionage and influence operations aiming to destabilize Dutch society. Some countries use 'long-arm tactics' to influence their diaspora population in the Netherlands. Thirdly, the Netherlands are increasingly confronted with threats against economic security. Vital processes remain vulnerable to sabotage attempts, strategic dependencies can be abused (for example, the European dependence on Russian gas), and foreign regimes attempt to steal advanced technology (China being the main culprit). Finally, the international legal order is increasingly under pressure from non-Western actors trying to destabilize the international system.

Social discontent is growing in the Netherlands. A recent report has focused on this trend, trying to identify the specific groups that are increasingly likely to 'drop out' of or 'disengage from' society (*afhaken*) (de Voogd & Cuperus, 2021). The report shows a strong correlation between disengagement and level of education and income, with citizens with a higher income and/or level of education being less likely to disengage. The report also shows differences between central and peripheral areas, but also between 'rich' and 'poor' neighborhoods in cities, growing and shrinking areas. Health is identified as an important factor as well, with people in bad health being more likely to disengage. The

report argues that people have not disengaged, but have been made to disengage, by societal changes, meritocratic norms and the disappearance of occupations and traditions. The result has been a growth of populist or outsider political parties, some of them holding extreme-right ideas.

As mentioned in chapter 4, the growth of undermining organized crime is a big problem in the Netherlands as well (Lam et al., 2018; Tops & Tromp, 2017; Tromp, 2015).

As for undermining by the state, chapter 4 has mentioned research by Van der Woude on counter-terrorism legislation and border control (Van der Woude, 2012; Van der Woude et al., 2016). Dutch migration policies, and particularly the treatment of asylum seekers, have received criticism by both NGO's and the Dutch Advisory Council on Migration (Adviesraad Migratie, 2022). The IDEA data presented in chapter 4 show a decline in almost all indicators, in particular civil liberties, and impartial administration. The decline in impartial administration could indicate that part of the population does not feel adequately represented or treated fairly, which could provide evidence for both horizontal and state undermining. The World Bank data show a sharp decline in political stability in the Netherlands, and Fund for Peace shows an increase in security threats to the state, a growing fragmentation of state institutions, and growing divisions and schisms between different groups in society.

Recent research by IDEA focuses on the impact of COVID-19 measures on democracy and human rights. As in other countries, measures were taken in the Netherlands that impacted civil liberties. Examples are restrictions on gatherings (such as keeping distance and showing a vaccination certificate, recovery certificate or negative test result), freedom of movement (including temporary curfews and lockdowns and the obligation to wear masks), and education. All in all, IDEA concludes that no pandemic violations of the Democratic Standards Index have taken place and classifies the Netherlands as low risk on the Pandemic Backsliding Index (Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2022).

These reports show signs for the three security challenges identified in chapter 4. How do the respondents for this case-study evaluate the challenges?

Most respondents recognize that the blurring of internal and external security leads to new security threats. Hybrid threats in general, cyber threats, organized crime, foreign influence operations and terrorism are mentioned.

Interestingly, one respondent questions the use of the word 'hybrid' in describing new threats, stating that *'personally I find 'hybrid' the most polluting word that the Defense department uses now. It implies that a clear distinction between threats has become impossible and therefore you can be made responsible for anything.'* (Respondent 20, civilian, executive organization)

In the Netherlands armed forces, cyber is considered the fifth domain, after Sea, Land, Air and Space. One respondent (respondent 33, military), however, considers this a wrong interpretation of reality, in which there is a physical sphere, and a virtual sphere, forming two parallel structures. Instead of considering cyber as the fifth domain and dedicating personnel to develop that domain, it would be logical to integrate cyber fully in the four existing domains.

Organized crime is considered a large and growing problem by many respondents. They point at the undermining potential of organized crime groups that are slowly spreading into neighborhoods where the government has pulled back to a certain extent. *'Government cutbacks from the last 20 years on social services, youth work, elderly care, public spaces have led to neighborhoods going downhill. Organized crime sees an opportunity to take over government tasks in these areas. ... As a government you will eventually lose grip over such a neighborhood.'* (Respondent 1, civilian, academic) And *'If people have the feeling that they are on their own, you should not be surprised when they start organizing themselves and creating their own law and order.'* (Respondent 47, civilian, academic) Respondents use the metaphor of a creeping process or a smoldering peat fire, slowly gaining in force. The ability of organized crime to undermine the constitutional state is demonstrated by acts such as the shooting of a lawyer, which deters other attorneys from taking up a suspect's case in an organized crime trial.

The link between organized crime and developments in society is clear: declining social cohesion and the rise of parallel societies provide opportunities for organized crime. Respondents from both local and national government authorities point out that specific groups that are dissatisfied with government policies increasingly find each other and unite in larger groups. In the Netherlands, this concerns, for example, critics of the COVID-19 government policies, farmers who fear losing their livelihood, spiritually inclined groups from well-to-do areas (with organizations such as *Moederhart* (Motherheart)) and extreme-right groups and sympathizers. Respondents worry about polarization: *'People end up sooner in places that are very extreme, left and right. In a liberal democracy you need a critical mass in the center, that is aiming for amelioration but not revolution. I see that opinions are becoming more extreme, and people are not just judging, but also condemning these days.'* (Respondent 2, military) Social media can be considered an ac-

celerator for these developments and as people increasingly end up in echo chambers on the internet it is more difficult to find dissenting opinions.

In general, some respondents emphasize that social cohesion is a precondition for stability: *'In the end, you can only keep stability in a country when there is something communal that everyone endorses. ... If personal interests are enlarged and put on central stage, you break that communal element. And that leads to destabilization. You see that in conflict areas as well.'* (Respondent 21, civilian, executive organization)

As this short overview shows, Dutch respondents recognize the first and second challenge to liberal democracy. The third challenge, the undermining of liberal democracy by the state, is mentioned a lot less, although some respondents do point at government policies and recent affairs (such as the childcare allowance affair and the earthquakes in the northern province of Groningen following decades of extracting gas) leading to declining trust in government. A few respondents mention that since the War on Terror western governments tend to emphasize and perhaps even exaggerate threats to liberal democracy, paving the way for an increase in their powers.

5.4 RECENT CHANGES IN THE DOMESTIC ROLE: EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

The Netherlands seems to have followed the trend of a growing domestic role of the armed forces. As for the third core task (the domestic role), until 2005 the armed forces were commonly referred to as a 'safety net', a 'last resort' that could be called upon in case all civilian options had been exhausted. In 2005, the government announced in a letter to Parliament that the armed forces would be transformed from 'safety net' to 'structural security partner', which implied a larger domestic role (Ministers van Defensie en van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2005). The letter states that the domestic role of the armed forces is transformed from a quantitative to a qualitative contribution. As stated in the letter, the knowledge, skills and means acquired abroad can be valuable in the Netherlands in the fight against terrorism and disasters.

A second letter to Parliament in 2006 further specified these measures (Ministers van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties en van Defensie, 2006). The biggest change announced was the guaranteed availability of specialist capabilities (4600 military personnel) under civilian control, that was deemed necessary to deal with new threats arising from the blurring of internal and external security. With these capabilities, the armed forces would be able to support civilian authorities in, for example, public order

management, security, and surveillance (with personnel or materiel, including drones), border control, protection of harbors, explosives detection and disaster management. Furthermore, three Regional Military Commanders would coordinate cooperation with civilian authorities, assisted by 25 military advisors that would be posted in the 25 Safety Regions.

To what extent has this transformation taken place in practice? For the respondents, the transformation from 'safety net' to 'structural partner' entails a move from a reactive to a proactive stance, from a quantitative to a qualitative contribution and from incident driven to strategy driven. They paint a mixed picture of this transformation. Some claim that the armed forces are better integrated in the Safety Regions, that civilian authorities are more open to cooperation with the armed forces, and that they see growth in the support of law enforcement. In the words of one respondent: *'Yes, I believe so. ... Since a year, a year and a half there has been some sort of breakthrough, that civilian authorities admit that they can't handle crises above regional level themselves and that they need the armed forces as a partner.'* (Respondent 14, military, national government)

There is some research to support these statements. A report written in 2017 concludes that support to the civilian authorities has grown since 2009. This growth can mainly be seen in criminal investigations (and much less in public order management), for example the use of advanced search teams (Army), divers (Navy), military trackers (Marines) or intelligence capabilities for observations and analysis (Bervoets, 2017; Bervoets & Eijgenraam, 2018).

Others think that in practice not much has changed: the armed forces are still used as a last resort, incident driven, and acceptance by the civilian authorities is limited. *'It's not stable, but it moves marginally within a bandwidth. The whole performance in the COVID crisis, with all due respect, only concerns a few people that already did that job. When you talk about the use of the armed forces for law enforcement, I don't see much change.'* (Respondent 2, military). Neuteboom and Hovens have concluded that the hybridization of the armed forces and the police has thus far been quite limited, although this may change because of the blurring of internal and external security and the growing threat of violent organized crime (P. Neuteboom, 2015; P. Neuteboom & Hovens, 2018).

The most recent letter to Parliament concerning civil-military relations seems to confirm this point of view (Ministers van Justitie en Veiligheid en van Defensie, 2020). Reading this letter leaves the impression that not much has in fact changed since 2006, at least not on the strategic level. The same words as in 2005 and 2006 are used, and the description of the changes since then is not convincing. The letter states that the domestic

role of the armed forces has grown since 2006 and points out its unique capabilities and sustainability. It confirms that the armed forces are a 'structural security partner' and that partners experience a growing willingness to accept this. Some initiatives are announced to explore a possible contribution of the armed forces in security and surveillance and the fight against organized crime. Bos arrives at the same conclusion, stating that the letter does nothing more than confirm the 2006 agreement (Bos, 2020). Two recent letters to Parliament confirm some development in the areas of security and surveillance and the fight against organized crime, but these can be considered marginal steps (Ministerie van Justitie en Veiligheid, 2020, 2022).

How can this be explained? When respondents were asked what factors influence the domestic role of the armed forces in the Netherlands, three main factors stand out, namely perception and framing, mixed attitudes on both sides and the growing distance between the armed forces and society.

Factor 1: Perception and framing

A very strong metaphor used to describe the domestic role of the armed forces in the Netherlands is that of 'green on the streets', which in the Dutch context has a negative connotation. *'Green on the streets always leads to debate in our country, more than in other countries. I think the Dutch don't want the state to impose things. ... And the armed forces are an instrument of power, an instrument of the state.'* (Respondent 27, military) In this frame, the armed forces are seen as an instrument of violence, aggressive and masculine. *'...because a domestic role seems farther away when people believe that masculinity is always true. Because then they associate the soldier with violence and then there will always be a certain hesitation to use the armed forces for tasks in which we could perfectly support.'* (Respondent 32, military)

Using the armed forces in a domestic context, especially in a visible role such as public order management, could lead to escalation instead of de-escalation and would convey the image to the public that civilian authorities have lost control. One respondent states: *'You must be careful with the image you convey. The use of the armed forces may give the impression that the police have lost control.'* (Respondent 20, civilian, executive organization)

Some think this metaphor of 'green on the streets' is slowly losing ground in the Netherlands due to the changing security threats, but they constitute an exception in the group of respondents interviewed. One of them states, *'There is some sensitivity with local authorities that say they don't want to see green soldiers in their streets. ... I do notice that with the rising threat level the borders are becoming increasingly blurred; there is more political-*

administrative willingness to accept that on some occasions there is no other alternative than to show your strength by using the military.' (Respondent 22, civilian, executive organization)

Another metaphor commonly used to describe the domestic role of the armed forces is that of the 'toolbox'. In the words of Bos, this makes the armed forces a supplier and the civilian authorities the customer. This image does not correspond with that of a structural security partner (Bos, 2020). The existence of a catalogue for civil-military cooperation strengthens that image of a toolbox. In the words of one respondent, *'A catalogue projects the image that you can order from it. That has never worked well in the past and it's not necessary now. The military liaisons know exactly what the organization has to offer and then you don't need such a catalogue.'* (Respondent 23, civilian, executive organization)

A complicating issue with using a catalogue is that the average civilian does not know what military capabilities can be used for. In the words of a local mayor, *'But I don't know what you can or cannot do with a tank. The fact that they said we want to help with the analysis of the problem and with that we can perhaps also contribute to a solution, that was a real revelation for me. And I think the armed forces can play an important role in that way.'* (Respondent 5, civilian, local government)

Another respondent points out that the armed forces choose to be in a safe position if they stick to the catalogue: *'It is a safe position, when you say we do our best to deliver if they ask us something, you can never be judged for it. Yes, I picked up the phone and did my best to arrange something, but all capabilities were abroad. That's a very safe position.'* (Respondent 14, military, national government)

The metaphors of 'green on the streets' and the 'toolbox' complicate the transformation of the armed forces to a structural security partner. According to one respondent, the addition of the word 'structural' is already an indication that the armed forces are seen as something special in the security domain: *'How should we understand this word 'structural'? ... It implies that the armed forces are a special structural partner, but of course that is not true. In my world of the Safety Regions, all partners are structural partners. ... There is something strange in that word 'structural'. The question is whether you need that word. I don't think you do.'* (Respondent 49, civilian, academic)

And if the armed forces have the ambition to be a 'structural partner', that has consequences: *'The armed forces say they want to be a structural partner in national security. That means you don't wait, like in the beginning of civil-military cooperation, from a perspective of 'your wish is my command'. That is a reactive position. If you have the ambition to be a*

structural partner in security, you choose a proactive position.' (Respondent 22, civilian, executive organization)

Factor 2: Mixed attitudes

Both the armed forces and the civilian authorities have mixed attitudes concerning the domestic role of the armed forces. As mentioned before, the Dutch armed forces have three core tasks. The third core task is the domestic role and in the words of many respondents, this third task gets third priority, something that should not distract the armed forces from their 'real' task, the first core task (defense of national and allied territory). *'It's not as if we have so much capacity. What if we use part of the Army for those tasks and we get a mission abroad? We won't have any personnel left. In addition, I believe that part of those tasks is educational, but in the end the core task of a soldier is to kill people and destroy things. If you work for example 5 years in law enforcement in the Netherlands, that makes you less capable for your real job.'* (Respondent 29, military). Another respondent confirms: *'Within the armed forces it's not viewed as a full task. We train for core task 1...we say all core tasks are just as important, but of course we secretly say it's first, second and third priority.'* (Respondent 35, military) Bos confirms this informal prioritization in a recent article as well (Bos, 2020). This attitude may lead to shirking by the armed forces in offering support to civilian authorities and a recent analysis points at some examples during the COVID-19 pandemic (Zijdeveld & Van Vark, 2025).

This prioritization is not without consequences in civil-military cooperation, as one respondent explains, *'At the armed forces, core task 3 people were usually non-commissioned officers or specialists. Real career officers shouldn't go to core task 3, then you were a loser. ... But if you want to work with the civilian domain, they are not stupid you know, you must send people of a certain quality. You can professionalize, so that you become a full partner in discussions.'* (Respondent 36, military)

Some however blame the civilian side for problems in civil-military cooperation: *'My analysis is that the civilian domain is still not organized well. If you can't work with your next-door neighbor, you don't go and ask your neighbor from three blocks down.'* (Respondent 39, military)

On the civilian side, they find it hard to build relations with armed forces personnel, who switch jobs much faster than their civilian counterparts and do not integrate well. *'And what I notice in my network is that the armed forces are very much inward-looking. In other ministries the culture is a bit more open. They know each other well. The armed forces are really a bastion, it's very hard to get in.'* (Respondent 43, military, working in the civilian domain) In addition, they fear budgetary competition from the armed forces and loss of authority

in the eyes of the public. *'Competition, fear, every euro that goes to the armed forces, doesn't go to the police or fire department.'* (Respondent 14, civilian, national government)

Some say the armed forces could be more proactive in offering capabilities: *'I think the armed forces can offer capabilities much faster than is the case now. That even today the training program gets prioritized instead of the needs of society. That they are very reluctant in offering capabilities because performing tasks in society is seen as a threat for the upkeep of skills and readiness.'* (Respondent 21, civilian, executive organization)

Others speak about the 'military mindset', claiming that military personnel are too dominant, find it difficult to accept civilian control and have difficulty in de-escalating in contacts with the population. *'Military personnel are trained to step forward and act, not to step backward and start a conversation.'* (Respondent 15, civilian, national government)

Military respondents with experience in cooperation with the civilian domain recognize this as well: *'Sometimes it's as if the armed forces feel treated unfairly when they operate under civilian authority. Even in the COVID-19 crisis I know that has happened. They tend to say, proclaim a state of emergency. ...The armed forces are reluctant in offering help unless they stay in control.'* (Respondent 24, military). And another respondent, *'The culture is completely different. At the Safety Regions they coordinate and consult. We call that command and control. If you bring that mindset to the table, you really are the odd one out.'* (Respondent 31, military)

Yet others, from both the civilian and the military domain, state that this is just an example of resistance, as military personnel would also prefer to take a step back, and the police can shoot when it is necessary. *'..., the police work context dependent as well. We shoot too when we must. But our starting point is that we act in peace time in a liberal democracy, knowing that we must play by the rules. And I think in a time of war there are less rules.'* (Respondent 19, civilian, executive organization) And a respondent on the military side: *'We train our people to deal with that situationally and violence is our last resort. ... I think that contrast isn't there. I think most of us don't want to throw the first punch.'* (Respondent 32, military)

Some respondents are of the opinion that the armed forces should be used only as last resort: *'I prefer the analogy of the soccer team. The armed forces are all the way in the back, even behind the goal. The defensive line is that of the police, special investigators, etc. Mid-field are organizations such as schools and businesses that have different goals than security but are still relevant. Those organizations should feel the backup of the police, etc. And at the*

forefront are the civilians. ... So, I do understand that the armed forces maintain relations towards the forefront, but you don't go and play soccer there.' (Respondent 46, academic)

Factor 3: Distance between the armed forces and society

A third factor influencing the domestic role of the armed forces is the distance between the armed forces and society. As mentioned before, on the separation versus immersion dilemma, the Netherlands have for a long-time preferred separation between the armed forces and society. For some respondents, this has caused a disconnect between the armed forces and society, which has deepened after conscription was suspended in 1997: *'...the natural entanglement of the armed forces with society has been lost since the suspension of conscription. The armed forces have mainly shown themselves on the international stage, while pulling back in their own barracks and training grounds back home.'* (Respondent 15, military, national government)

Some believe this has led to a disconnect between the armed forces and society, which is seen as problematic, as it may lead to an erosion of support for the armed forces. *'It's very important that you make sure the armed forces are integrated in society and remain part of society. I think we must stay alert and must keep explaining who we are, what we do and why we do it.'* (Respondent 26, military) And another respondent: *'Something changed in the position of the armed forces. After the Second World War we still had barracks in the cities, but with the reorganizations they have largely been sold. That has caused a disconnect between society and the armed forces. We have pulled back at the Hoge Veluwe, behind the trees. You must create and cherish proximity; it helps in creating support and understanding. You need blending with the civil sector.'* (Respondent 36, military)

Other respondents think the opposite is true. One respondent is of the opinion that the suspension of conscription has not caused a disconnect between the military and society, but on the other hand has normalized the armed forces as part of society: *'Well, I think perhaps the military has become more of a part of normal society. I don't know if that is related to the suspension of conscription. Conscription was defining the image of the armed forces.'* (Respondent 24, military)

This section has shown that although a changing (and larger) domestic role of the armed forces in the Netherlands is announced in government documents, and is visible in practice as well, change is slow. Reasons for this can be found in persisting metaphors and frames, mixed attitudes on both sides and the growing distance between the armed forces and society.

One exception is the Marechaussee. As mentioned before, the Marechaussee is a gendarmerie-type organization, a police organization with military status that is part of the Ministry of Defense but performs most of its tasks for civilian authorities such as the Ministry of Justice and Security. In terms of civil-military relations, the very existence of the Marechaussee is a form of immersion. As in other countries with a gendarmerie-type force, the blurring of internal and external security has led to a growth of the Marechaussee, even in times where the other parts of the armed forces have suffered large cutbacks.

Table 5.1: Marechaussee personnel

	2010	2015	2021
Military	5.490	5.649	6.606
Civilian	565	494	954
Total	6.055	6.143	7.560

As can be seen in table 5.1, the organization has grown particularly fast between 2015 and 2021 (Kamerstukken II 2010/11; 32500 X; nr. 4, 2010; Kamerstukken II 2015/16; 34300 X; nr. 17, 2016; Kamerstukken II 2021/22; 35925 X; nr. 4, 2021). This growth mainly concerns the area of high-risk security and surveillance due to the rising terrorist threat in this period. The Marechaussee supports the police, based on article 57 Police Law 2012. As this support was given a semi-permanent character, the Marechaussee set up a new unit for high-risk security mainly focusing on object security. With the rising threat of organized crime, including the murder of both a lawyer and a journalist (Peter R. de Vries), the Marechaussee additionally developed extra capabilities for personal security. Up to recently, these tasks were still carried out in support of the police. However, with a recent change in the Police Law, high-risk security has become a legal task for the Marechaussee. This means the Marechaussee can be tasked directly with high-risk security activities (Marechaussee, 2022). Recently, the Marechaussee has also received extra personnel for the fight against organized crime.

Most respondents are positive about using the Marechaussee for high-risk security and surveillance. In the words of one respondent from the local level, *'I'm positive about the current division of work, because in well-argued and exceptional cases you can use the Marechaussee and leave the heavy weaponry with military personnel. I do find that in-between form better, because if you say that it must be police, then I'm afraid there will soon be a request to give the police automatic weapons and if you start doing that, it's a slippery slope. Before you know it, you will have American-type police and then you have two armed organizations in your city.'* (Respondent 10, civilian, local government) Another respondent confirms, *'Yes, the beautiful thing is that we have military personnel dressed in blue. They are robust and have more charisma than the police, but it doesn't feel like it's*

the military. I find that a perfect in-between type of organization, that is very effective and needed.' (Respondent 27, military)

Gendarmerie-type forces have the advantage of providing an extra step on the escalation ladder while still being under civilian control: *'That's the strength of gendarmeries, you must be able to operate with force, but under civilian control. If you don't have it, you must choose between too weak civilian police performance that is overrun quickly or the armed forces. But if you don't embed it well, you are in big trouble. They will demand an operational autonomy that you can't keep under control well.'* (Respondent 47, academic)

However, growth of the Marechaussee is generally not seen as growth of the armed forces: *'If you look at the toolbox of instruments the government has at its disposal, it won't classify our performance as using the armed forces.'* (Respondent 2, military)

As was evident in the literature discussed in chapter 2 as well, not everyone is convinced of the usefulness of the Marechaussee. Some believe that institutional interests led to a growing role: *'Look, the role of the Marechaussee. Those tasks must be done by someone; that they are done by the Marechaussee is because of opportunistic arguments used at the time. Everyone is happy now, but if you would design it again, border control could have gone to Customs just as well.'* (Respondent 28, military) And another military respondent: *'The Marechaussee played that game well, they are the only part of the armed forces that has grown. If you are situated in a border area, you can always profit either on the left bank or on the right bank.'* (Respondent 36, military)

In the words of another respondent, responsiveness of the Marechaussee may have played a role in awarding the organization with extra tasks: *'For me, it has only partly to do with the threat and how it is appreciated. For example, with the high-risk security units, that is seen as a threat for which you need something that can both bark and bite. But to be honest, I think it has mainly to do with the responsiveness of the Marechaussee, both in governance and organization, that we can create a solution in a fast way. So, I don't think there is a fundamental debate underneath. They find it an okay solution, but the persuasive power to choose that solution is based on how fast we can effectuate it.'* (Respondent 12, military)

Having investigated how the domestic role of the armed forces in the Netherlands has changed in both theory and practice in the past 20 years, the next section will explore possibilities for a future role.

5.5 POLICY OPTIONS FOR A CHANGING DOMESTIC ROLE

This section will explore policy options for a changing domestic role of the armed forces as well as define criteria for this role. Respondents acknowledge the changing threat environment and mention many possibilities for the armed forces to contribute to dealing with these threats. During the interviews, some of these policy options were brought up by the respondents themselves. In other cases, the respondents were asked for their thoughts on certain policy options. For each policy option, both descriptive elements (what domain and what task does the policy option entail) and normative elements (why, or why not the armed forces should have a role, and under what conditions) have been discussed. The interviews resulted in 8 specific policy options for the domestic role of the armed forces in the future that will be summarized below. In the appendix to this chapter, the policy options are summarized in table 5.2.

Conscription

Regarding conscription, some respondents see a possible role for the armed forces in the event that social conscription would be implemented in the Netherlands. Young people could be allowed to choose between, for example, the armed forces, police, care homes, etc. A different option would be to organize special programs for young people that could benefit from the structure and discipline offered by the armed forces and/or learn a profession and gain work experience there. *'I believe the armed forces have an enormous asset to give people pride, a future, ..., a sense of community and discipline.'* (Respondent 6, civilian, local government) In fact, on a small basis these programs already exist. The 'School for the Nation' argument is mentioned by some respondents, who claim the armed forces can help integrate young people in society and foster social cohesion.

Others are of the opinion that this purpose is too far-fetched from the core business of the armed forces. In any case, the 'School for the Nation' argument would only work in case of large numbers. *'The armed forces as big equalizer, I don't believe in that. It's a feudal rank-based organization where order, authority, and hierarchy play an important role. That's the armed forces for me.'* (Respondent 10, civilian, local government)

Public order management

In the area of public order management, the most far-reaching option would be the use of military personnel on the streets, for example in case of large-scale public unrest and when the police are overburdened. A large majority of respondents does not see this as a preferred option. It might lead to escalation and would be intimidating for the population. Others emphasize that the monopoly on violence in peace time should rest with the police.

A less invasive option would be the use of military materiel, for example heavy materiel to block an area or the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) for surveillance of an area. *'What we can do is support crowd management with observation, with UAV's. Also, the use of counter drone capabilities like on King's Day.'* (Respondent 30, military) A good example of the use of military materiel were the farmer's protests in the Netherlands in 2021: *'An interesting case is the closure of the city center of Den Haag at the farmer's protests. At the beginning, a private company had been hired to do that with trucks... So, they were there from 5 AM and at 5.30 the owner had already received 6 not so friendly phone calls stating what the protesters intended to do with his trucks. So, he left at 9 AM and then they asked us to come. ... Next time we were there blocking the area with green trucks.'* (Respondent 35, military)

An even less invasive option would be to give the armed forces an advisory role in logistics, such as the most logical route to organize a certain protest in a city. *'I do believe that in demonstrations you shouldn't immediately arrive with tanks. You could think of another role, a critical review of the logistical preparations of the police, for example, or the design of the city, if that is the most optimal, or choice of location.'* (Respondent 5, civilian, local government)

The respondents name quite a few preconditions for this policy option. In the opinion of most, no violence should be used against the population. The military should only be used for public order management in exceptional cases (last resort) and under civilian command, and military personnel should preferably be wearing a police uniform and working in teams of military and police.

Fight against organized crime

With respect to the fight against organized crime, respondents emphasize the use of specific expertise, such as search teams or arrest teams: *'In the south, you can see that in the search for drugs labs, the armed forces in Afghanistan gained a lot of expertise in search. It was aimed at explosives there, but you can use that expertise to search for drugs labs and that's what they are used for.'* (Respondent 8, civilian, local government)

As the fight against organized crime is a national task, local authorities—who ordinarily would be hesitant to have military personnel on their streets—are more receptive to the use of the armed forces. Other relevant aspects are the fact that organized crime tends to use a high level of violence, and the expertise of the armed forces is complementary to that of the police. The military could profit as well since the use of search capabilities in support of the police is real life training for them. A minority of respondents was more skeptical, stating that criminal investigations are a police task. In their opinion, if the

armed forces have specific expertise that is needed, then the police should develop this expertise themselves.

As for preconditions, respondents stated that the use of the armed forces should always be in support of the police and that no integration of police and military capabilities should take place.

Cyber domain

The cyber domain is seen as a promising and relatively uncontroversial area for the domestic role of the armed forces. Many respondents suggest combining capabilities of the military and civilian organizations. They state that the cyber domain is borderless, so the fight against cyber threats should be borderless as well. In addition, it's quite difficult to distinguish between cybercrime and cyberwar. In the words of one respondent, *'Why would the armed forces protect the harbor of Rotterdam in case of a physical attack and not in case of a cyber-attack?'* (Respondent 3, civilian, executive organization). Finally, personnel for this line of work are scarce and hard to find.

Respondents do point out that there may be legal obstacles, for example in sharing information that must be dealt with.

Crisis management

Crisis management seems to be the least controversial domain when talking about a domestic role for the armed forces. It is in fact a domain in which the armed forces have traditionally been active already. Some respondents suggest giving the armed forces a larger role in planning, although others say the civilian domain has developed these capabilities as well. Some suggest looking at structural tasks for the armed forces in this domain instead of the armed forces only being called in to fill certain gaps.

As a precondition, respondents suggest that the support should be long-term when needed as the armed forces tend to leave too soon. In the words of one respondent from the civilian domain, *'The armed forces can supply a lot of people on short notice. The question then always is for how long. You see that with the COVID test locations now. They say in four weeks you must take over from us. Well, where am I supposed to find the people for that? You build an XL test location with 300 soldiers and in four weeks you leave again!'* (Respondent 23, civilian, executive organization)

Security and surveillance

In security and surveillance, we can distinguish between object security and personal security. This policy option has both a quantitative and a qualitative aspect. On the

quantitative side, unfortunately the number of people that must be protected is rising and the police has difficulty coping. On the qualitative side, the level of violence is rising and some plead for a layered use of police, Marechaussee and the rest of the armed forces, depending on the level of violence. Respondents from the civilian side are quite positive about this as it could prevent a militarization of the police. In the words of one respondent, *'I don't think the police should be able to cover the whole spectrum of violence. The police should focus on crimefighting and law enforcement. Security and surveillance and arrests in a higher spectrum of force can be done by others. Of course, these are police tasks, but they are very specific police tasks. We have a different group of people in the Netherlands for that, so we should use them.'* (Respondent 21, civilian, executive organization)

Some respondents are more critical, stating that the monopoly on violence in peace time should rest with the police and that security and surveillance is a police task: *'In peacetime, the monopoly on violence should rest with the police. That is a matter of principle. ... But I don't object against investigating how the armed forces can support the police and cooperate. ... I believe we can intensify our cooperation; we are no enemies of each other.'* (Respondent 19, civilian, executive organization)

As for preconditions, some respondents prefer the use of armed forces personnel for object security rather than for personal security. In case of using them for personal security, some prefer that the armed forces wear a police uniform.

As we have seen in chapter 4, there are recent developments in this domain. In 2022, the Dutch armed forces and the police teamed up to guard an Amsterdam court building in a high-profile crime trial (Ministerie van Defensie, 2022a).

Intelligence

In the area of intelligence, the first topic that comes up with respondents is air surveillance capabilities that can be used for surveillance and search. An example is the Joint Strike Fighter, or UAVs such as the Reaper. Many respondents suggest that pooling such expensive and scarce resources and using them for multiple purposes is efficient. In the words of a military respondent working for a civilian organization, *'You should look for a win-win situation. Take for example UAVs - we will buy those Reapers. They are meant to observe the enemy in Afghanistan, well, as Director of the Coast Guard I can use those as well!'* (Respondent 38, military)

Respondents working in the domain of intelligence also talk about the difference between military and police intelligence procedures and mindset. The police tend to look inside-out (from a crime scene), while the military tends to look outside in. This can be

complementary. However, there are legal obstacles that prevent combining intelligence capabilities that would have to be overcome first.

In general, this domain seems to be less controversial than for example public order management, as it is a less visible role. On the other hand, when during the COVID-19 pandemic the Army created an experimental intelligence unit to monitor developments in the population, this led to a significant incident and the unit was shut down.

Expert support

A final domain mentioned by respondents concerns expert support in all kinds of areas, for example explosive detection, CBRN, divers and logistics. Arguments used mainly concern efficiency and these tasks are not controversial.

As one respondent from the police says, 'Yes, I think you should use each other's expertise. It would be nonsense for me to train diver teams if I can also just make a call to the armed forces. It's nonsense that we would have to train all these specialists ourselves. I have long discussions with my labor unions about explosives and then I say, just go talk to the armed forces. Why would I train them myself? That's another 10 cops, that really doesn't make sense.' (Respondent 19, civilian, executive organization)

Conclusion

As is clear from the above, respondents see many possibilities for a future domestic role of the armed forces, particularly in national tasks (under national authority), in large-scale operations, in a higher spectrum of force and for tasks in the grey zone between war and peace (cyber operations stand out in this respect). Proponents of a larger domestic role list arguments of capacity (police can be overburdened, certain capacities are scarce, for example in cyber), efficiency (pooling of resources), unique expertise of the armed forces (for example search, logistics, air surveillance). They also emphasize that in using the armed forces for tasks in a higher spectrum of force, the militarization of the police can be prevented. Layering (with the police as first layer, Marechaussee as second and armed forces as third) can help in this respect.

On the more critical side, respondents emphasize that the monopoly on violence in peace time should rest with the police, the armed forces should preferably not be used for police tasks and certainly not against their own population. When used in a domestic context, the armed forces should always be under civilian command, should team up with civilian personnel and should not wear military uniforms.

Almost all respondents are reluctant to use armed forces personnel in public order management in a visible way, especially when there is a risk of force against the population. This does not mean the armed forces cannot be used in public order management at all. The use of materiel (air surveillance, heavy materiel to block areas) is a lot less controversial, as well as the use of personnel in an advisory role (such as logistics).

The strengths of both the police and the armed forces could be combined in a complementary way, based on a comprehensive approach. However, the respondents feel that combining the two groups into a single security organization is a step too far.

After this exploration of policy options for the future domestic role of the armed forces, the next section will explore the impact on civil-military relations.

5.6 IMPACT ON CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

As shown in this chapter, in terms of civil-military relations, the Netherlands prefer the model of separation, in which the military and civil domain are separated and there is civilian control over the military. At the same time, signs of immersion are visible. These signs and the trends will be described in this section, focusing on four domains: society, public administration and strategy, law, and performance.

Immersion in society

As has been shown, respondents talk about a growing disconnect between the armed forces and society in the Netherlands, which has exacerbated after the suspension of conscription. The armed forces have vanished from view and, consequently, also from the minds of many people. According to one respondent, the armed forces have become a concealed reality, while they should be a self-evident certainty: *'In this world we live in, with growing uncertainty for people, the armed forces and gendarmeries are an implicit certainty. A form of stability and continuity and certainty which you don't speak about because it's always there. Until it's gone. Then a crisis is just around the corner. In a democratic society, the armed forces can be a self-evident certainty.'* (Respondent 47, academic)

There are many ways to increase the visibility of the armed forces in society, some small (for example, wearing a uniform while travelling to work, which was forbidden in the Netherlands for a few years after the terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels, or opening barracks to the public), some bigger (for example, social conscription, where the armed forces could be one of the organizations where young people can serve). In the words of one respondent, *'The suspension of conscription, which I find to be one of the bigger decisions*

that have led to a growing disconnect between the armed forces and society, is a decision you cannot easily undo, but that deserves reflection to see if reinstatement would make the social contract between the armed forces and society stronger...a form of social conscription, like they have in Germany. It will result in a more natural link with the organizations that matter in society and it would also show that defending values is something all of us have a responsibility in, not just the armed forces.’ (Respondent 15, civilian, national government)

Immersion in public administration and government strategy

This form of immersion refers to respondents stating that the armed forces are too absent in public administration, are seen as an inward-looking bastion, switch jobs too fast, and are seen as too reactive. Ways to deal with this would be to exchange personnel with civilian organizations in the security domain, to professionalize in building relationships with civilian partners and to be more proactive in offering a contribution to civilian authorities.

Some respondents propose that the armed forces increase their ‘professional visibility’, meaning that they participate in public debate. This could lead to a better understanding and appreciation of the armed forces with civilian authorities and the population and consequently also increase public support. *‘In my opinion, you must be more present as the armed forces. We don’t talk about our profession and the way we look at the world. We believe that everyone must understand there is a threat and what constitutes that threat. One role of the armed forces is just to be there, not on the streets I mean, but to speak out, and this means more than marketing. ... In my opinion, our place at the table is too small to be able to contribute. (Respondent 2, military)*

As for government strategy, the Netherlands up until very recently has not had a comprehensive security strategy, including both national and international security, as was recommended by a government think tank in 2017 (Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid, 2017). The last government, however, established a National Security Council, which has produced such a comprehensive security strategy, based on the Government-wide Risk Analysis discussed in section 5.3 (Nationaal Coördinator Terrorismebestrijding en Veiligheid, 2023).

Immersion in performance

This form of immersion has to do with tasks performed by the armed forces in support of civil authorities. As shown in this chapter, although developments are slow, there are examples of the armed forces supporting the civil authorities. As shown in section 5.5, there are many options for a larger domestic role of the armed forces, also in tasks that have traditionally been seen as police tasks, such as criminal investigations. With their specialist capabilities, the armed forces could support the civil authorities in various

domains, especially in national tasks, large-scale operations, in the higher spectrum of violence and in the grey zone between police and military tasks. The armed forces and the police could train together, exchange personnel and cooperate in teams.

In fact, the only area where a domestic role is considered controversial is public order management, especially in the visible role of personnel on the streets. In addition to the substantive arguments against such a role, having 'green in the streets' has some influence as well.

A model that could describe the future domestic role of the armed forces is that of a comprehensive approach, as it is known from stabilization operations in post-conflict areas: *'The opponent doesn't know borders between countries, but also not between organizations. They do what they find important, and our answer shouldn't be stove piped. We must use a comprehensive approach.'* (Respondent 26, military) Others speak about a whole of government approach or about ecosystems. In the words of one respondent, *'Security is not purely military. By looking at security challenges in a modern way you come to new solutions. ... Aren't there any new forms of organizing other than the stovepipes of government ministries and how do you get people ready to embrace new constructs if the security challenges require it? You shouldn't be afraid not to be autonomous anymore.'* (Respondent 16, military, national government)

Immersion in law

In the current situation, the use of the armed forces in a domestic context is based on art. 97 of the Constitution, as explained in section 5.3. Some respondents have stated this is a rather vague description and have suggested amendments: *'...I think it would be good to review art. 97 of the Constitution, because the domestic use of the armed forces is based on a rather vague sentence in that article, the defense and protection of the interests of the Kingdom. We use a quite broad interpretation of that sentence, and it seems wise to have a State Committee check if the armed forces haven't been given too many powers in relation to that article. ... Why doesn't that article for example include that domestic use of the armed forces always takes place under civilian control?'* (Respondent 44, academic)

5.7 ANALYSIS

All three security challenges that have been linked to the undermining of liberal democracy (see chapter 4) can be found in the country-specific literature. The respondents mainly focus on the first and second security challenge, not so much on the third challenge (undermining of liberal democracy by the state). This could be caused by the fact

that almost all respondents work within the security domain and it could be challenging to recognize your own shortcomings. Furthermore, being part of the state apparatus, respondents may not see the specific measures taken by the state as undermining liberal democracy. However, when asked about policy options, respondents did seem to be able to reflect upon and acknowledge the risk of state undermining.

Regarding the degree of hybridization, in the Dutch case there are examples of constabularization and militarization. The armed forces have been increasingly involved in domestic operations in support of the police, for example in the search for drug laboratories or in arrest teams (the Special Interventions Service). However, the main example of hybridization in the Netherlands is the existence and relatively fast growth (even when the rest of the armed forces were shrinking) of the Marechaussee, which has followed from the increased blurring of internal and external security. As shown in this chapter, respondents see the Marechaussee as an effective in-between option between the police and the rest of the armed forces.

Looking at policy options for the future, respondents see possibilities for a domestic role of the armed forces in national tasks (under national authority, such as security and surveillance), large-scale operations, a higher spectrum of force (also with the purpose of preventing police militarization) and the grey zone between war and peace. They use arguments of capacity, efficiency or the unique expertise of the armed forces. There is a clear link between these options and arguments and the rise of new security threats (for example, the increasing organized crime threat leading to an increased use of the armed forces for search activities and security and surveillance).

At the same time, the respondents are aware of the risk of state undermining, pointing at the need not to use the armed forces against the population and making sure they always operate under civilian command and collaborate with civilian personnel. As for the second security challenge, declining social cohesion, Dutch respondents are reluctant to use the armed forces in public order management, especially in a visible way. There is some support for the 'School for the Nation' argument for conscription, but not on a large scale.

Regarding the separation versus immersion dichotomy, this chapter makes it evident that the Netherlands is not entirely in a separation paradigm. This is most clear when looking at the task dimension. As shown above, the Dutch armed forces (and even more so the Marechaussee) have been increasingly involved in domestic tasks. The legal possibilities to have the armed forces support civilian authorities – following a request by civilian authorities – are quite extensive as well. And even in public administration and

government strategy, the position of the armed forces has been slowly growing. For the first time, the Netherlands have a security strategy covering both internal and external security, and a National Security Council has been created.

This chapter has furthermore shown how cultural factors seem to have played a role in the Dutch focus on separation. Pacifist sentiments, reluctance to see 'green on the streets', and fear of the military mindset have been important factors. However, since the end of the Cold War, this has slowly changed.

On the side of the government, the diminishing external threat has led to budget cuts in the armed forces and the decision to suspend conscription, as explained in section 5.2 (what Levy would classify as an effort to rebalance the republican exchange) (Levy, 2012). With the rise of new security threats following from the blurring of internal and external security, the government has subsequently expanded the domestic tasks of the armed forces and has increasingly relied on the Marechaussee to support the police in dealing with these threats, as illustrated in section 5.4. For the armed forces, the new tasks were welcomed in a time when external threats were diminishing, conscription was suspended, and budget cuts were looming. On the other hand, as has been confirmed by the respondents, the armed forces have been reluctant to take on more domestic tasks, as this could impact their preparedness for the first core task (defense of allied territory). As for the Dutch population, although there is a disconnect between the military and the population, especially since the suspension of conscription, there are no indications in the literature that a growing domestic role is not supported, except for public order management. And in recent years, there has been more support for a domestic role of the armed forces than for the other two tasks (Konings & Van Der Grient, 2022; Muller, 2017; Muller, Bosch, et al., 2017; Van der Meulen, 2015, 2017). During the COVID-19 pandemic, when the armed forces provided extensive support to the civilian authorities, public support peaked at 7.7 (Siebelhoff & Fastenau, 2022). Therefore, looking at the Dutch data, I conclude that there is evidence for alignment between the political elite, military and population on the development towards immersion.

If there is alignment (or concordance as Schiff would call it) (Schiff, 1995) on the move from a separation paradigm towards an immersion paradigm, this should have consequences regarding civilian control as well. A move from objective control towards subjective control is to be expected. Looking at the Dutch data, the position of the armed forces in public administration and government strategy has slowly become stronger, culminating in the creation of a National Security Council and the first security strategy covering both internal and external threats in recent years. According to Bruneau, Matei and Sakoda, a National Security Council is an appropriate institute for civil-military

relations in liberal democracies, as it can both improve civilian control and the effective implementation of roles and missions (Bruneau et al., 2009). The Dutch data show evidence for what Travis calls 'pragmatic civilian control' or what Schiff calls 'targeted partnership', meaning that relationships between civil and military actors are adaptive, and that the military interacts with politicians in policymaking (Schiff, 2012; Travis, 2017). However, the Dutch situation does not reflect Bland's theory of shared responsibility in which responsibility for control is shared between civilian leaders and military officers, at least not yet (Bland, 2001).

APPENDIX: TABLE 5.2: POLICY OPTIONS FOR A CHANGING DOMESTIC ROLE OF THE ARMED FORCES

Domain	What	Why	Why not	Preconditions
Civic education	• Social conscription • Special programs for difficult youth	• 'School of the Nation' • Disciplinary role	• Far-fetched from core business	• 'School of the Nation' only in case of large numbers
Public order management	• Use of military personnel on the streets • Use of military materiel, for example heavy materiel to block an area or UAV's for surveillance of an area • Advisory role in logistics	• Armed forces can provide extra capacity when police are overburdened	• Might lead to escalation • Intimidating for the population • Monopoly on violence in peace time should rest with the police	• No use of violence against the population • Only in exceptional cases (last resort) and under civilian command • Only in an invisible role (materiel / wearing police uniform) / in teams of military/police / unarmed
Organized crime	• Use of specific expertise (e.g. search teams) • Arrest teams	• National task, which makes the use of the armed forces more acceptable for local authorities • International aspects (grey zone) • High level of violence • Expertise armed forces is complementary to police • Benefit for the armed forces: real life training	• Criminal investigations are a police task. If the armed forces have specific expertise that is needed, then the police should develop this themselves	• Only in support to the police • No integration of police and military capabilities. Keep it separated
Cyber domain	• Combine armed forces and civilian capabilities (pooling of resources and capabilities)	• Cyber domain is borderless so the fight against cyber threats should be borderless too • Difficult to distinguish between cybercrime and cyberwar • Cyber personnel are scarce	• Legal obstacles, for example in sharing information	• Legal aspects must be dealt with

Domain	What	Why	Why not	Preconditions
Crisis management	- Structural tasks instead of incidental gap filling - Planning capabilities - Large scale evacuation scenarios must be investigated	Uncontroversial, appreciated role		Support should be long-term when needed, armed forces tend to leave too soon
Security and surveillance	- Object security - Personal security	- Quantitative: numbers of people that must be protected are rising - Qualitative: layered use of police / Marechaussee / armed forces depending on level of violence - Supported by local authorities - Militarization of the police can be prevented	- Monopoly on violence in peacetime should rest with the police - Security and surveillance are a police task	- Preference for object security over personal security - In case of personal security, some prefer that armed forces wear a police uniform
Intelligence	- Air surveillance capabilities for surveillance and search (JSF, UAV's) - Military personnel	- Efficiency, pooling of resources (e.g. UAV's) - Military intel procedures are complementary to police (outside-in instead of inside-out from a crime scene)	- Legal obstacles - Less controversial than for example public order management, as it is not visible	Legal aspects must be dealt with
Expert support	Explosive detection, CBRN, divers, logistics	Efficiency, pooling of resources		



6

SWEDEN

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will focus on the findings of the Swedish case study. The first part of this chapter will describe the Swedish armed forces, its tasks and legal framework, the relations between military and society, the current state of civil-military relations and civil-military cooperation in Sweden (section 6.2). The next section (6.3) will focus on specific security challenges in the Swedish context. In section 6.4, recent changes in the domestic role of the Swedish armed forces and explanations for these changes will be explored. In the second part of this chapter, the future is examined: what policy options can be defined for a future domestic role of the armed forces (6.5)? The last part of this chapter will focus on the balance between separation and immersion and will include an analysis of the results of this chapter using civil-military relations theory.

6.2 THE SWEDISH ARMED FORCES

This section will describe the Swedish armed forces, its tasks, the legal framework for the domestic use of the armed forces, as well as civil-military relations and cooperation. In addition, it will describe the position of the Swedish armed forces in society. This will lay the foundation for future developments of the domestic role of the armed forces and civil-military relations.

The Swedish armed forces (Swedish armed forces, 2022) are subject to the Swedish parliament and government and are headed by the Supreme Commander. All Swedish government agencies, including the armed forces, receive their assignments from the government. Nevertheless, in Sweden, government ministers are not allowed to intervene in day-to-day operations of any government agency (Government Offices of Sweden, 2015).

The armed forces consist of the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and include the Home Guard and the National Security Forces as well. Certain capabilities, such as training, logistics and intelligence, are pooled.

The Home Guard consists of volunteers that serve a certain number of days per year.

Its main responsibility of the Home Guard is to protect, guard and monitor Swedish territory and provide support to society in times of crisis. In case of natural disasters, large-scale accidents, forest fires, etc., the Home Guard assists the police, rescue services and other authorities.

The defense budget has recently been substantially increased and will reach EUR 8.9 billion in 2025, along with an increase in personnel from approximately 60.000 in 2020 to 90.000 in 2025 (Ministry of Defence of Sweden, 2021).

Tasks

The Swedish armed forces are tasked by the government. In the 'government bill for total defence 2021-2025', the goal for the military defense shall be to have the capability to:

1. Defend Sweden against armed attack.
2. Assert the territorial integrity of Sweden and safeguard sovereign rights and national interests in Sweden and outside Swedish territory in accordance with international law.
3. Promote our security and prevent and handle conflicts and wars by conducting operations in peacetime on our own territory and in the neighborhood, as well as participating in international peacekeeping operations.
4. Protect society and its functionality by assisting the rest of society, with existing capabilities and resources both in peacetime and in times of heightened alert. (Ministry of Defence of Sweden, 2021)

The fourth task is particularly relevant for this research. The government stresses that the armed forces need to cooperate and plan with other involved agencies on the effective use of resources in different situations. If possible, support for society should also be provided in the event of the risk of war, and during war. The government highlights the importance of the Home Guard and voluntary defense organizations in dealing with peacetime crises. In the same document, the government states that it 'does not see any need to perform any specific review of the Swedish Armed Forces' support for the civil society' (Ministry of Defence of Sweden, 2021).

Legal framework

Support by the armed forces to civilian authorities is based on three specific laws. A law from 2002 (last amended in 2019) regulates support to the police, the security service, the coast guard, customs, other government agencies, municipalities, and regions (Förordning (2002:375) Om Försvarsmaktens Stöd till Civil Verksamhet, 2002). Based on this law, the armed forces may only provide support if they have suitable resources and the support does not seriously hinder regular operations. Armed forces personnel may not be used in situations where there is a risk that they may use coercion or violence against individuals. Furthermore, personnel need to be appropriately trained. Lastly, a unit that provides support based on this regulation must be under the command of a military commander.

In 2006, a new law made it possible for the armed forces to support the police in the fight against terrorism (Lag (2006:343) Om Försvarsmaktens Stöd till Polisen Vid Terrorismbekämpning, 2006). Under this law, support is only allowed if certain conditions have been fulfilled:

1. The support is needed to prevent or intervene against a terrorist crime or an attempt or preparation for such a crime.
2. The intervention requires special resources that the police or security service do not have.
3. The government has given its consent.

In case of urgency, the government does not have to consent beforehand but must be notified and can consent afterwards.

Within this law, the armed forces may only provide support if they have the required resources. The unit will perform under civilian control and only personnel with appropriate training and experience may participate in a support operation. The law also stipulates that the armed forces personnel involved will have the same powers as police personnel and have the authority to arrest people.

The only law that permits the armed forces to use force against civilians in the current context is the aforementioned law from 2006, which concerns support by the armed forces to the police in the fight against terrorism. The general law from 2002 and the specific law on helicopter support discussed below explicitly state that armed forces personnel may not be brought into a situation in which they run the risk of using force against individuals.

In 2017, an ordinance on the armed forces' support to the police with helicopter transport was instated (Förordning (2017:113) Om Försvarsmaktens Stöd till Polisen Med Helikoptertransporter, 2017). Based on this regulation, the armed forces can carry out helicopter transports at the request of the police. Section 3 of the ordinance specifically states that armed forces personnel may not be used in situations where there is a risk that they may use violence or coercion against individuals. The armed forces unit involved must be under the direct management of the requesting authority.

Military and society

The Swedish total defense model has played an important role in civil-military relations since the Second World War. Therefore, this section begins with a short overview of developments in this model. Subsequently, it focuses on one specific aspect, namely conscription.

Total defense

Total defense meant a systematic securitization of more or less everything in Swedish society (S. Larsson, 2021). The Swedish model for total defense emerged during the Second World War when an expert commission concluded that the boundaries between the military and the civil domain had been erased and war had become total. This called for total defense, including both a military and a civil component (S. Larsson, 2021). The model consisted of four elements, namely military defense, economic defense (including storage and supply of key provisions), psychological defense (including countering disinformation), and civil defense (including shelters, evacuation planning, etc.). The whole population was in fact involved in preparing for the eventuality of a war. During the Cold War, Sweden had conscription for males and was able to mobilize up to 850.000 persons.

The total defense effort also included educating the societal elite from both the public and private sector in the organization and operation of total defense by means of a course of wargaming and networking lasting several weeks (S. Larsson, 2021).

Up until the 1980s, total defense was only focused on a possible external invasion. Starting mid-1980s, however, experts began to point at possible threats from within the country itself. In 1985, the Swedish Emergency Management Agency (ÖCB) was established as a coordinating agency for civil defense. As Larsson describes, it was this agency that started asking questions about other threats to society such as terrorism, mass migration, major attacks, and other threats in the 'grey area' between war and crime (S. Larsson, 2021).

However, it was not until the early 2000s that the threat of an invasion was no longer prioritized and priorities shifted to other crises such as asymmetrical attacks, major accidents, natural disasters, etc. (S. Larsson, 2021). These security problems were not necessarily in the domain of the armed forces (Stiglund, 2021). Consequently, this marked the beginning of a 'strategic timeout' for the traditional total defense model and a downsizing of the Swedish armed forces. The defense budget shrank from approximately 2% of GDP in 1990 to approximately 1% in 2010 and the conscript system was replaced by an all-volunteer force in the 2009 defense bill (Kronvall & Petersson, 2016). According to some authors, the downsizing of the defense forces to a point where they cannot conduct military operations independently is particularly risky for a non-aligned country like Sweden (Kronvall & Petersson, 2016). Since Sweden has recently joined NATO, this is no longer the case.

In this period, a new term entered the security discourse, namely 'societal security'. ÖCB was transformed into a new Swedish Emergency Management Agency called KBM. In

2003, KBM published a report on Sweden's preparedness against terrorism. This report contained some far-reaching proposals, including a hybridization of military and police organizations, but nothing much changed in practice (S. Larsson, 2021). In 2008, KBM merged with other agencies into the currently operational Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB).

In the 2010s, a new shift took place. With the changing geopolitical situation and the rising Russian threat, Sweden again began to increase its military capabilities. In December 2020, the total defense bill 2021-2025 was approved by the Riksdag. The goals of the total defense bill is to make sure Sweden can counter an armed attack. The starting point is that Sweden should be able to handle a security crisis in Europe, which causes disruptions to society, as well as war during part of this time, for at least six months. The most important elements of this bill are:

- A strengthening of both civil and military defense, including a substantial budget increase and increase in personnel for both the military (from 60.000 to 90.000) and civilian agencies such as the police (10.000 extra). For the police, the need for a 'reinforcement organization' will be investigated, consisting of, for example, recently retired police officers and/or people that have transferred to other careers.
- An increase in conscription volumes from 4.000 persons per year to 8.000 per year in 2025.
- A strengthening of cyber defense, including the establishment of a cyber security center.
- An expanded peacetime organization with new units throughout the country, for geographical, preparedness and training reasons and because it contributes to popular support for the armed forces.
- Total defense means support by civil defense to the armed forces, but also support from the armed forces to society. With respect to the latter, this bill sums up current legislation and states that no additional measures are necessary.
- The establishment of an agency for psychological defense.
- As part of civil defense, more attention will be paid to voluntary defense organizations, including extra budget. Individual citizens should be prepared to take care of themselves for a week and to help other citizens as far as possible.

The bill acknowledges the rise of hybrid / grey zone threats and states that further analysis is needed. It mentions that total defense resources will be designed so that they can also strengthen society's ability to prevent and handle severe emergencies affecting society. According to this bill, crisis preparedness and civil defense should reinforce one another (Ministry of Defence of Sweden, 2021).

Total defense 2.0: critical remarks

The new total defense model has been criticized by different authors from a perspective of securitization. Stiglund states that the more comprehensive security model that had been formed 20 years before was not abandoned with the new total defense model, but rather that two security discourses now exist side by side (Stiglund, 2021). These security discourses correspond to two different security logics: a threat logic (old defense model) and a risk logic (new defense model). Risks do not have the same kind of immediacy as threats and instead of emergency measures rather require measures to manage them in the long run, pre-emptively (Stiglund, 2021).

In the words of Stiglund, *'new risks, old threats, as well as hybrid and in-between phenomena are now supposed to be handled by what can be referred to as a "total defense 2.0"; that is, a "holistic" apparatus covering a spectrum of dangers, antagonistic forces, and suspicious individuals, a system for targeting a multiplicity of both threats and risks – without conflating them into one and the same.'* (Stiglund, 2021, p. 216)

As a consequence, the term 'total', which used to refer to the mobilization of society for defense in case of a (threat of) war, now rather refers to how *'virtually all societal phenomena may be considered "dangerous" and therefore a potential "security matter"...*' (Stiglund, 2021, p. 217). According to Larsson, this means that societal and national security are connected in a way that civil and war preparedness are *'merged into an ever-present dimension of everyday existence'* (O. L. Larsson, 2021, p. 1). The brochure that MSB sent to every household in 2018, titled *If crisis or war comes*, illustrates this (Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap, 2018). The brochure emphasizes the responsibility of the individual for both their own security and for that of society as a whole. According to Rådestad and Larsson, this responsabilization strategy was also a way to unburden public authorities and contribute to the robustness of society (Rådestad & Larsson, 2020). It highlights the moral dimension of civil preparedness and leads to state-citizen relationships being replaced by citizen-citizen relationships, making the state somehow less responsible for providing security (O. L. Larsson, 2021). Consequently, according to Larsson this new relationship undermines the social contract between the state and citizens, which induces fear and public anxiety.

Conscription

An important factor influencing the role of the military in society is conscription. As mentioned, conscription in Sweden was abolished with the 2009 Defense bill. However, due to the deteriorating security situation and recruitment problems, in 2017 the Swed-

ish government decided to re-activate conscription on January 1st, 2018, starting with 4.000 conscripts per year (Government Offices of Sweden, 2017). The new conscription system is gender neutral. In 2021, the government decided with the total defense bill to increase conscription numbers to 8.000 persons per year in 2025 (Ministry of Defence of Sweden, 2021).

As also discussed in chapter 2, the absence of conscription can lead to a detachment between citizens and the military and therefore to a reduced influence of the military on society (Holmberg, 2015). Holmberg states that after the defense reform in the 1990s and 2000s, the Swedish armed forces have substantially less local presence in Sweden, leading to fewer possibilities for interaction between the armed forces and the public (Holmberg, 2015). However, times have changed since Holmberg's study was published and with the reinstatement of conscription and the decision to create new units throughout the country this will likely change.

Civil-military relations

Based on the ideal types for civil-military relations defined in chapter 2, Sweden most resembles the preferred model for a democratic regime, in which the civil and the military domain are separated and there is civilian supremacy over the military.

In a study published in 2013, Hedlund analyzes civil-military relations in Sweden from 1984 until 2011 by specifically looking at civil-military control of the military officer rank system and the professional officer education system (Hedlund, 2013). The analysis is based on Huntington's and Janowitz's theories of objective and subjective civilian control over the military, as explained in chapter 2.

In general, Hedlund concludes that civil-military relations and the autonomy of the military vary depending on the perceived external threat level. When the external threat is perceived to be high, the functional imperative for military autonomy is higher. When the external threat is perceived to be low, the societal imperative to curtail professional autonomy of the military is higher. Hedlund shows that in the researched period from 1984 up until 2010, subjective civilian control over the military profession by the Swedish state was at its strongest. From 2010, with the transition to an all-volunteer force and because of the Swedish armed forces increasingly participating in international operations, steps were taken towards objective control. The Swedish armed forces needed to adapt to international military standards (a functional imperative in order to be interoperable with other nations' armed forces), which made for less room for national societal imperatives (Hedlund, 2013). Hedlund's study does not include recent years in which decisions have been taken to rebuild total defense. However, based on his study, this

functional imperative could lead to more objective civilian control and therefore, more military autonomy.

From a different perspective, Holmberg has studied processes of militarization and demilitarization in Sweden to analyze the influence of the military on politics and society in 21st century Europe. She concludes that since the end of the Cold War, the traditional 'exceptionalism' around the military has decreased, making it more like other government agencies. She points for example at a comment made by the Prime Minister in 2013 about the military being a particular interest group (särintresse) (Holmberg, 2015). The abandoning of total defense and conscription have reduced the possibilities for interaction between the military, politics, and society as well. However, this may change again with the rebuilding of total defense and the reinstatement of conscription.

Civil-military cooperation

Since 2013, Sweden has had five military regions: Northern, Central, Western, Southern and Gotland (which was only established in 2019). Each region has a regional staff that is responsible for coordination of the military effort with civil authorities in case of national crisis situations and other support activities. In practice, the regional staff serves as a linking pin between military and civil authorities in the region.

6.3 SECURITY CHALLENGES AND THREATS

In chapter 4, three security and stability related threats that undermine liberal democracy were defined, namely (1) the blurring of internal and external security and the rise of new security threats, (2) declining social cohesion and the rise of social unrest and parallel societies and (3) undermining of liberal democracy by the state.

This section shows how these threats manifest themselves in Sweden. The Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) publishes a biannual report, the National Risk and Capability Assessment, which identifies the most important threats and risks for Sweden and Swedish society. The 2021 report (Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap, 2021) emphasizes four major challenges, starting with hostile threats, which include hybrid threats, the risk for cyber-attacks or terrorist attacks. A second challenge identified is climate change which is increasing the chances of serious natural disasters, thus putting pressure on preparedness. Climate change will also affect Sweden in an indirect way, through changing migration patterns and security policy tensions. Furthermore, society's dependence on technology increasingly makes it vulnerable, for example to cyber-attacks, influence operations, and failed technical systems. The third challenge

identified is the protection against major accidents, which needs to be strengthened. The fourth challenge concerns societal trust, which is eroding. The agency specifically points at lack of trust in authorities and at disinformation campaigns by foreign powers or violent extremists.

Early 2023, the Swedish security service, Säkerhetspolisen, published its yearly report in which it identifies the most pressing security threats for Sweden (Säkerhetspolisen, 2023). The report focuses on authoritarian states strengthening their positions. Russia is seen as the single biggest threat to Sweden and China and Iran pose a threat on the long-term. The organization points at the vulnerabilities following from rapid technological developments and the ongoing Swedish total defense build-up. The threat posed by foreign powers is changing and includes illegal intelligence activities, influence operations and cyber-attacks. Within Sweden, Säpo points at radicalization and an increased threat of assassination. Additionally, the spread of conspiracy theories and anti-government messages is increasing. This could undermine trust in society's institutions, political decision-making, and the state's legitimacy as a democratic system. Both violent extremists and foreign powers can exploit these vulnerabilities. Violent extremists are seen as infiltrating or influencing different parts of society, undermining trust in society in the long term.

The National Intelligence Centre of the Swedish Police Authority published a multi-agency report (together with 11 other public agencies) on organized crime in Sweden in 2021 (Swedish Police Authority, 2021). The report concludes that the most serious threats in organized crime are attacks on the welfare system and the evasion of taxes and charges, drugs crime and the serious violence resulting from it, and the parallel social structures that have emerged in vulnerable areas (60 identified in 2019). Open air drug trafficking is taking place in vulnerable areas, governed by criminal networks that aim to 'own' the location. There is a strong link between drug crime and the use of violence, and the report notes an increase in lethal violence in Sweden since 2013, mainly consisting of shootings and explosions in public places, especially in vulnerable areas. The report also notes that criminal actors in vulnerable areas put pressure on inhabitants not to report crimes, and also put pressure on representatives of government agencies. According to the Swedish Police Authority, local social arrangements, including alternative financial and judicial systems, have developed to varied degrees in vulnerable locations. Some criminal actors provide services in employment, housing, banking, protection, and security. These parallel social structures create a society within society beyond the control of the state. In that sense, according to the report, they challenge the Swedish democratic social order, the rule of law, and the state's monopoly on violence. As mentioned in chapter 4, Åberg writes about these vulnerable areas as

well and describes how deadly street violence is on the rise and organized crime, gang crimes and shootings are a growing problem (Åberg, 2019).

Several reports show that the Swedish population worries about organized crime. The Swedish Crime Survey 2022 shows that 80% of the Swedish population believes that the number of crimes in Sweden has increased over the past three years and 46% of the population have great concern about crime in society (Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå), 2022).

The SOM Institute, based at the University of Gothenburg, executes an annual nationwide survey. The latest edition published concerns Swedish trends 1986-2021. Respondents were asked what they worry about in security and democracy. The highest percentage, by far, (67%) is organized crime, followed by increased drug usage (58%), terrorism (49%), political extremism (47%), weakened democracy (35%) and finally, the situation in Russia (only 19% at the time) (SOM Institute, 2021). When asked about issues or societal problems in general, law and order rank first, before healthcare, integration, and the environment.

As for undermining of liberal democracy by the state, as shown in chapter 4, Sweden scores higher than Finland and the Netherlands in general, but the IDEA indicators show a sharp decline in fundamental rights, civil liberties, and absence of corruption. The decline in impartial administration and representative government in Sweden indicates that part of the population does not feel adequately represented or treated fairly, which could provide evidence for both horizontal and state undermining.

Recent research by IDEA focuses on the impact of COVID-19 measures on democracy and human rights. As in other countries, measures were taken in Sweden that impacted civil liberties. Examples are restrictions on gatherings, travel restrictions, the use of masks in public transportation, etc. However, no strict lockdown strategy was employed by the Swedish authorities. They mainly relied on voluntary social distancing guidelines. All in all, IDEA concludes that only minor violations of the Democratic Standards Index have taken place and classifies Sweden as low risk on the Pandemic Backsliding Index.

The reports discussed in this section show indications for the three security challenges identified in chapter 4. How do the respondents for this case-study evaluate these challenges? When asked about security threats, three categories stand out to Swedish respondents. One of them is the external threat posed by Russia, both in a traditional (military) way and as a hybrid threat, including cyber-attacks, the weaponization of migration, and disinformation campaigns. Respondents highlight the vulnerability of Swedish society. In the words of one respondent, *'I think that Swedish society, much like*

other European states, has made itself vulnerable since it has started digitalizing many functions in society. Critical infrastructure can easily be attacked. This makes our society very fragile.' (Respondent 68, academic)

The second category standing out for Swedish respondents is the threat posed by organized crime and the gang violence related to it: *'Well, I think there has been a naivety in Sweden when it comes to organized crime for many years. One of the biggest eyeopeners so far is Encrochat and Sky operations, giving us a lot of intelligence about serious organized crime, that has changed our estimates a lot, by a factor of 10. Also, historically, we have seen crimes from a sociological standpoint, that's the common historical view, but the way we see it now, we see crime more like actors, serious actors with serious capabilities. ... That opened a lot of people's eyes, that realized organized crime isn't just an effect of poverty or other social issues.'* (Respondent 55, civilian, executive organization) Another respondent takes it even a bit further: *I think what we have in the big towns and cities, they call them criminal groups, but I call them armed groups, because they are actually the same as I saw in the Central African Republic, they are entrepreneurs in crime.'* (Respondent 53, civilian, executive organization) As noted in the reports described above, the use of violence is a growing problem as well, with *'Gun violence that was so remote for me as a Swede 10-15 years ago is now present on an everyday basis.'* (Respondent 58, military)

The third category concerns declining social cohesion and the creation of parallel societies in some areas. Respondents attribute the weakening of society to *'changes in values, greater individualism, and polarization.'* (Respondent 64, academic) In the words of the same respondent, *'40 years ago we could afford this individualism, because we came from a very collectivist mode. ... But it turns out that values change over time, slowly, but they change.'*

Respondents also see the danger of parallel societies forming in different parts of the country, noting that *'a growing number of municipal areas are increasingly disconnected from mainstream society.'* (Respondent 61, military) Some respondents link these developments to immigration: *'... this becomes politically sensitive, the bulk of the ethnic Swedish society is still pretty calm. But Sweden is a country that has taken a huge amount of immigrants. Most of this has been very successful, these people are completely integrated, they have jobs, a future. But there is a significant minority that have not been integrated. And there one could say that Swedish society has a big problem. ... It has become so bad that even heavily reinforced police officers cannot enter certain areas any longer.'* (Respondent 70, academic) The consequence can be an undermining of liberal democracy. In the words of the same respondent, *'But a real problem that is emerging behind the scenes is corruption. I can take the case of a smaller community not far from where I live. A politician was approached by the head of a local clan, and he said I can offer you 2000 votes if we can*

have a discussion about this and that. This kind of thing is really, really dangerous, because it's penetrating the system.' (Respondent 70)

As this short overview shows, Swedish respondents recognize the undermining of liberal democracy by new security challenges, in particular the behavior of Russia and the rise of organized crime and the increasing violence that has been related to it. They recognize the horizontal undermining of liberal democracy by declining social cohesion as well, confirming the reports discussed in this section about vulnerable areas where parallel societies are being created.

6.4 RECENT CHANGES IN THE DOMESTIC ROLE: EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

A major development influencing both the Swedish security sector and society as a whole is the reinstatement of total defense, including the reactivation of conscription, as explained in section 6.2. Planning for total defense was resumed in 2014, based on the legal frameworks that were still in place from the Cold War period. One respondent uses the metaphor of a shield to describe this system and regrets that Sweden abolished it, because it will take a lot of time to build it up again: *'I think of national defense as a combined shield, where the armed forces are the front part of the shield, and the rest of society are the back of the shield. And that's where Sweden is missing a lot. ... The tragedy of total defense is that it was so good, there wasn't anything like it anywhere in Europe. The system included all parts of society, the private sector, ordinary citizens. ... And then they just abolished it. Now they are trying to build it up again, but the institutional memory isn't there and of course it would need to be a bit different. And on top of that, in 30 years a whole generation has grown up that knows nothing about it.'* (Respondent 63, academic)

The importance of the total defense model lies in mobilizing all of society in their willingness to defend the country. As one respondent states, this should be the priority in the rebuilding of total defense: *'The will to defend is actually, if the people don't want to defend Sweden, it doesn't matter how good the defense forces are. We don't need to focus on the military guys. They want to defend Sweden. We should focus on the rest.'* (Respondent 51, civilian, national government)

As discussed in section 6.2, resilience is a key word, or in Swedish: motståndskraft, a combination of 'mot' (against), 'stånd' (to stand) and 'kraft' (force). One of the respondents explains, *'That's for me what psychological defense is really, it's to be able to...back in the Cold War it was really to resist in case of war. To be able to endure the struggle, the shortage of*

food and electricity, to resist the enemy and never to give up. ... One element of this was to resist foreign propaganda. Foreign propaganda would tell us we have given up, we should just accept that we had lost, etc. We should be able to resist and withstand foreign propaganda. To me these are the elements we see today as well. We should be able to resist and identify foreign disinformation. And also, be able to have a very strong feeling that Sweden is worth protecting, Swedish democracy and freedom of expression is worth fighting for. So that's why we use the word motståndskraft.' (Respondent 57, civilian, executive organization)

Based on the total defense bill described in section 6.2, in 2022 a new Psychological Defence Agency (Myndigheten för psykologiskt försvar, MPF) was created, mainly aimed at identifying, analyzing, and countering foreign influence operations and disinformation, for example taking place on social media (Braw, 2022). This agency defines psychological defense as 'the collective ability of society to resist foreign malign influence activities and other disinformation directed at Sweden' (Psychological Defence Agency, 2022). The agency works closely together with the intelligence community, government agencies, municipalities, and voluntary defense organizations (Visser, 2022). The agency works both in peace time and in war time. In war time, the agency has a specific task, which makes it cooperate closely with the armed forces: *'We have one additional task in war time, that is to be able to support the government in suggesting actions that could be taken to counter a foreign adversary. That's kind of an offensive action, like the military has to shoot back.'* (Respondent 57, civilian, executive organization)

Interestingly, the new Swedish government, that was instated in the Fall of 2022, decided to move both MPF and the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) from the Ministry of the Interior to the Ministry of Defence, under the coordination of a new Minister for Civil Defence. This was done in an effort to strengthen the civilian components of total defense, more specifically civilian defense and crisis preparedness (Kristersson, 2022).

As part of the reinstatement of total defense, the national defense courses that Sweden organized during the Cold War have been reintroduced as well. These courses are organized at different levels (middle management, senior management) and aim to bring people from different backgrounds (government, private sector, NGO's, etc.) together to learn about national security. During the Cold War, the courses covered total defense issues, but recently they have been expanded to include crisis management. The courses are taught by the National Defence University (which in Sweden is not part of the armed forces, but a separate agency under the Ministry of Education), commissioned by the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB). The armed forces are involved as well.

Respondents are overwhelmingly positive about these courses, emphasizing their usefulness in both knowledge transfer on matters of national security and network building among the participants: *'I think that they are absolutely excellent. ... The relevance, importance and added value is immense. I don't have to convince you of course that there are so many situations that you can solve with a telephone call. Because you have the network, you can call each other.'* (Respondent 58, military) Respondents do emphasize that it takes time to build up a community again and to convince people of the changing threat environment: *'The problem seems to be more that the participants of these courses get no traction when they go back to their normal workplaces. They go to the course, and they learn all these aspects and then they come back to their normal places of work and say, we should do this, and people there say well, we don't have the time. The people of the workplaces are so immersed in normality, that they see no reason to care about total defense.'* (Respondent 64, academic)

Looking at other aspects of the domestic role of the armed forces, the domestic role of the armed forces is quite heavily regulated by the law, as has been discussed in section 6.2. While in the Netherlands the armed forces have three core tasks that are equally important, in Sweden the support of the armed forces to civil authorities gets last priority. As has also been discussed in section 6.2, two recent laws have slightly expanded the domestic role of the armed forces, which are now allowed to support the civil authorities with helicopters and can support the civil authorities in case of a terrorist attack.

When asked about recent changes in the domestic role of the armed forces, the respondents in this research emphasize that change is very slow, especially in the realm of police tasks: *'When it comes to the mandate for a combination of police and armed forces, I don't really see that changing now. The discussion comes up, and also the discussion about a hybrid force, but as we don't have the tradition of a hybrid force, it's also a question of where do we see the regular tasks for such a hybrid force?'* (Respondent 65, academic)

On the other hand, while a domestic role for the armed forces was unthinkable for a long time, things are slowly changing now. In the words of one respondent, *'Yes, I say step by step these restrictions are being softened up. ... We are moving in that direction, especially when it comes to terrorism, using military weapons, cyber, and also the grey zone that you cannot know in advance whether the green men are some kind of criminal groups, a terrorist group or a proxy for a foreign power. It tends to blur the lines.'* (Respondent 64, military)

Another respondent points out that cooperation between the armed forces and the police has deepened over the years: *'However, it has changed over the years. During my*

service this has been developing to a closer cooperation, both when it comes to intelligence work, but also operational and tactical operations.’ (Respondent 71, academic)

The reluctance to use the armed forces in a domestic context has consequences for the police as well. Some respondents point at a certain militarization of the police: *‘Yes, I’d say it is. Ten years ago, you didn’t see, before 9/11 the police was absolutely the old time policeman. Now they are very robust. They have military under armor, more or less the same gear as the military.’ (Respondent 59, military)* Some respondents, mainly those with a police background, worry about this development as it could blur the line between police work and military work: *‘The terminology that the police are starting to use, it includes terms like neutralizing, and the enemy, which is very specific to the aim and purpose limited to international humanitarian law. Using terms such as neutralizing and enemy is natural in that setting, but is very foreign to a policing context in which the task is to uphold individuals’ rights and everybody is equal before the law. So that kind of categorization of individuals is not...when you start to merge the vocabulary that is specific to an armed conflict in a policing context, it’s starting to move the borders towards those of armed conflict.’ (Respondent 67, academic)*

The fact that Sweden does not have a hybrid force, such as a gendarmerie, and at the same time is reluctant to use the military in a domestic context, has consequences for the police: *‘I think that in countries without a gendarmerie the police are used for a sort of catch all force. They have to deal with everything, from social problems to massively complex criminal organizations that are heavily weaponized.’ (Respondent 63, academic)* Another respondent points out that militarization of the police is a logical consequence of the Swedish reluctance to use the military for police tasks, stating that *‘if you can’t use the military for policing, then you will see a militarization of the police.’ (Respondent 64, academic)*

Some respondents do not see the militarization of the police as a bad thing: *‘At this point, and we have not reached the tipping point, I would prefer the police become more robust before I let the armed forces perform police tasks.’ (Respondent 58, military)*

How can the Swedish reluctance to use the armed forces in a domestic context be explained? Three factors stand out:

Factor 1: Ådalen 1931, a national trauma

Virtually all respondents refer to an incident which took place in 1931 in Ådalen, in northern Sweden. Factory workers were on strike at the time and the companies involved hired strike-breakers. This led to demonstrations by the striking workers against

the strike-breakers. The police did not manage to get the situation under control. At the time, it was not possible to get police reinforcements from another county. Therefore, the County Administrative Board could only ask the military to support the police. On May 14th, this resulted in an incident in which 5 civilians (4 demonstrators and 1 bystander) were shot dead by the military troops.

Since that moment, the use of the military in a domestic context is a very sensitive matter in Sweden and it has been heavily regulated. More than 90 years later, this incident still has an impact on discussions about a possible domestic role for the military: *'but I'm not sure why this incident from so long ago in fact seems to be a national trauma. Whenever it is suggested that the military could have a larger role in society, everyone is like no, because Ådalen '31. Then it's like the end of discussion.'* (Respondent 68, academic)

Some respondents think this is slowly changing: *'I think it's still influential, but I do think it's losing its grip on the Swedish culture. ... it's very much related to one political party in Sweden, the social-democratic party. They have been dominating Swedish politics ... and that legacy has impact on how we see things today. So, I wouldn't say it's a major factor. It's declining with the voter support for the social-democrats, but it still lingers on. If you ask me, I would say most people wouldn't have a clue, but just automatically say, you know, Ådalen '31.'* (Respondent 58, military)

Factor 2: Mixed attitudes

As we have seen in the Netherlands as well, both on the civilian and on the military side there are mixed attitudes about the domestic role of the armed forces. On the civilian side one respondent states, *'Culturally the Swedes are reluctant to let the military be part of our day-to-day business. ... I don't think the military should be seen on the streets.'* (Respondent 57, civilian, executive organization)

Respondents with a policing background talk about the different mindset of the military, that impacts their operation: *'For example, I was in Kosovo as a military police officer in 2002. ... We found an IED. As a police officer, it can be a military object, it can also be organized crime, it can be terrorism, it can be civilians that want to start something. As a police officer, I think about investigation, so I think about democratic principles of investigation. When I enter an area, I'm always careful about where I put my feet, I collect evidence, I look around, ask my questions in a certain order. The military that came just took it and went away, because it was an IED, it should be taken away.'* (Respondent 71, academic) Another example concerns searches: *'For example, when it comes to searches, the military type of search, kicking in doors and knocking things over, a forceful approach to search, is not generally how we in policing settings conduct searches.'* (Respondent 67, academic)

The same respondent questions the possibility for military personnel to make a shift to be able to operate in a policing context, if they are trained in a military context: *'If you bring a military aim and purpose into a policing setting, it becomes defeating the enemy. Forcing the enemy into submission. That is not an appropriate aim and goal in policing settings, where you have the task to ensure security by providing the right to all individuals. ... So, then all of a sudden you have to shift gears entirely, when as a military officer you are put in a policing context. ... And what does that take then. ... It does require a different skill set on an individual level. Does it require different tools? These are the questions we need to ask ourselves.'* (Respondent 67, academic)

Another respondent with a policing background explains how police work is different from the work of the military: *'Community policing is like family. We try to have that relationship with citizens. ... Without that it cannot function. ... When it comes to military, in general, they don't need to establish this relationship, like a family. ... You have an opponent, a combatant, and you should defeat it, no matter the relationship. ... You can talk to them, of course you do that, but you are trained to kill, to use that kind of violence. ... The police work on relationship building. The military doesn't need legitimacy in the people.'* (Respondent 71, academic)

Other respondents emphasize that competition between the police and the armed forces may play a role as well: *'The pandemic led to a lot of border controls and it was a heavy load for the police, especially with a crime wave at the same time. Then there were calls for the military to be used. In a couple of instances, the military was used to guard border crossings to Norway, but they could only observe and report. This is not just Ådalen '31, but it's also a turf battle. Police capacity has no surplus, but if you broach the subject of giving someone else responsibilities, then the turf instinct comes up.'* (Respondent 64, academic)

However, some respondents expect this might change due to the changing threat environment and due to the performance of the armed forces in many western liberal democracies during the COVID crisis, as a consequence of which people have started to view the armed forces in a different way.

On the military side, many respondents point out that the core task for the armed forces is to defend Sweden against an external attack and that a domestic role should not distract them from that task: *'We don't want to end up in a situation where we need to train the soldiers for social disturbances, police work. That's not the work for soldiers. ... The core task of the armed forces is fighting an enemy coming to Sweden.'* (Respondent 51, civilian, national government) Due to the changing threat environment, capacities are scarce: *'The military culture is, and that's probably an effect of all these years in overseas operations,*

that there is this internal need or wish to support civilian society and making life simply better. But then again, when it comes to the deteriorating security situation, not only the last few weeks, but the last 5-10 years, we have to be very specific as to what spare capacity we do have.' (Respondent 58, military)

Some respondents think that even though the main task for the armed forces is to defend Sweden against an armed attack, they could do more to support civil authorities: *'Our main task is not to support the police; our main task is to protect Sweden from external aggression. But my opinion is that we can help the police much more than we do. There is a balance of course, where we would lose valuable training time for conscripts if they were put into tasks like this. So, this should be done with professional soldiers. But you can't do it too much, because then they will lose their skills. So, it's a balance.'* (Respondent 59, military)

Factor 3: Legal limitations

As explained in section 6.2, the domestic role of the armed forces is heavily regulated in the law and only possible in very specific circumstances. This is mostly the heritage of the Ådalen '31 incident. Some respondents consider the possibilities to be too limited: *'My feeling is that what we see in the organizations, in the military and the police, there's a lot of goodwill and understanding that the other side has a lot of capabilities and information, and they are willing to cooperate, but perhaps we have to hold back on it, because we simply don't have the legislation for it. That can be frustrating sometimes. We have a lot of initiatives and a lot of times we try to have cooperation, but we are limited by legislation very often.'* (Respondent 55, civilian, executive organization)

Apart from these specific legal limitations, respondents point at additional general legal limitations, following from the Swedish governance model. As explained in section 6.2, based on the Swedish constitution, government authorities are very independent from both each other and the government. This complicates cooperation between different authorities: *'One authority cannot tell another authority what to do, or to prioritize on behalf of another authority. Meaning that they have to keep this idea of everybody is doing what they are supposed to do, but we add a layer for cooperation. Cooperation is like the buzzword of all times and of course I see the rationale for it and for the principle of responsibility. But it also becomes the scapegoat for everything, like: this is my task and that is not my task, that's somebody else's task. What happens then? Nobody sees the whole picture or the whole Swedish perspective, rather than this is my sector, this is my authority.'* (Respondent 65, academic)

In addition, this kind of cooperating structure takes time to start to function. In the words of one respondent, *'The way we try to cope with it is like the Americans that have*

acronyms like joint this and joint that. We create entities where authorities meet, sit at the table. No-one can decide over anyone else. In the beginning no-one wants to do anything. After a couple of years, people get to know each other and then it starts to work on a personal trust level.' (Respondent 54, civilian, executive organization)

The fact that Sweden has two legal systems, for peacetime and for war, is limiting as well: *'Generally speaking, I think it's odd that we have chosen to have so separate starting points of how we handle peacetime crises and war. ... And I think what we have now is not a very good solution, since that ... we have to be clearly in war or danger of war in order to use the total defense system. Before, when we had only the total defense system, the idea was that in planning for the absolute worst that can happen, war, you also create a capability to handle peacetime crises. But now instead you have to decide which one of the two systems you are using. Peacetime means that governmental frameworks are exactly the same. The system is built on that you don't have a minister taking decisions on their own, in their area of responsibility. Instead, you have decision-making in consensus between at least 5 ministers. This is something which is not of help in crises and emergencies.'* (Respondent 65, academic)

6.5 POLICY OPTIONS FOR A CHANGING DOMESTIC ROLE

As shown thus far, Sweden has been quite reluctant to use the armed forces in a domestic context. Legal limitations, mixed attitudes on both the military and civil sides and the national trauma of Ådalen play an important role here. Does this have an impact on future policy options as well? What policy options do Swedish experts from both the military and civil side see for a future domestic role of the armed forces? These options will be explored in this section. In the appendix to this chapter, the policy options are summarized in table 6.1.

Conscription

As explained in section 6.2, Sweden has reactivated conscription, starting with small numbers and growing towards 8.000 men and women in 2025. Depending on the security situation, these numbers could rise further in the future. Most respondents say this would foster social cohesion in the country, which is in line with findings from the literature as described in chapter 2. As one military respondent states, *'I am very much of the view that it is very beneficial to cohesion, because it installs a sense of participation and responsibility in a sizable number of young people. And so, I think at least it's a net loss for cohesion in society not to have conscription. Since we have restarted conscription, although on a much lower level of intake, I really have the feeling and get some reports that*

it does serve the same purpose as it did, at least for those who are lucky enough to serve.'
(Respondent 61, military)

A few respondents are not so sure about the effect of conscription on social cohesion, pointing at the limited amount of research, the small number of participants and the fact that until recently, conscription was only for men. As one civilian respondent explains, *'I have never really understood how this is supposed to work if it's only for men. Today it's gender-neutral, but if we accept only 5000 every year, that's very few.'* (Respondent 57, civilian, executive organization)

Some respondents suggest creating a form of social conscription: *'They could serve with the police for example as well, hospitals, that could make a huge difference. At the moment, and this is something I feel very strongly about, teenagers are not asked to do anything for society. Then you don't feel committed, you just float on the surface that society provides, without considering what it takes to run a society and that everyone has a responsibility to contribute to society. If you have to serve for a year, care for the elderly, or a hospital, or the municipal parks department, then you will look at society very differently, I think.'* (Respondent 63, academic)

Some propose taking it a step further and see a role for schools to get involved as well: *'I think you have to integrate it in the school curricula again. It shouldn't be a big deal. You can have representatives from the armed forces and civil agencies come to schools and do presentations. There are some initiatives in some schools here and there, but it's not part of the curriculum.'* (Respondent 66, academic)

As discussed in section 6.3, Sweden has a problem with parallel societies and the creation of no-go areas. When asked about a role for conscription in countering these, not everyone is positive, pointing out that *'You cannot just send everyone to disciplinary schools.'* (Respondent 68, academic) Doing so could even be a risk: *'If you send someone with a troublesome background and you train them it could even be a risk if they go back to their no-go zone with skills in tactics and weapons use.'* (Respondent 68, academic)

On the other hand, conscription could be helpful in integrating new migrants into Swedish society: *'If you are a migrant in the defense forces and you do a good job, you have a really good chance to get recognized, respected, have a career in the defense forces or be accepted by society. So, it can have a very important educational function.'* (Respondent 70, academic)

Police tasks

Sweden has been very reluctant to use the armed forces in police tasks. As explained in section 6.2, a few legal exceptions have been made, including the use of helicopters in support of police operations and the support to the police in case of a terrorist incident. In such a case, support must be approved by the government, for which there is a high threshold.

Do Swedish experts see any development in this area? Most respondents are very reluctant when asked about using the armed forces for police tasks. This is the most visible in public order management, where most respondents clearly state that *'In Sweden, when it comes to public protests, I don't think we would ever have the military assist the police in that. That's the biggest no-go for the Swedish military.'* (Respondent 55, civilian, executive organization) This is of course related to the risk of using violence against the population, as happened in Ådalen: *'We should never ever be in a situation where the armed forces would be obliged to use force against its own population.'* (Respondent 62, politician)

The one exception where the armed forces are allowed to use force is in case of a terrorist attack. As discussed in section 6.2, the use of the armed forces in such an event is clearly defined in the law. The units used must be trained specifically in police use of force and be under police command. There is no joint unit, as there is for example in the Netherlands.

There is some ongoing debate about expanding the law on support in case of terrorism to include the fight against organized crime: *'...the conservative opposition party ... have in their election program that organized crime should be labeled as terrorism, so that all kinds of laws and powers, that are only kept for incidents of terrorism, could be also applied in case of organized crime.'* (Respondent 64, academic)

Some respondents from the military see possibilities in this area: *'... it needs to be discussed, because we have many capabilities that could be used in the fight against organized crime.'* (Respondent 58, military)

Other respondents, mainly from the civilian side, are more reluctant, claiming that this is not what society needs in the fight against organized crime: *'I would say that I have a lot of respect for the armed forces. They have capabilities in different levels of applying violence, and that's not what we need. The capabilities of the armed forces are not what the civil society in crime fighting needs.'*

Intelligence

Some respondents believe that increased collaboration on intelligence-related matters between military and civilian actors is necessary: *'I think that in this non-linear environment, we have to have a common situational awareness, and there I think the armed forces could be very helpful and relevant.'* (Respondent 52, civilian, national government) Another respondent concurs, explaining that *'What is so challenging today is that threats are not binary. A group can be linked to a hostile state, even though it looks like a criminal group. And that's where Sweden, along with many other countries, needs much closer cooperation between police investigative work and intelligence work. Considering that other countries take advantage of our vulnerabilities, we need to remove the hurdles so that the police and the armed forces can work closer together.'* (Respondent 63, academic)

As we have seen in the Netherlands, some respondents point at the capabilities of the armed forces in identifying networks behind the concrete cases that the police work on: *'What we do, as police, we take the small fishes. It's like when you're in front of an aquarium. With the police we see the small fishes and are enthusiastic about them. But we're not capable to step back to see the big fish.'* (Respondent 53, civilian, executive organization)

The main limiting factor for this policy option, similar to other options, is in the law: *'Generally, the military by law cannot look inside Swedish borders. ... We don't want military intelligence looking at Swedish citizens.'* (Respondent 51, civilian, national government)

Crisis management

Crisis management seems to be the least controversial area in which to use the armed forces although the prime responsibility lies with the civilian agency MSB. The armed forces support civilian authorities for example in the event of flooding, forest fires, logistics, etc. Although the armed forces support to the civilian authorities during the COVID-19 pandemic was limited (the armed forces built two field hospitals that were never used and supported civilian authorities in different areas in testing for the virus), according to some respondents the pandemic did trigger a different way of thinking about the armed forces: *'I think, in a sense, COVID was a bit of a milestone, because everywhere in Europe governments had to call on the armed forces to help. ... And I think many people realized that this is a fantastic asset that we have, and they stopped thinking about the armed forces as only a tool of war, but more as a tool to use during societal crises, and as we discussed earlier, organized crime is becoming an extremely acute concern in Sweden.'* (Respondent 63, academic)

Cyber threats

Most respondents recognize that the armed forces have a role to play in the cyber area, claiming that *'The reason why cyber is also a job for the military is you can argue that cyber-attacks could be existential threats against Sweden.'* (Respondent 61, military)

Steps have been taken in Sweden to create more cooperation and coordination in dealing with cyber threats. A national cyber security center was established recently, but functions mainly as a hub, with no-one in the lead. In the words of one respondent, *'On the cyber area, we have been a few steps behind other European countries. ... we haven't decided on the political level which agency should be in the lead. ... Someone should have the national responsibility for cyber security.'* (Respondent 55, civilian, executive organization)

Another respondent agrees: *'Still this center is not an organization, not an agency. It's a co-operative working group. ... You must have some crisis management organization, national security council in the prime minister's office. ... There is a lack of coordination. The most important thing is to create a national security council to look at the cyber thing, develop a national strategy.'* (Respondent 69, academic)

In the area of cyber security, Sweden has been experimenting with cyber conscripts: *'... you can do your military service as a cyber soldier. We'll see how that works out. The thing is, the kind of capabilities you need in that kind of unit, those skills take a lot longer than a year to teach. The idea is that you start these people off and then let them go back into society to develop their skills and then keep them on as reservists.'* (Respondent 55, civilian, executive organization)

Some suggest taking this initiative further by creating a cyber-Home Guard, as will be discussed in the next section.

Hybrid forces

Apart from a domestic role for the armed forces, the creation of a hybrid force in between the armed forces and the civilian police could be an option. Some respondents see possibilities to use the existing Home Guard for certain domestic tasks, for example in border control and cyber security: *'That's actually the same thing as the Home Guard in Norway is doing right now. They are acting unarmed and under the leadership of the police, in checking people that cross the border into Norway. ... Since the Home Guard has an auxiliary function, I think it would be good, because it could alleviate some of the challenges of the police right now, patrolling the border.'* (Respondent 62, politician)

The Home Guard could focus on cyber security as well: *'We already have a national cyber security center and different agencies responsible for different aspects of cyber security are working together. ... The link that is still missing is how do we connect to enterprises, to the civilian sector. ... I'm thinking of a cyber-Home Guard, from the individual level up to covering state agencies and enterprises. Completely new forms of cooperation and collaboration that we need to discover. I think this is a driver for closer cooperation between military and civilian sectors.'* (Respondent 58, military)

During the Cold War, as part of the total defense system, Sweden had an organization called 'Beredskapspolisén', a sort of special readiness police consisting mainly of former conscripts who had undergone basic police training and could be called up in particular situations to supplement the regular police. It was used to guard embassies during the Gulf war, but other than that was not used much and was eventually dissolved in 2012. According to some respondents, this mainly had to do with cost effectiveness and with turf battles: *'They were hated. Police bureaucracy tried and ultimately succeeded in killing them off.'* (Respondent 64, academic)

Recently, a Swedish MP proposed to reintroduce this Beredskapspolisén (TV4, 2021), stating that *'They could for example ... control borders, assist in riot control, assist in border controls in case of refugees. ... Some of them can be especially equipped to handle large cases of grey zone attacks.'* (Respondent 62, politician)

A few years ago, a Swedish professor proposed the establishment of a gendarmerie of between 1.500 and 2.000 employees to deal with threats following from the blurring of internal and external security, such as cross-border organized crime. As explained in chapter 2, gendarmeries can quickly shift between small-scale, more regular police duties, to large-scale operations that protect national security. They would be especially useful in the grey zone between internal and external security. In the words of Hasselblad,

The thought of Swedish internal troops probably makes many associate it with Spain under Franco and all kinds of ghosts from European history. But there is hardly any sane person in Germany who regards the Bundespolizei, or in France the gendarmerie, as a threat to democracy. The threat to democracy lies in a liberal democracy that does not dare to create the resources required to ensure the integrity of the people's government and the security of the population in a time of new threats (Hasselblad, 2017).

However, this proposal has not sparked a political debate. Based on this case study, this can probably be explained by the Swedish preference to keep agencies separated in general and because of the heritage of Ådalen.

Public opinion

Having discussed the ideas of experts in the Swedish security domain about the domestic role of the armed forces, it is interesting to look at public opinion as well. Public opinion seems in fact to be positive about a domestic role for the armed forces. In a study from 2005 (note that this study was done before the threat picture changed again in the 2010s), both military and civilian students were asked about threats for Sweden and considered organized crime, drug trafficking and cyber threats to be the most important threats. 88% of the military students and 76% of the civilian students approved of the military dealing with domestic disorder. About half of both groups approved of the military combating drug trafficking. And 48% of military students and 29% of the civilian students supported the involvement of the military in the control of mass migration (Weibull, 2005).

The SOM Institute at the University of Gothenburg regularly performs public opinion research in Sweden. In a 2021 trend report, the Swedish public was asked about how important certain tasks are for the Swedish armed forces. For the first time, the public was asked about support to the police in operations against serious crime. 54% of the respondents considered this a very important task and 24% a fairly important task, with 14% considering it not very important or not important at all and 8% without an opinion (Berndtsson et al., 2021). There was also high support for the armed forces being tasked with defending Sweden's border against foreign threats, protecting central social functions against terrorist attacks, and assisting the civil authorities in crisis situations in Sweden. Support for tasks carried out in other countries (for example, peacekeeping operations or operations to depose leaders in dictatorships) had much less support. The report received some news coverage (Sveriges Radio, 2021; Ydén, 2021).

Conclusion

Based on the above analysis of policy options, it can be concluded that respondents see some possibilities to expand the domestic role of the armed forces. The main argument focuses on realizing that the current security situation is more complex than is presumed in the law. There are legal frameworks for peacetime (including peacetime crises) and for war, but not for the in-between scenarios. The Swedish authorities are predisposed not to let civil and military affairs blur. This raises the question of what to do when this blurring takes place anyway. As one respondent formulates it, *'In Sweden by legislation it's peace, and then there's war, and there's a legally defined tipping point on*

the one hand. On the other hand, we know that the span of conflict is travelling towards the grey zone.' (Respondent 54, civilian, executive organization)

This problem has been recognized by the police. *'The director of the police authority has written a letter to the government asking them to widen that law, in order for us to cooperate in grey zone and hybrid threats, the twilight zone between when a crisis starts, and you realize there's a state actor behind it. And they realized you have a grey zone area between where the police authority's mandate and capabilities stop, and the military's mandate and capabilities start. And they want to fill that grey zone.'* (Respondent 55, civilian, executive organization)

On the other hand, respondents are quite reluctant to mix mandates: *'No, you shouldn't have a mix of green and blue, that's the Swedish approach. ... never blend, because of issues of legitimacy, trust, training and mindset and all that.'* (Respondent 71, academic)

One respondent emphasizes the need to train together, but also to make it crystal clear to participants from both the civil and military domains what are the differences in aims and purposes between the two: *'I mean, I think given the reality we live in now, with grey zone security issues, if we are capable of understanding the different nature of various roles, if that is part of the training, then...because we may end up in a situation where we are in between. We may be approaching the legal context of an armed conflict but not be there entirely. In those kinds of situations, a grey zone kind of setting, training together for those kind of purposes is essential. But I think it's absolutely essential that we understand the differences in aims and purposes.'* (Respondent 67, academic)

When used in a domestic setting, the armed forces should, according to the respondents, always be under civilian command: *'Not necessarily that the military should go in and conduct operations on their own. It should be under the jurisdiction of the police or supporting the police authorities. That could be supporting them in whatever tasks or missions, so that they could get their own assets out of that area and use them elsewhere.'* (Respondent 59, military)

A clear line is the use of force against civilians: *'We should never ever be in a situation where the armed forces would be obliged to use force against its own population.'* (Respondent 62, politician) For some respondents, this means the armed forces can never work too closely together with the police, *'because then they might end up in a situation where they may need to use force.'* (Respondent 65, academic)

6.6 IMPACT ON CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

As shown in this chapter, in terms of civil-military relations, Sweden prefers the model of separation, in which the military and civil domain are separated and there is civilian supremacy over the military. As discussed, the armed forces have a very limited domestic role in Sweden, which can be explained by legal limitations, the trauma of Ådalen '31 and mixed attitudes on both the civilian and the military sides. At the same time, respondents presented several policy options for a larger and/or different domestic role for the armed forces, and there were some proposals for the creation of a hybrid force in between the police and the armed forces.

In terms of civil-military relations, this means there are signs of immersion. These signs and the trends will be described in the following section, focusing on four domains: society, public administration and strategy, law, and performance.

Immersion in society

The distance between the armed forces and society is one of the explanations for the slowly changing domestic role of the armed forces in the Netherlands. Even though Sweden suspended conscription for a decade as well, the distance between the armed forces and society seems to be smaller than in the Netherlands. One respondent explains, *'No, the Swedish armed forces have always been an integrated part of society. That goes back to the old conscription system. It's always been very close to the society. That was probably a problem with an all-voluntary force. Because then there was a tendency that it's separating itself from the public and becoming something on its own. The politicians didn't like it, so that's a reason they reintroduced conscription. The other reason was of course recruitment.'* (Respondent 51, civilian, national government)

Still, the amount of immersion was larger during the Cold War, and distance between the armed forces and society has grown since then, which is recognized by most respondents: *'I'm not saying that the defense forces are alienated. Not at all. They are a normal phenomenon in society. But there is not the same intimate presence and connection.'* (Respondent 70, academic)

With the growing conscription numbers and other measures from the total defense bill, such as the creation of new units throughout the country, the immersion of the armed forces in society will most likely grow.

Immersion in public administration and government strategy

Although the total defense model should in theory lead to coordination between the different agencies involved in security, including the armed forces, and an integrated strategy, previous sections have shown that the independence of Swedish government agencies from both the government and each other is a limiting factor. According to the respondents and the literature, cooperation depends on hubs and working groups and usually only develops over time, when the different players get to know each other. The national defense courses that have been reinstated recently could facilitate this. Some respondents argue for a larger coordinating role of the Prime Minister's Office or the establishment of a national security council: *'So, there is a lack of coordination. The most important thing is to create a national security council to look at the cyber thing, develop a national strategy. We don't have anyone with that oversight.'* (Respondent 69, academic)

Looking at recent developments, the new Swedish government has announced the creation of a national security council, led by the prime minister, and a new national security strategy. The first national security advisor has been appointed to lead the operational work of the national security council (Kristersson, 2022). The national security advisor has a background in both the armed forces and the foreign service, and before accepting this new position was Director General of the Swedish Psychological Defence Agency (Prime Minister's Office, 2022).

Immersion in performance

This form of immersion has to do with the concrete policy options defined in section 6.5. As discussed, experts see most possibilities in cyber capabilities and intelligence and are most reluctant when it comes to police tasks. Some respondents do expect developments in the fight against organized crime, for example, by expanding the current law on support in case of terrorist attacks.

This research shows that the Swedish authorities are reluctant to integrate capabilities in joint units. However, many respondents recognize that this makes it more difficult to tackle grey zone threats. A first example where a joint unit may be an option is in the area of cyber threats. In the recent total defense bill, the government has recognized that this topic deserves further analysis. Respondents expect developments to be slow: *'In that context, I think what may happen in Sweden is that the armed forces are called in under appropriate legislation on an ad hoc basis. It will grow gradually on that basis.'* (Respondent 63, academic)

The same reluctance in Sweden can be found when it comes to the establishment of hybrid forces, such as a gendarmerie or the re-establishment of the Beredskapspolisén. Some proposals have been made, but no concrete decisions have been taken so far.

Immersion in the law

An important legal challenge for the future will be how to integrate the two separate systems in Sweden: the emergency management system for peacetime crises and the total defense system for war. In the words of one respondent, *'By creating these separate tracks for peacetime crisis and war, you also build in automatically a gap that can be abused by a structured enemy, but also create a problem for ourselves to handle a situation clearly, because you can always doubt what is what and in what system should I be and how many differences are there. The authorities then have to decide what system to use when.'* (Respondent 65, academic)

Another respondent would prefer broader legislative possibilities, in which the armed forces would be able to support the police below the threshold of war as well: *'There is this legislation threshold that has to be reached before the armed forces can act. The threshold between peace and war. I would see an advantage if the armed forces were able to support the police below this threshold as well. The construct of CT¹⁷ support is quite well defined. The police is responsible. The armed forces will provide their resources. They have the same protection, the same tools. It works quite well. I would say if we could expand that so that the armed forces could work beneath that threshold, it would serve Sweden well.'* (Respondent 54, civilian, executive authority)

Small steps could already be helpful in improving cooperation between the armed forces and the police, for example in the level of decision-making: *'I would say a slight change the level of decision-making. That may be heritage from Ådalen '31, that the government needs to decide that the armed forces can support the police in CT. You could lower that a couple of floors, so that it would be easier.'* (Respondent 54, civilian, executive authority)

Another concrete example of widening legal possibilities would be to expand the terrorism law to include other crimes, but respondents do not expect any major developments: *'What I do think you will see is a discussion about the terrorism law, to see if you can somehow widen the catalogue of crimes where this kind of support could be used. ... I wouldn't be surprised if they do widen it, but I think it will be still kept like certain criminal acts with a very clear procedure around it.'* (Respondent 65, academic)

6.7 ANALYSIS

Both in the literature and in the interviews with Swedish respondents, there is evidence for the undermining of liberal democracy by the rise of new security threats and by declining social cohesion. Particularly noteworthy are the growing threats posed by the Russian (hybrid) threat, organized crime, and gang violence. Regarding the gang violence problem, authors and respondents point at the creation of parallel societies or even no-go areas in some parts of certain Swedish cities. Furthermore, social cohesion is declining, as is also evidenced by the IDEA data on Sweden that was presented in chapter 4. For the Swedish population, organized crime is also a major concern. Lastly, like in the Dutch case study, the respondents do not point at the undermining of liberal democracy by the state, but the discussion of policy options below shows the awareness of this risk.

The reconstruction of total defense, which has been ongoing since 2014, is one of the most significant recent developments in the armed services' domestic role. This includes the creation of a new Psychological Defence Agency (with a focus on countering disinformation and foreign influence operations) and the reshaping of the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (which is responsible for crisis management). The new government installed in the Fall of 2022 moved both agencies to the Ministry of Defense, which may be considered a form of militarization. The national defense courses from the Cold War era have been reinstalled as well.

In line with this focus on total defense against the external (Russian) threat and combined with the Swedish model of separate agencies, legal limitations, and the reluctance to use the armed forces in the domestic security context, the extent of constabularization has been limited, but respondents do point at some militarization of the police. Additionally, there have been some developments in involving the armed forces in the fight against terrorism. The impact of the Ådalen incident from 1931 (in which civilians were shot by the armed forces supporting the police) still lingers and especially civilian respondents cast doubt on the military's capacity to function in a law enforcement capacity. At the same time, respondents from the military emphasize their focus on the defense of the country against external threats. However, in line with the literature discussed in chapter 4, respondents from both sides recognize the rise of grey zone threats, which suggests that closer cooperation between the armed forces and the police is necessary, for example in intelligence matters and cyber threats.

Looking at future policy options, there is some support for the use of conscription to foster social cohesion and the integration of migrants in society. Although there is

evidence in the academic literature for a link between conscription and social cohesion (see chapter 2), about half of the Swedish respondents are reluctant to acknowledge this link. Respondents are reluctant about using the armed forces in police tasks, although the fight against organized crime is mentioned by some as an area that could profit from military support. Hybrid forces remain controversial in Sweden. It is interesting to note that public opinion research indicates a misalignment between the general public and the military and political elite, with the public seemingly rather supportive of the armed forces playing a part in the fight against organized crime.

As for the separation versus immersion dichotomy, the Swedish position differs per dimension. When looking at tasks and legal possibilities, Sweden is on the separation side of the dichotomy, with some small exceptions and developments taking place. As for society and public administration, developments are clearly moving towards a larger visibility and footprint of the armed forces. Evidence for this may be found in the rising numbers of conscripts, the efforts made to expand military presence across the nation, the transfer of two civilian agencies to the Ministry of Defense, and the establishment of a national security advisor and strategy.

Looking at the changes in the separation-immersion dichotomy in Sweden after the Cold War, evidently the developments differ from the developments discussed in chapter 5 in the Dutch case. Sweden came from a total defense background, where the position of the armed forces in society and government was stronger. Although the country has known a 'strategic time-out', during which the external threat posed by Russia was deemed small or absent, this period has only lasted for about 10 years, leaving the total defense structures largely intact. The visibility of the armed forces in society shrank in this period and arrangements such as the national defense courses were abolished but were not a thing of the distant past as it was in the Netherlands.

Both the Swedish military and the political elite have been reluctant in expanding the domestic role of the armed forces. The population, however, would support a larger role, especially in the fight against organized crime. Consequently, though small steps have been taken to enlarge the domestic role of the armed forces, the interplay between military, political elite and the population has not caused alignment (to use Schiff's theory) on a significant change in this domestic role. The Swedish system of separate agencies, combined with the Ådalen trauma, has undoubtedly played an important role in this regard. Because of the separate agencies, the Swedish armed forces have not developed policing capabilities during stability operations like the Dutch armed forces have. In addition, the strategic time-out period most likely was too short to cause meaningful change. The growing Russian threat, however, has fostered alignment between

the military, political elite and the population for strengthening the armed forces and increasing its visibility, leading to more immersion in Sweden anyway. The redesigned Swedish conscription system is popular among Swedish youth. In a significant move, the new Swedish government has decided to transfer two civilian agencies to the Ministry of Defense as well.

Looking at the issue of civilian control, Sweden is an interesting case study as well. On the one hand, respondents talk about civilian control in explaining why the domestic role of the armed forces should be small. On the other hand, as part of the effort to rebuild total defense, the government has transferred two civilian agencies (MSB – the Swedish civil contingencies agency and MPF – the Psychological Defense Agency) from the Ministry of the Interior to the Ministry of Defense. Although the agencies are placed under the new minister for Civil Defense, and not the regular minister of Defense, this is still an interesting move in a country which is reluctant to allow hybridization.

As discussed earlier in this chapter based on the work of Hedlund and Holmberg, the 'exceptionalism' around the Swedish armed forces has decreased since the end of the Cold War, indicating that Sweden has followed the line of Brooks, who argues for a normalization of the role of the military instead of treating it as an exceptional actor (Brooks, 2019). At the same time, related to the declining external threat, subjective control has become stronger. With the rebuilding of total defense, the pendula could again move in the opposite direction, towards more objective control and more professional autonomy for the military. This is in line with Desch's theory (Desch, 1998), while at the same time there are indications for the mediating link of militarization, as has been argued by Levy and Kuehn (Kuehn & Levy, 2021a, 2021b). It is worth mentioning the new Swedish National Security Council, that in Sweden only consists of ministers (unlike the Netherlands and also Finland, as will be discussed in the next chapter), which could be seen as an effort towards 'pragmatic civilian control' (Travis) or what Schiff calls 'targeted partnership', especially as the new National Security Advisor has a background in the armed forces.

APPENDIX: TABLE 6.1: POLICY OPTIONS FOR A CHANGING DOMESTIC ROLE OF THE ARMED FORCES

Domain	What	Why	Why not	Preconditions
Civic education	• Conscription reactivated with growing numbers • Social conscription • Involve high schools • National Defense Courses	• External threat • Foster social cohesion • Integration of migrants	• Armed forces cannot discipline everyone • Risky to train young people with a difficult background in the use of weapons	• Social cohesion argument only works with large numbers and when gender neutral
Police tasks	• Use of helicopters in support of police operations • Supporting the police in case of terrorism • Debate about organized crime	• Armed forces can provide specific capabilities in exceptional situations	• Risk of using violence against the population • Armed forces capabilities not good for crime fighting • Reluctance to mix mandates	• Support must be approved by government • Support should not hinder regular operations • Never in public order management • Training in police use of force • Under police command • Only when the intervention requires special resources the police do not have
Cyber domain	• Cooperation and coordination • Cyber conscripts • Cyber reservists	• Cyber threats can be an existential threat	• Legal obstacles, for example in sharing information	• Legal aspects must be dealt with
Crisis management	• Support civilian authorities in case of crises and disasters	• Uncontroversial, appreciated role		• Never in the lead
Intelligence	• Cooperation between military and civilian actors	• Create common situational awareness • Identifying the networks behind cases	• Legal obstacles	• Legal aspects must be dealt with
Hybrid forces	• Expand Home Guard tasks to e.g. border control and cyber security • Re-establishment 'Beredskapspolis' • Creation of a gendarmerie not a serious option (yet)	• Grey-zone threats • Augment the police when needed	• Preference for a separation of agencies	• Legal aspects must be dealt with



7

FINLAND

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the results of the case study on Finland. The first part of this chapter describes the Finnish armed forces, its tasks and legal framework, the relations between military and society, the current state of civil-military relations and civil-military cooperation in Finland (section 7.2). In section 7.3, specific security challenges and threats in the Finnish context are described in addition to the general analysis provided in chapter 4. Section 7.4 focuses on recent changes in the domestic role of the Finnish armed forces and explanations for these changes. Subsequently, section 7.5 addresses what policy options can be defined for a future domestic role of the armed forces. The last part of this chapter will focus on the balance between separation and immersion and developments in that area and will include an analysis of the results of this chapter using civil-military relations theory.

7.2 THE FINNISH DEFENCE FORCES

This section describes the Finnish Defence Forces (FDF), its tasks, the legal framework for the domestic use of the armed forces, as well as civil-military relations and cooperation. In addition, it describes the position of the Finnish armed forces in society. This will lay the foundation for future developments regarding the domestic role of the armed forces and civil-military relations.

The Finnish President is Supreme Commander of the FDF and can decide on key principles of national military defense, important changes in military readiness and principles of implementation of military defense. The Minister of Defense decides on the establishment of new garrisons or brigade-level units. The FDF are led by the Commander of the Finnish Defence Forces (Chief of Defence). The FDF consist of the Defence Command, the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and the National Defence University (The Finnish Defence Forces, 2022b).

During peacetime, the FDF consists of approximately 12.000 persons, including approximately 4.000 civilians. Annually, the FDF train around 22.000 conscripts (The Finnish Defence Forces, 2022b). Wartime strength of the FDF is 280.000, which can be augmented by adding more reservists, of which there are 900.000 in total.

Tasks

The tasks of the FDF are defined in the Law on the Defence Forces, dating from 2007 (Laki Puolustusvoimista, 2007), and last updated in 2022 (Laki Puolustusvoimista an-

netun lain 2 ja 10 §:n muuttamisesta, 2022). The FDF have 4 main tasks, based on article 2 of this law:

1. The military defense of Finland, which includes
 - a. Surveillance of land, water and airspace and safeguarding territorial integrity,
 - b. Safeguarding the living conditions of the population, fundamental rights and freedoms and the freedom of action of the state leadership, as well as defending the lawful social order,
 - c. The provision of military training and the management of voluntary defense training and the strengthening of the will to defend,
2. Support of other authorities, including
 - d. Assistance in maintaining public order and security, in preventing and interrupting terrorist offences and other offences causing serious danger to human life or health, and in protecting society in general,
 - e. Participation in rescue operations by providing equipment, human resources and expert services necessary for rescue operations,
3. Participation in assistance and aid based on Article 222 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union or Article 42(7) of the Treaty on European Union and participation in territorial surveillance cooperation or in other international assistance and activities,
4. Participation in international military crisis management and in military missions in other international crisis management.

Legal framework

Support of the FDF to other authorities is based on the Law on the Defence Forces, article 2, as defined under 'Tasks' above. Article 10 of this law defines support to the Police and the Border Guard (Laki Puolustusvoimista, 2007).

As for the Police, article 10 states that the FDF shall provide official assistance to the Police in accordance with the provisions of the Act on Official Assistance to the Police (Laki Puolustusvoimien virka-avusta Poliisille, 2022). It also states that a soldier is entitled, while under the direction and guidance of a police officer, to carry out measures related to the official assistance mission and to use force in accordance with the provisions of the above-mentioned act. In cases of emergency defense, the soldier acts under his official responsibility.

The Act on Official Assistance to the Police further specifies that the police can only receive assistance from the FDF if that is necessary for its performance due to insufficient police resources and if the assistance can be provided without jeopardizing the first task of the FDF (military defense of Finland). Assistance is defined in paragraph 2 of

the Act and could include a wide range of tasks such as search, arrest, directing traffic, security and surveillance, identification and clearance of explosive devices, protection of an event or public gathering, prevention and stopping of a crime which poses a serious threat to life or health and temporarily making available equipment, facilities, or expert assistance. Assistance by the FDF is based on four principles, namely respect for human rights, proportionality, least harm and purpose limitation.

The assistance may include the use of force and firearms suitable for the performance of police duties (article 5). Assistance must be requested by the Police Board or, in urgent cases, a police unit under the Police Board (article 7), and the decision to grant assistance is taken by the General Staff or the headquarters of the Army, Navy or Air Force.

Article 8 regulates the use of 'more powerful armament', in addition to a soldier's personal armament. This form of assistance may be requested when necessary to prevent or interrupt a terrorist (or comparable) offence which seriously endangers the life or health of many people.

Article 9 regulates the protection of visiting international VIPs, for which the FDF can deliver official assistance.

Referring to both article 8 and article 9, article 10 arranges for a special decision-making procedure where in principle the Government Council decides at the request of the Ministry of the Interior. In urgent cases, the Ministry of Defense decides. In case 'more powerful armament' needs to be used, the Ministry of Defense decides at the request of the Ministry of the Interior. In urgent cases, the General Staff may decide at the request of the Police Board. This procedure could be used for example in case of a hijacked airplane which needs to be shot down.

Personnel working based on the Act on Voluntary National Defence (*Laki Vapaaehtoista Maanpuolustuksesta*, 2007) can participate in official assistance duties, but are not allowed to use firearms (article 11).

Based on article 12, the official assistance mission takes place under police command. The police decide on the use of force (article 14). The armed forces personnel involved may only use force if necessary to prevent a serious and immediate threat to human life or health that cannot be averted by less serious means. The FDF are responsible for the costs of assistance, unless it takes up considerable resources, in which case the FDF can be reimbursed.

The Act on Official Assistance to the Police came into effect in 2022 and is an update of a 40-year-old law on the same topic. As explained on the website of the Ministry of the Interior, the update was deemed necessary because of the changing threat environment, for example to make it possible for the FDF to assist the police in exceptional circumstances where police personnel or equipment are not enough to deal with a situation (either quantitatively or qualitatively) (Ministry of the Interior, 2022). Examples are the prevention or interruption of terrorist crimes, but also other crimes that seriously endanger life or health if their effects are comparable with terrorist crimes. The decision to grant assistance can be made at an earlier stage than in the old law, facilitating prevention and preparation. In the old law, the situation had to be immediately threatening. In the words of the ministry, official assistance is an economically justified means of strengthening the operational capacity of the police.

As for the Border Guard, article 10 of the Law on the Defence Forces states that the FDF shall provide official assistance to the Border Guard in accordance with the Border Guard Act (Rajavartiolaitos, 2005). Based on the Border Guard Act, article 79, the Border Guard can receive assistance from the FDF for missions related to border security, if the assistance can be provided without jeopardizing the performance of other tasks of the FDF. Personnel providing assistance are permitted to use force under the supervision of a Border Guard. Same as with assistance to the police, the FDF bear the costs of assistance, unless the assistance takes so long that it leads to significant costs for the FDF, in which case it can be reimbursed.

Lastly, article 11 of the Law on the Defence Forces stipulates that the defense forces can provide assistance to protect society, in particular in case of oil spills (Laki Puolustusvoimista, 2007).

Military and society

As in Sweden, the total defense model has dominated the Finnish security landscape during the Cold War. This section therefore starts with a description of the relevant developments in that respect. After the Cold War, the total defense model transformed into what is called the comprehensive security model, which is also described in the following section. An important element of both models is the Finnish system of conscription. The final part of this section focuses on that topic.

Total defense

The roots of the total defense model lie in the civil war after the Finnish declaration of independence in 1917, with the Finnish Red Guards revolting against the White Civil Guards (state troops). After the civil war, the Finnish security structure was based on

the White Civil Guards. An important factor in stimulating collaborative thinking in the country was the Winter War in 1939-1940, that was caused by the invasion of the Soviet Union. Former 'reds' and 'whites' united against the invasion and despite severe losses, Finland was able to remain independent. It had been forced to mobilize the whole nation to achieve this. This served as the foundation for the concept of total defense (Valtonen & Branders, 2021).

During the Cold War, the Soviet Union forced Finland to keep some distance from other western countries, leading to what the Finns call '*impivaara*', and what Valtonen and Branders describe as the '*Finnish mindset of go-it-alone isolationism*' and to the principle of pragmatism informing security policy (Valtonen & Branders, 2021). The balancing act of Finland between Soviet pressure and cooperation with the western world has been called 'Finlandization' (Aaltola et al., 2014).

In this period the Finnish Defence Council that developed the components of total defense was established, including the creation of national defense courses for key leaders in the 1960s. The total defense concept was implemented top-down, and a major element of the model concerned the ability to endure large-scale societal distress, which also required a willingness of the citizens to defend the country and its core values. Hyvönen and Juntunen describe this as the spiritual component of the model and point at the 'enlightened patriotism' it entails (Hyvönen & Juntunen, 2021).

After the Cold War, the threat environment started to change and widen. As Hyvönen and Juntunen describe new emerging threats like organized crime, terrorism and migration challenged the military-centric conceptions of security (Hyvönen & Juntunen, 2021). During this period, the model of total defense was broadened and evolved into the Finnish comprehensive security model, a cross-sector cooperative framework that will be discussed below. One of the reasons for this development was that the total defense model was considered a militarization of the nation (Valtonen & Branders, 2021). However, the total defense model was not abolished but remains part of the comprehensive security model.

Comprehensive security

The Finnish comprehensive security model, as described by Valtonen and Branders, (a) focuses on coordination across and between governance levels, (b) takes a phenomenon-led approach, (c) is built on the rule of law, and (d) emphasizes preparedness (Valtonen & Branders, 2021). In this sense, it can be considered as both a conceptual approach and a governance model (Fitz-Gerald & Macnamara, 2012; Valtonen & Branders, 2021).

As for coordination, the model aims for better coordination between national security authorities, local authorities, (non-governmental) organizations, the private sector and citizens. An important role is fulfilled by the Security Committee, that assists the government in matters related to comprehensive security. The committee was installed in 2013, facilitates information exchange between relevant actors and develops various strategies, such as the Security Strategy for Society and the Finnish Cyber Security Strategy. The committee is jointly chaired by the Ministry of Defense and the Prime Minister's Office. Its members come from various government ministries and executive organizations such as the Police, Defence Command, Border Guard, Customs, and the Intelligence Service (The Security Committee, 2022). To improve the involvement of citizens, the concept of 'security cafés' was implemented. In these cafés, authorities and citizens discuss safety and security issues (Valtonen & Branders, 2021).

The approach is phenomenon-based, which means that practical needs are at the core of the model, rather than administrative decisions. A good example of this phenomenon-based approach is the cooperation model between the Border Guard, Customs, and the Police. This model developed in rural Lapland because of scarce resources and will be further explained in section 7.5.

The principle of rule of law means that each authority has its own competence, based on legal provisions. In specific cases, when regular legislation is considered insufficient, the Emergency Powers Act may be activated, as was for example the case during the COVID pandemic (Valtonen & Branders, 2021).

Lastly, the principle of preparedness means that foresight processes play an important role in the comprehensive security model.

The most recent description of the model can be found in the Security Strategy for Society that was published in 2017¹⁸. It is based on cooperation between various security actors from both the public and private sectors, including citizens. The strategy describes the seven vital functions of society that should be safeguarded, namely leadership, international and EU activities, defense capability, internal security, economic infrastructure and security of supply, functional capacity of the population and services, and psychological resilience. The vital functions are presented in the shape of a diamond (The Security Committee, 2017).

18 A revised version of this strategy is expected early 2025.

The FDF organize *National Defence Courses*, that encourage comprehensive thinking. The course takes 3,5 weeks and is attended by key leaders of Finland, such as Members of Parliament, CEOs of critical infrastructure companies, NGO and media leaders, artists, and academics (Valtonen & Branders, 2021). The courses have a certain aura of mystery surrounding them for the public and are known to foster both networking and cohesion in the Finnish elite (Hart, 2023).

Although largely considered a success, some problems with the model remain, as Valtonen and Branders describe. These have to do with lack of resources and with competition and bureau-politics between the security organizations involved. As we will see in section 7.4, this is recognized by respondents as well.

An interesting element in the Finnish comprehensive security model, as analyzed by Hyvönen and Juntunen, is the concept of resilience. They describe resilience as the ability to (a) withstand the effects of major disruptions, (b) maintain the ability to act amid a crisis and (c) bounce back from the crisis and being able to learn from it to increase the ability to adapt to future circumstances (Hyvönen & Juntunen, 2021). Resilience focuses on the enhancement of society's functionality to face unpredictable threats, and it emphasizes the role of the private sector, civil society, and even individual citizens (Hyvönen & Juntunen, 2021). According to Hyvönen and Juntunen, in the specific Finnish context the main interpretation of the concept of resilience emphasizes the top-down process of defining strategic priorities and maintaining national cohesion as well as resistance through preparedness and fast recovery instead of the adaptive and self-governing capacities of the population (Hyvönen & Juntunen, 2021). Based on a discourse analysis of textbooks for the National Defence Courses, Hart concludes that the word 'resilience' (both at the collective and at the individual levels) has replaced the term 'pluralist patriotism' that was used before to emphasize that patriotism is relevant for both the political left and the political right (Hart, 2023).

The role of the Ministry of Defence remains relatively strong and according to Virta and Branders, there is no devolution of power and agency to the civil society and local communities (Virta & Branders, 2016). However, it is recognized that resilience capacities of society are needed to execute the strategic priorities, and this requires legitimacy, trust in the authorities and a sense of national togetherness (Aaltola et al., 2018; Hyvönen & Juntunen, 2021). Hyvönen and Juntunen also recognize a shift towards responsabilization of civil society and individual citizens as key agents in resilience building. Still, they consider the Finnish concept of resilience is mainly aimed at 'bouncing back' rather than 'bouncing forward' or adaptive learning / resilience as renewal. This may be related to

the total defense heritage that is still very much present in the comprehensive security model.

Conscription

Based on the Finnish Constitution, every Finnish citizen must participate in national defense. For men, this means conscription (or civil service for those with ethical or religious objections). As mentioned on the website of the FDF, the objective of military training is *'to sustain the readiness of the Finnish Defence Forces and to train individuals liable for military service in tasks of national defence.'* (The Finnish Defence Forces, 2022a) Military service is obligatory for men; women can serve on a voluntary basis since 1995.

Military training consists of various training phases and, depending on the training, it takes 165, 255 or 347 days. Conscripts are selected for training programs based on the needs of the FDF, willingness and personal competences (The Finnish Defence Forces, 2022a).

As Kosonen and Mälkki describe, conscription has for over a century been a deep-rooted part of the Finnish state, nation, society, and culture (Kosonen & Mälkki, 2022). It is seen on the one hand as the only cost-effective model to establish national defense in a non-aligned country like Finland, situated so close to and with such a long border with Russia. On the other hand, it is seen as a key cultural phenomenon, or even a myth that unites citizens and fosters the will to defend the country (*maanpuolustustahto* in Finnish), which is very high in Finland compared with other countries. The FDF have a legal obligation to foster the willingness to defend the country among the Finnish population and participation in national defense is considered a civic duty, based on the Finnish Constitution (Hadar & Häkkinen, 2021; The Finnish Constitution, 1999). Conscription also makes the military a visible part of society (Valtonen & Branders, 2021).

Conscription in Finland has remained unchanged for a long time. However, as Hadar and Häkkinen describe, since 2018 the possibility of national service has been debated, which would allow both men and women to choose between military or non-military service as an alternative to conscription (Hadar & Häkkinen, 2021). The most recent developments will be described in section 7.5.

Civil-military relations

Looking at the ideal types for civil-military relations defined in chapter 2, Finland, at first sight, seems to match the preferred model for a democratic regime, in which the civilian and the military domain are separated and there is civilian supremacy over the military. Virta and Taponen, in describing the Nordic police philosophy, emphasize the

importance of civilian features, meaning that policing tasks are not performed by the military (Virta & Taponen, 2017).

However, other than Sweden, Finland has never abandoned the total defense model, which has resulted in a relatively strong position of the FDF in Finnish society. Although officially the total defense concept has transformed into the concept of comprehensive security, in practice the influence of the military remains relatively strong. This can be seen in the Security Committee, for example, which is headed by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Defense while the State Secretary of the Prime Minister's Office acts as deputy. It can also be seen in the National Defence Courses, that are organized by the FDF, and even in the name of these courses, that have not been changed to 'comprehensive security courses'.

As general conscription for men has never been abandoned, there is little distance between the armed forces and society. As Hadar and Häkkinen describe it,

Conscription, therefore, is not only a source of military manpower but also a facilitator of a militarized mind-set, whereby giving one's all in time of national crisis is essential to the state's survival (Hadar & Häkkinen, 2021, p. 207).

On the legal level, there are many possibilities for the armed forces to support civilian authorities. However, in practice, as will be discussed further on in this chapter, there is quite a strict separation between the armed forces and other actors in the security domain.

Military personnel are encouraged to refrain from party political discussions and from connecting the FDF to these discussions (Finnish Defence Forces, 2017).

Civil-military cooperation

The FDF have 12 regional offices that are responsible for conscription matters (call-ups, ordering reservists to refresher exercises), the planning of military national defense, cooperation with other authorities and national defense work (Finnish Defence Forces, 2022). The most recent Government's Defence Report proposes a transformation of most of the regional forces into local forces. These will create a national network that will cooperate with and support other authorities and society, for example in the protection of vital infrastructure or restoring services after disruptions. The local forces will have to use the reservists more effectively, and this will include more training and refresher exercises, also using the capabilities of voluntary national defense (Finnish Government, 2021b). Voluntary defense training in Finland is provided by the National Defence

Training Association of Finland (MPK). The organization provides military training to FDF reservists, familiarization training for youths aged 16 and older, and information on voluntary national defense. It also provides safety, security, and preparedness skills training (such as first aid, self-defense) and instructor and leadership training (Maanpuolustuskoulutus, n.d.).

7.3 SECURITY CHALLENGES AND THREATS

In chapter 4, three security and stability related threats were defined that undermine liberal democracy, namely (1) the blurring of internal and external security and the rise of new security threats, (2) declining social cohesion and the rise of social unrest and parallel societies and (3) undermining of liberal democracy by the state. This section will discuss how these challenges play out in Finland.

The Government Report on Finnish Foreign and Security Policy emphasizes global challenges such as climate change, pandemics, the rise of nationalism and populism, migration and hybrid threats and the impact these challenges may have on Finnish society and social cohesion. At the same time, it recognizes that the rules-based international system is under growing pressure because of the increasing competition between great powers, and specifically naming the role of China and Russia (Finnish Government, 2020).

Under the auspices of the Ministry of the Interior, every three years, the Finnish government produces a National Risk Assessment. The latest version was published in 2023 (Ministry of the Interior, 2023). It assesses threats and risks on the global, societal, and individual level, and relates them to the functions that are vital to society as they have been defined in the Security Strategy for Society 2017. The report points at a transformation of the foreign and security policy environment of Finland, due to increased competition between the superpowers, the weakening of the rules-based international order and increased instability in the region caused by the Russian war in Ukraine. It also points at global challenges such as climate change, the availability of food and water, migration, and pandemics. Within Finnish society, the report points at polarization, growing regional differences, and increasing inequality. It notes that hostile information influence activities may be used to create and accelerate polarization in society. In the area of crime, the report points at an increase of violence, firearms, and drugs, online and cross-border crime. The report also mentions that digitalization poses specific risks, such as cybercrime and disruptions of electronic platforms. Research by Virta and Taponen is in line with the results of this risk assessment (Virta & Taponen, 2017).

In 2021, the Finnish Government published a Report on Internal Security, identifying developments in internal security until 2030 (Finnish Government, 2022). The report emphasizes that Finland is a very safe country and ranks high in international comparisons. Still, the report notes that rising social inequality may lead to security problems, and polarization may lead to increased social tensions and unrest, although in general social cohesion in Finland remains high. Trust in security authorities is generally high as well, although the opposition and violence towards the authorities have increased steadily in the past 10 years. As for safety issues, the report notes that accidents and injuries are more common in Finland than in neighboring countries. The analysis notes that for the past 30 years, crime rates have decreased. The report also notes that there are about 70 organized-crime groups in Finland, most of them biker gangs. These groups have tried to become part of legal social structures and the use of organized crime in hybrid influence operations must be monitored. The report expects organized crime to increase and become more international and serious, following the trend in other EU member states. Serious and extensive incidents may become more common, for example, maritime or regional major accidents, violent movements, extensive immigration, activities targeting critical infrastructure, and terrorist attacks.

In its 2021 yearbook, the Finnish Security and Intelligence Service (Supo) emphasizes the risk of refugee espionage operations, risks to information security and the threat of terrorism (right wing or radical Islamist) (Supo, 2021).

As mentioned in chapter 4, research by IDEA shows there is a decline in all indicators for liberal democracy in Finland in the last 10 years. As the data show, the sharp decline in civil liberties and impartial administration stands out from the other indicators also showing a decline. This may indicate the undermining of liberal democracy by the government. The decline in the indicator for impartial administration could also point at horizontal undermining if part of the population feels treated unfairly. On the other hand, the World Bank data discussed in chapter 4 show that 'group grievances' are not a major issue in the Nordic countries.

Hyvönen and Juntunen point at exceptional measures that have been taken by the government in recent years to combat new security threats, for example the introduction of new intelligence laws and surveillance measures in 2019 (Hyvönen & Juntunen, 2021). However, as Virta and Taponen describe, it may be difficult to reconcile these measures with principles of community policing, such as trust in communities and protection of human rights (Virta & Taponen, 2017). They see a strengthening of the role of the state in Nordic countries, due to the political situation and new security threats.

Recent research by IDEA focuses on the impact of COVID-19 measures on democracy and human rights. Both in 2020 and 2021, the Finnish government declared a state of emergency in Finland, which lasted for a couple of months and made the use of special powers under the Emergency Powers Act possible. These measures included restrictions on cross-border movement and assembly. One measure that stood out was the quarantining of the Uusimaa region (including Helsinki) from the rest of the country for three weeks in March 2020, with exceptions for essential commuting and other work-related travel. All in all, IDEA classifies Finland as a high performing country with no violations of the Democratic Standards Index during the pandemic and a low risk on the Pandemic Backsliding Index (Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2022).

The reports mentioned above show indications for the three security challenges identified in chapter 4. How do the respondents for this case-study evaluate the challenges? When asked about security threats, respondents first and foremost speak about Russia, and to a lesser extent China, pointing out that *'...the risk of conventional war, armed conflict with Russia, is always on the table when we are evaluating our crisis environment.'* (Respondent 78, academic) Although Russia most readily comes to mind, one respondent points out that *'...one could say that Russia is a bad weather or a storm, but China is a climate change. And China is also interested in Finland because it's the only area where it can reach the Arctic area.'* (Respondent 73, civilian, national government)

At the same time, some respondents recognize that the threat environment is changing, with non-military threats on the rise. As one respondent points out, *'Cyber is one big issue which I think we are always a few steps behind what we should have done already and that is maybe my main concern, that it might...have cascading effects leading to systematic failures, which can cause harm to normal people and to politicians ability to do their job. We have built a modern society which is very vulnerable in some sense, because people do not tend to think of security first; it comes few steps later.'* (Respondent 77, military)

Terrorism is considered as less of a problem in Finland, and the same goes for organized crime: *'Organized crime is not so interested in Finland, because nothing is happening here. There are not so many opportunities. And mostly the critical infrastructure is located in Helsinki area and the south part. And in the north, there is nothing. So, you cannot run an illegal business either, because there are no consumers. The only trend we have at the moment is that organized crime is interested in buying land in Finland.'* (Respondent 81, academic)

Relatively few respondents are concerned with polarization and social unrest, although they do recognize this may change towards the future. One respondent explains, *'On my radar, that is not a particularly pressing issue. There are signs that social unrest may rise to*

the domestic security agenda as well; for instance, our major cities in Finland are developing in the direction of Sweden, where some areas have become no-go zones for instance.' (Respondent 83, academic)

As this short overview shows, respondents are mainly concerned with external threats and the increased blurring of external and internal threats, but less with internal issues like declining social cohesion, although they do recognize this may change towards the future.

7.4 RECENT CHANGES IN THE DOMESTIC ROLE: EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

Respondents note that changes to Finnish policy, on any subject, typically happen very slowly; this also holds true for the domestic role of the armed forces. A respondent with an academic background explains, *'Our legislation is not flexible enough to face these hybrid threats or new situations. I think there might be some attempts to tackle that fact, but otherwise I don't see that at this moment there would be any changes or surprises. There usually isn't. We always strive for consensus and that means changes are slow. It can be frustrating sometimes.'* (Respondent 91, academic)

In Finnish history, social transformations are usually related to a big crisis because *'Then people understand that this is not the way to live. We have to change society.'* (Respondent 81, academic) One recent example is of course the Finnish decision to apply for NATO membership after the Russian attack on Ukraine. Public opinion changed almost overnight to an overwhelming majority in favor of NATO membership.

One recent change that stands out is the transformation of the total defense model into the comprehensive security model, as was described in section 7.2. This transformation reflects the broadening of the threat environment and could imply a larger domestic role of the FDF, since with the total defense model all focus was on society supporting national defense. However, in practice not much has changed in the domestic role of the FDF.

In 1961 Finland started with National Defense Courses for elite representatives of various sectors in society. With the transformation of total defense to the comprehensive security model, the substance of these courses has changed, but it is still the FDF who is organizing the courses.

The main purpose of the courses is to inform the participants about national security and to at the same time build a network between participants. Respondents are overwhelmingly positive about the courses. As one respondent explains: *'It suits Finland because of what I said about cohesion in a small country. Everybody knows everybody. We trust each other and it reproduces that. It would also be beneficial in security situations, that people know each other. As a military sociologist I know that the official organization is never enough. You need to have the unofficial side as well, the networks.'* (Respondent 91, academic)

In recent years, these courses have broadened: *'It's been opened up, it's more broad than it used to be, and it's very good that journalists, government officials, heads of enterprises and so on, it's very good that the military brings them together. There should be more internal issues, like organized crime for example, and the change has been in that direction.'* (Respondent 84, academic)

As a side effect, most respondents point out the positive effect of the courses on the position of the military: *'... they are extremely well arranged. You'll be flying helicopters, visiting battle ships. So, it's also a promotional activity from the military point of view.'* (Respondent 73, civilian, national government) Very few respondents make critical remarks about the courses: *'I was in the course in 2005 or so. I think it's a big opportunity for the military. I think it's very clever ..., because they create that kind of atmosphere that we are really important and remarkable people in society, and we have a big responsibility because we are so important. People are like that. If they hear they are so important, they want to support it. And I didn't like this atmosphere. It's a kind of manipulation. But there's also a lot of useful information.'* (Respondent 72, civilian, national government)

As we have seen in Sweden as well, the fact that the FDF are preferably not used for police tasks has led to a certain militarization of the police: *'Of course we are aware of this militarization of police. Police has bought armored vehicles. ... But what has happened in Sweden, some who are fond of militarizing, also in police, they claim that it's obvious what is happening in Sweden will in the near future happen in Finland. Of course we have to be ready and be prepared, have the equipment.'* (Respondent 86, academic) However, most respondents say this process has been relatively limited in Finland. This may be related to the relatively small problems in Finland in for example organized crime, as was described in section 7.2, but also with the police not being as good in strategic communication as the FDF. As one respondent points out: *'I think this is partly because of the police itself. The police are not very good at explaining what they are doing and why the money is needed. The armed forces are very good at this kind of PR work, how to touch*

people's feelings. The police think that everybody knows what they are doing so they don't have to explain.' (Respondent 72, civilian, national government)

Looking for explanations for the fact that relatively little changed in the domestic role of the armed forces in Finland, three factors stand out:

Factor 1: Historical reasons and the security environment

Because the Finnish have always felt an external threat, even after the end of the Cold War, unlike Sweden and the Netherlands (and many other countries), the debate about what to do with the armed forces simply has not come up much: *'There hasn't been much need to debate what to do with the armed forces, because it is pretty evident that they are needed for the defense of the country, the traditional role.'* (Respondent 83, academic) This image of the FDF is ingrained in Finnish society and is easy to explain to the Finnish population, unlike the comprehensive security model: *'We see the defense forces like, every man goes to the border and fights, that's the defense forces. ... It's so difficult for people to understand what we have done in terms of comprehensive security for example. It's so fuzzy, different kinds of organizations, coordination, cooperation in networks.'* (Respondent 91, academic)

Some find that a domestic role would distract them from their main task of defending the country and make them less capable of fulfilling these tasks as well: *'If you would give them more tasks, they probably would say no, we don't want to. We have enough work in making these youngsters become soldiers and handling emergencies, and that's the only way in which we can keep the level of deterrence that is needed. ... So that is part of deterrence, that you have well educated...you don't lower them to be like stopping cars [like a police officer], you know.'* (Respondent 88, academic)

In a sense, in the words of the same respondent, the main task of the FDF is simply to be there: *'They are withstanding or preventing the threat by existing. By keeping the equipment and training at that level that it would be very costly for Russia to do what they are doing in Ukraine now. ... That's the main task, to just be there. ... I think almost everyone in Finland understands it. ... So that's why also the military want to do their own job, and not be distracted by anything else, like organized crime.'* (Respondent 88, academic)

Some point at the Finnish history to explain the reluctance to use the armed forces in a domestic context: *'And also we have our long history of our war for freedom where the Finns were fighting against each other. The state was divided between Reds and Whites and the Whites won the war. The defense forces have been created based on the white army and we still carry symbols on our flags and uniforms which are coming from the white army. That's*

one sensitivity. ... Many families still remember these events and look negatively towards the armed forces, because our ancestors shot their grandfather for example.' (Respondent 78, academic) Another respondent clarifies that because of the civil war '*...we don't want to see our own people fighting against our own people.'* (Respondent 92, academic)

Interestingly, one respondent points out that the existence of conscription may prevent change in the military because '*If you think about society, almost all men have been to military service. They have a view of the military. That view can prevent a new role for the military in society.'* (Respondent 82, academic)

Factor 2: Comprehensive security, a model of silo's

In the Finnish system, organizations stick to their own task as much as possible: '*I'm not sure about the background, but we don't have this kind of culture or traditions. We have very good cooperation between authorities, and we can help each other, but we want to keep the authorities separated in public. I think it's strongly a part of our culture and our tradition.'* (Respondent 74, military) Culture is mentioned by another respondent from the military as well: '*It's quite difficult to say, but in our culture all the authorities do their own business. And then we have some kind of model, we are dining together, but after dinner everybody leaves to do their own work. It's not tradition.'* (Respondent 75, military)

This model sounds similar to the Swedish model of independent government agencies, and it may actually be related to it, as Finland used to be part of Sweden in the past. As one respondent points out, '*First of all, if you think about governmental structures and processes in Finland, they date back to I think 19th century, [when Finland was] part of Sweden, part of Russia and so on, and very little has changed since then. The status of a ministry in Finland is very independent, very strong. They are very jealous regarding resources, positions, and so on.'* (Respondent 84, academic)

As was shown in section 7.2, the Finnish comprehensive security model seems in fact to be a model of silos: '*I say what is the main issue here in Finland is that we have horizontal phenomena, but our processes, organizations and actors are very vertical. We have silos.'* (Respondent 84, academic) Another respondent confirms this view: '*Now we look at this system of comprehensive security and in the idealistic world this model creates great cooperation between all authorities. And it is doing that, but there are quite strong political tensions inside that system, because if you are starting to expand your limits, then you are always overlapping some other organization's authority. ... So that has led to the situation that the comprehensive security model is a silo model.'* (Respondent 78, academic)

The Security Committee, which assists the government in matters of comprehensive security, is currently positioned at the Ministry of Defense. According to the same respondent, this is a mistake: *'First of all, it's in the wrong place. It shouldn't have been in the Ministry of Defense at all. I was part of the process and I was strongly recommending that it should be in the PM's office, but in 2011/2012 there was a discussion and the PM's office didn't realize, well, more or less anything, but at least not security issues as they should. So, it ended being part of the Ministry of Defense and it took several years that the committee has become acceptable to all partners. But currently it has no resources, it has no legislation backing them. ...that committee should step up from this coordinating role to do some implementing. But ok, nobody in those organizations which are represented there wish any organ above them.'* (Respondent 84, academic) Another respondent agrees, pointing out the usefulness of the model, but criticizing the execution: *'I think the concept, the idea of this diamond model is excellent. It is almost 10 years old at the moment and there's a need to update it. The problem with the model is that mostly the execution, after the decision-making of the crisis, the part that executes the security for society, they are in the stovepipes.'* (Respondent 81, academic)

These responses are confirmed in the literature. Based on her discourse analysis of the textbooks for the *National Defence Courses* between 2000 and 2018, Hart concludes that even though the comprehensive security model aspires towards a holistic approach, comparable with the comprehensive approach in international relations, in practice, it has 'morphed into a technocratic and bureaucratic management tool' (Hart, 2023, p. 184). A report by the Safety Investigation Authority on the management by the government of the first part of the COVID-19 pandemic confirms this sentiment. Among other recommendations, the report recommends an update of the model for future crises, ensuring that open, proactive, and adequate cooperation, preparation, and leadership are started on time. In addition, the flow of information between the levels of administration needs to improve (Safety Investigation Authority, 2021). A respondent elaborates, *'At the start of the COVID pandemic an organization was created for situational awareness for the prime minister and other ministers from different sectors of society. We have an organization where we can organize that function, but instead of that, when the crisis started, the prime minister created her own headquarters, with her own staff. So, this model we have been building since 35 years was pushed aside. It was not used at all.'* (Respondent 78, academic)

Competition between organizations is primarily playing a role at the state level and less at the regional level: *'I would say that at the regional level there are no such problems. ... The idea of all the police chiefs, fire guard, doctors, etc. They have been friends with each other in such a small city. They know each other, they practice together constantly. But then when we come to state level, the problems start.'* (Respondent 78, academic) Another

respondent confirms that *'At the local level, the cooperation is very good, but the higher you go, at the strategic level, the more problematic it becomes.'* (Respondent 84, academic)

When asked why there is close cooperation between civilian security organizations (Police, Customs and Border Guard) and not so close between these organizations and the armed forces, respondents are quite clear: *'I think the main reason for the problem is we have [the] Ministry of Defence leading national defense. [The] Ministry of Interior is leading police forces, border guard and customs. They are under one ministry and it's natural for them to take breakfast together and operate together. But if you must go to a different ministry and create cooperation, it's quite a long way.'* (Respondent 75, military)

One respondent points out that the silos may remain so strong in Finland, exactly because there are strong networks: *'Maybe that's why we have such strong silos, because the networks fill in. If we didn't have the networks, we couldn't have the silos.'* (Respondent 91, academic)

Factor 3: Mixed attitudes

As was evident in Sweden and the Netherlands as well, attitudes in Finland are mixed about a different role for the FDF in a domestic context. This is related to the previous two factors mentioned.

On the civilian side, some fear the armed forces could be too dominating in cooperation: *'I think it's very difficult for the military to be in a supporting role. It's somehow against their professional identity. ... There would be difficulties if the civilians do not take a strong position. Because the military would like to decide independently how the cooperation is going on, because that's the way they work. But it can lead to the civilians being more on the side, and that's the challenge.'* (Respondent 72, civilian, national government)

On the military side, according to most respondents, the armed forces prefer to remain in a supporting role: *'They are in a supporting role, and they like to keep it that way. So, more or less the situation is that and our military is not very eager to have a larger role and I think this current understanding, this sentiment in society would not support that.'* (Respondent 84, academic)

While most respondents are quite reluctant when it comes to a different role for the armed forces, some think it will have to change due to changing security challenges: *'We cannot decide now to concentrate on our classical tasks. The society needs more and more response and dialogue from the FDF. How the FDF sees society, how to defend society, what are the options. Maybe the nation state and civilians and the other sectors are no longer*

happy to see that we only concentrate on our own task.' (Respondent 81, academic) However, some fear that the military will not want to change: *'The challenge is that I'm not sure that the military system and the people behind it have real interest to take into account all those threats in society, which we really have and people are afraid of. That's one thing that's preventing the change from a traditional military organization to an organization which is taking part in comprehensive security. I hope I am wrong about it.'* (Respondent 82, academic)

7.5 POLICY OPTIONS FOR A CHANGING DOMESTIC ROLE

As discussed, Finland has been quite reluctant to increase the domestic role of the armed forces. This is related to historical reasons and the threat environment, the comprehensive security model and its silos, and mixed attitudes on both the civilian and military side. What future policy options do Finnish experts see for the domestic role of the armed forces?

In general, when asked about a changing domestic role for the armed forces towards the future, most respondents agree that changes will be incremental and limited, unless a big crisis takes place that makes change necessary: *'But looking at the learning cycle of crisis management, things need to go terribly wrong for the government to come to the conclusion that we need a radical change. Otherwise, it's more incremental changes here and there, but the basic structure remains the same.'* (Respondent 80, academic)

One respondent points out that Finland may be at a crossroads: *'In my opinion we are at a crossroads, whether we are heading for option A or option B. Maybe there is an option C available. In my opinion, the defense forces are very much, culturally speaking, Anglo-American. All our ideas come from either the US or the UK. And the situation in those countries is like Huntingtonian, or post-Huntingtonian. ... Why not read Janowitz in addition to Huntington and figure out how to organize those things that we discussed about. But there are few options and I'm not sure in which direction we are heading. In the 2030s we will see what has happened.'* (Respondent 86, academic)

This section describes the various policy options in detail. In the appendix to this chapter, the policy options are summarized in table 7.1.

Civic education and conscription

Because general conscription is mandatory for men in Finland, it is usually the first topic mentioned by respondents when asked about civic education and they add that the FDF is *'a real citizen's army in that sense.'* (Respondent 87, academic)

Some respondents propose a civil service or new models of conscription to increase the involvement of young people in society. *'...what we should have is a civil service. Ok, you may be part of the military, and the military decides we need you, and not you, but everybody should help, in a school or a hospital or whatever. Nowadays, there are so many young people that are not part of society at all. ... everybody participates three months, four months whatever to find out, ok, there is a society! And that's something we should be doing.'* (Respondent 84, academic) Another respondent agrees and links this with the comprehensive security model: *'But if I think about the future, we have a really big strength in society. We could change military service in a way that it could take all those comprehensive security issues to the citizen level. Citizens would participate to solve the problems in society. ... I think that part of the people should just participate in a short security course, which could also be virtual. Others could integrate more deeply. It's very challenging to develop such a model.'* (Respondent 82, academic)

Conscription could also be helpful in the integration of migrants, as is pointed out by several respondents: *'We have a lot of very good, even excellent experiences with those things, how former migrants have been to conscript service and how well they have learned and how good their experience is with these training events. This has enabled them to be more and more citizens of Finland.'* (Respondent 86, academic) A recent article confirms a positive effect of conscription in Finland on labor market integration of migrants (Bontenbal et al., 2024).

An important topic related to conscription is the fact that it is only for men. This is debated in Finnish politics and society and is also pointed out by several respondents: *'... you also referred to future challenges and one of them is the gender equality issue. That should be discussed. More and more people are challenging why it's only compulsory for men. It's the only exception where Finland is not gender equal. It's actually in the constitution: every citizen is obligated to defend their country. For men it means conscription but for women it doesn't say what it means.'* (Respondent 73, civilian, national government)

However, most respondents do not expect any big changes in this respect: *'I very much doubt it will be compulsory for both men and women, because the military doesn't need more people, and that's why they take men. ... What I'm expecting is that within 10 years there will not be any big changes. What they have been talking about is a common call-*

up for both men and women, for 1 or 2 days, where they can learn about comprehensive security system and think about if they want to be drafted into the military.’ (Respondent 87, academic)

In 2020, a Parliamentary Committee on National Defence Obligation and Conscription was established to define the goals for strengthening and developing conscription. According to the appointment decision, this development must be based on the needs of military national defense, must generate additional operational value, must strengthen equality and the will to defend the country. The Government’s Defence Report published in 2021 states that increasing the number of women completing military service is a goal to ensure size and quality of the reserves, and at the same time deepen societal impact of national defense, improve the will to defend the country and increase equality (Finnish Government, 2021b).

The Parliamentary Committee reported in the Fall of 2021 and recommended to extend the call-up system to the entire age class (not just the men), meaning information days at schools about conscription and voluntary service (Finnish Government, 2021a). The report also states that operational needs do not justify conscription for the entire age group.

Some respondents suggest involving schools more in civic education by the military: *‘... something we’re looking into, is giving more defense related education at school. Not a subject of its own, but people in 9th grade or something would get an hour or two in a semester. Now, I think they have 45 minutes in senior high school.’ (Respondent 73, civilian, national government)*

Others consider that this would be sensitive, but small steps have been taken: *‘In the ’60s and ’70s it was more tricky, the red flag of militarization would go up very easily. I don’t know how conscious that is, but I feel the defense forces have made small steps. In some places, they go to schools and talk about defense issues. It’s a very small part of the curriculum, that is optional. It depends on the school. There have been some small occasions where the flag has been going up, because it was considered too much.’ (Respondent 91, academic)*

Police tasks

Finnish respondents are very reluctant to consider a role for the FDF in police tasks, mainly because of the risk of using violence against civilians and the impact this may have on the position of the military. One respondent illustrates: *‘I remember when I was in the MoD there were big riots in Helsinki city center. People having riots against fur production, that was turning out aggressive. Police was asking if we could bring our water guns,*

that we normally for example use in the harbor, when a military ship would start to burn, and it carries ammunition. They were asking if we can get these armored personnel carriers with water guns to shoot at the demonstrating people. Later we saw the media coverage with the armored personnel carrier in armed forces colors which was starting to shoot ordinary people. And it's coming with full pressure, so they are flying away. And we said this is not good publicity, so next time you need this go to the fire guard, we are not coming anymore.' (Respondent 78, academic)

One recent event in which the military was used for public order management was during the pandemic, when the region around Helsinki was closed off from the rest of the country. In total, 800 conscripts and 50 FDF staff supported the closure (Safety Investigation Authority, 2021). In that case, the support by the military was considered acceptable because it was such an extraordinary situation: *'Then the military helped the police in controlling the traffic. I think, in general, there were some issues if that's the military's task to do that, but also this was an extraordinary situation and I think there was a consensus, although you can debate how effective that measure was.'* (Respondent 80, academic)

Respondents do not generally see a role for the military in the fight against organized crime, emphasizing that the organized crime problem is not so big in Finland, and that the police are well able to deal with it. As one respondent states, *'I think Finland is a very safe country, in terms of violence produced by organized crime, much safer than Sweden. So there has been no special need.'* (Respondent 87, academic) Another respondent adds, *'Of course, there is organized crime in Finland as well, but most of the organized crime in the Finnish context are those Bandidos, motorcycle gangs. They deal with drug trafficking and they can be armed. Police have their own special forces to deal with that. ... So, it's very difficult to imagine such an organized crime situation where you would need defense forces.'* (Respondent 88, academic)

On special occasions, the military can support the police in security and surveillance: *'Police can ask assistance from the military, and we have preparation units that can, for example, lend armored vehicles and professional soldiers. We don't use the conscripts. ... for example, big summits and these kinds of events in Finland ..., of course the military was asked to support in security at the outskirts, but only [a] couple of them had guns and they were professional soldiers.'* (Respondent 77, military)

Also, for the fight against terrorism, in principle, respondents see no role for the military (other than taking down a hijacked plane if necessary): *'I think that is something that is more difficult to imagine, because what we consider terrorist threats are small groups,*

lone individuals, so you wouldn't imagine you would need the military.' (Respondent 80, academic)

Intelligence

In the area of intelligence, respondents recognize the need for increased cooperation between military and civilian authorities. One respondent points out that new legislation has already been created to increase cooperation: *'We developed military intelligence laws last year, and I think it's one step for recognizing new threats, organized crime, immigration, domestic operations, overseas operations, cyber space, to have enough flexible laws to recognize new threats and cope with threats that are concrete already now.'* (Respondent 75, military)

Of course, there are still some obstacles to the sharing of intelligence between civilian and military authorities: *'The legislation not just encourages but commits the civilian and military intelligence to work together more, but then, like in any democratic society, we also have legal obstacles and legal sensitivities. ... So, the big picture is that the cooperation between the two is increasing, but there are legal obstacles.'* (Respondent 83, academic)

Crisis management

Crisis management is an area where support by the armed forces to the civilian authorities is not considered sensitive at all. A couple of respondents talk about the accident that happened in the city of Nokia: *'It happened some time ago, maybe 10 years. There were bacteria in the water network in the city and it was a couple of weeks that people couldn't use their water. They had to sanitize the whole system. There was a lack of water. The local authorities asked support from the defense forces. We were driving our tank trucks through the streets, where people could get water and the conscripts were going door to door to deliver water bottles and these kinds of things.'* (Respondent 78, academic)

Other examples named by respondents are pandemics, natural disasters due to climate change, such as floodings, or large-scale evacuations in case of radiological fall-out.

Cyber threats

Research shows that strategic leadership of cyber security in Finland is fragmented, and overall leadership is lacking, with activities largely siloed in various departments. In addition, there is no effective cooperation structure at the strategic level (Lehto & Limnell, 2021). The 2019 Cyber Security Strategy proposes the installment of a Cyber Security Director at the Ministry of Transport and Communications to coordinate national cyber security policies (The Security Committee, 2019). However, the above-mentioned research

shows that the Prime Minister's Office would have been a more logical place and that the chosen model could lead to continuation of siloed activities (Lehto & Limnell, 2021).

The cyber domain is an area in which many respondents see some developments towards a larger role for the military, mainly due to the problem with attributing cyber-attacks: *'I think there is a really good possibility to make progress. And I think cyber is the first concrete threat where authorities are trying to learn to cooperate together.'* (Respondent 75, military) They recognize that cyber capabilities are too separated in the current situation: *'We have divided cyber capabilities with authorities, so when it's crime it goes to the police, and when it's critical infrastructure it's Ministry of Communications. Military cyber defense is for military systems. And this is too separated because we have limited resources. I would like to see the cyber version of Border Guard, Customs and Police.'* (Respondent 77, military)

However, the latest Government Defence Report emphasizes that the Defence Forces are responsible for military cyber defense, and their goal is to safeguard the systems of the Defence Forces as well as others that directly impact defense capability (Finnish Government, 2021b). The FDF do support other authorities by providing executive assistance, but the report does not mention any ambitions to increase cooperation.

As discussed in the Sweden case study as well, Finland experiments with using conscripts for cyber tasks and some respondents consider this to have great potential, emphasizing that *'the young men who are conscripts could contribute to cyber defense more than they would in the old-fashioned defense in the forest.'* (Respondent 80, academic)

Hybrid forces

The Finnish Border Guard can be considered a hybrid force. Its officers are trained at the National Defence University and the organization uses military ranks and procedures, such as for command and control. However, it is positioned under the Ministry of the Interior. In case of war, the Finnish Border Guard or parts of it can come under the command of the FDF, if the president so decides. Conscripts can elect to do their service at the Border Guard. In a sense, this makes the Border Guard a multipurpose authority, and several respondents describe it that way: *'Border Guard is our multipurpose authority so to say. During war time, they are part of the defense forces but in normal times they are part of the Ministry of the Interior.'* (Respondent 77, military)

As one respondent points out, the Finnish Border Guard, though being a civilian organization, has a military identity: *'I think that the Border Guard, its identity is quite military. They feel that they are part of the military system.'* (Respondent 72, civilian, national government)

The main task for the Border Guard is border security, including guarding of the external border and checks at border crossings. There is close cooperation between the Border Guard, Police and Customs organization. This cooperation has originated in remote regions of Lapland, where arrangements were made for one organization to represent the other two. As a respondent explains, *'In the north of Finland, they used to be strict on tasking, but when they realized OK, there's only you and me, they said, well if you are doing a border check, can you also check if he has something for Customs? And that is very functional in those areas where there are not many people. ... So, it started due to lack of resources, but they found that it was so good that they made legislation for it.'* (Respondent 77, military)

The Act on Cooperation between the Police, Customs and the Border Guard regulates cooperation between the three organizations (Laki Poliisin, Tullin Ja Rajavartiolaitoksen Yhteistoiminnasta, 2009). Based on this legislation, a so-called PCB authority may, on request, carry out measures related to the combating of crime on behalf of another PCB authority, using the powers that are available to it in its own crime-combating tasks. In case of urgent measures that cannot be postponed, these measures may be used without a request as well.

According to the respondents familiar with this model of cooperation, it works very well and is mainly motivated by lack of resources: *'My understanding when I compare this model to other member states is that it is very advanced and working very well. It can always be better, but I believe it's a very reasonable system. Also, in a small country with limited resources, we need to cooperate.'* (Respondent 76, military)

As for future policy options, respondents are very reluctant to involve the defense forces in border security, unless in a case of hybrid warfare, where Russia would transport large amounts of migrants to the border with Finland, as happened in 2015 (Reuters Staff, 2016). One respondent explains: *'So, I can imagine if that kind of thing would happen, that thousands and thousands of migrants would come over the border from Russia, then you would need defense forces...they need camps, etc., you don't have enough police to deal with it. I think that you could connect the concept of hybrid warfare to this, ..., where you necessarily need the defense forces also. At least as plan B.'* (Respondent 88, academic)

Another idea related to hybrid forces is to create a reserve for the Finnish police with armed forces personnel: *'We are trying to create a reserve for the police in Finland. The armed forces have more reserves than they need, so it's not a big problem for them to give us some of their reserves as well. ... We want to create a reserve who can take care of these*

support tasks, so that the police officers can focus on police cases. You can think about traffic control, not the kind of tasks where you need strong powers.’ (Respondent 74, police)

Another respondent describes how the armed forces are currently considering the position of reservists: *‘What the armed forces have been thinking about, at least at some tables, is whether we could use the reservists for those purposes. We have the military training, and they are willing and then they go into the reserves, and then if they are not called back, they kind of forget about it. So maybe for the 30, 40 years they are in reserves we should do more on that, and the only way is to use them for something. So, it is about the life course of a citizen-soldier. There is a military obligation in the law. It’s not only your military training, but you have an obligation until you are 60. So, the armed forces are thinking more about the reserve career.’* (Respondent 91, academic)

Conclusion

As we have seen in this section, respondents have identified a few options for a changing (or larger) domestic role of the armed forces, primarily in the cyber domain, in intelligence and in civic education. Using reserve personnel would be preferred over using active military soldiers. One of the arguments has to do with the resource potential. Some respondents name the blurring of internal and external threats as a reason to consider changes in the domestic role of the armed forces, but at the same time the wish to separate law enforcement from warfare runs deep in Finland.

As was evident in the Netherlands case study as well, respondents are quite reluctant about seeing the FDF in a visible role on the streets, fearing that it will undermine trust in the armed forces, especially if force would be used: *‘Trust in the military is indeed very high in Finland, because we are doing the core business of defending Finland. But there is a risk that we are extending our response area and start to come in riots in the street and that kind of business. So, it can turn around.’* (Respondent 78, academic) Another respondent adds, *‘When I go around Europe and you see the military on the streets, it’s quite a tricky thing. We definitely couldn’t have that. ... it’s also the history I think, since the civil war. How the armed forces came out of the White Guards. There were some incidents where the military has used violence against their own citizens. I think those kind of legacies are still there.’* (Respondent 91, academic)

They also state clearly that support to the police can only be delivered if the armed forces do not need those capabilities at the same time. Priority always goes to the needs of the FDF: *‘It’s reactive in a sense that when there is [a] police force needing an armored vehicle or non-kinetic assistance, it can be given if the defense forces don’t need it at the same time.’* (Respondent 73, civilian, national government)

Respondents are very reluctant to use the armed forces for police tasks. *'Now in the pandemic there's a role. In climate change there could be a role. Flooding could be an issue. And then cyber, perhaps those are the main new threats. But not like organized crime or anything. That's something that people would say it's much more difficult to imagine what the role of the military could be.'* (Respondent 80, academic)

Support by the armed forces should always be under civilian control (as is defined in the law as well): *'The competent authorities are always in charge and the defense forces are supporting [them] if need be. ... So they can be there, but never in the first lines and always under the command of the competent authority.'* (Respondent 76, military)

7.6 IMPACT ON CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

As discussed in this chapter, in terms of civil-military relations Finland formally prefers the separation paradigm, in which the military and civilian domain are separated and there is civilian supremacy over the military. At the same time, signs of immersion are visible. These signs and the trends will be described in this section, focusing on four domains: society, public administration and strategy, law, and performance.

Immersion in society

Mainly due to general conscription for men, the FDF are largely immersed in society. As one respondent explains: *'In many societies, military forces are one island somewhere. Nobody wants to go there; interaction between armed forces and society is really weak. In Finland, I think that armed forces are really close to our society.'* (Respondent 75, military)

Because they are all over the country, local social control is quite high: *'Partly because of conscription, but also partly that local organizations come together in this comprehensive security system.'* (Respondent 87, academic)

Still, the FDF has taken some steps to decrease its footprint in society: *'For instance, the number of garrisons in the country is going down. ... The armed forces are more thinking nowadays about effectiveness and concentrating the amount of conscripts in bigger garrisons, bigger units. ... I think the relation was more intimate in the past where the armed forces were more spread out in the country.'* (Respondent 83, academic)

Related to conscription, some respondents emphasize that the percentage of men who participate has declined for many years, leading to a decreasing militarization of society in Finland. Also, some fear that if conscription would be expanded to women, and there-

fore become more selective, the bond between military and society may loosen, which they consider to be a bad thing: *'Many people are afraid if it is compulsory for men and women, and we have to become selective, that the bond between society and the military may loosen.'* (Respondent 87, academic)

In addition to being visible in society due to conscription, the FDF also take steps to promote itself in society. As one respondent explains, *'It's more like selling your brand nowadays. FDF are very active in social media. Many young people are interested in extreme sports and extreme things, so we are spreading out the combat videos where the guys are falling out of a helicopter. ... And for the older people we are keeping our traditions, we are showing ourselves on the streets. We organize exercises in the middle of Helsinki.'* (Respondent 78, academic)

The media in general are very positive about the armed forces as well: *'In the media there is very seldom something negative written about the FDF. They can in a sense do what they want because the support is so big.'* (Respondent 81, academic)

As discussed in section 7.2, one of the tasks of the FDF is to strengthen the will to defend the country. In a yearly survey on Finns' opinions on foreign and security policy, national defense and security, the Finnish Advisory Board for Defence Information measures this will to defend the country. The opinion poll usually takes place in autumn, but because of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, an extra survey was carried out in spring 2022 (The Advisory Board for Defence Information, 2022a).

When asked whether in case of an attack on Finland, Finns should take up arms to defend themselves in all situations, even if the outcome seemed unclear, 83% answers 'yes' (68% in 2021). This is the highest percentage in the history of the surveys, that have been taking place since 1976. The personal will to defend ("If Finland were attacked, would you be prepared to participate in the various tasks of national defense according to your abilities and skills?") remains high at 82%. New survey data from the end of 2022 confirm these results (The Advisory Board for Defence Information, 2022b). Trust in the FDF to defend Finland against various military threats is very high as well (87%).

Inglehart, Puranen and Welzel relate the high willingness to defend in Finland (and other Nordic countries) to the perceived threat by their close neighbor Russia (Inglehart et al., 2015). However, it is important to note that before the Russian invasion, there was a slight downward trend for the first question. Additionally, Finnish scholars have recently questioned the measurement of citizens' willingness to defend with just the two questions mentioned above, arguing for a more in-depth analytical approach (Hart et al., 2023).

In this and earlier surveys (2016-2021), questions were also asked about the Finnish system of general conscription for men (The Advisory Board for Defence Information, 2021, 2022b). Most of the population is still in favor of this system, although it has decreased from almost 70% in 2016 to 53% in 2022. A growing share of the population (from 11% in 2016 to 22% in 2021 to 31% in 2022) supports general conscription for both men and women. A more or less stable number of 15% supports voluntary military service for both men and women (although in 2022 the percentage was only 10%) and around 7% (but declining to 3% in 2022) supports a professional army. Almost three quarters of the respondents support extending the call-up system to women in one of three ways, namely compulsory conscript service for women, compulsory call-ups for women but conscript service on a voluntary basis or sending all 18-year-old women information on the possibility of conducting military service. Support for general civic service has gone up as well, to 59% in 2022 (50% in 2021).

Respondents see the will to defend as an essential element of the Finnish defense system, related to general conscription: *'General conscription is not all about learning skills and becoming a soldier. It's also a place where you go with people in the same age group, from different social surroundings, from different parts of Finland. They share from six months to one year time, [the] same misery in wintertime, which is miserable. When it comes to sociological defense studies, ..., what's the main factor affecting a strong defense will? It's not about social background, information, being conservative or liberal...the strongest defense will was in those groups that had spent the most time together in the same unit. You're not only depending on a metaphysical thing of the Finnish nation, you're defending they guy next to you, your family.'* (Respondent 73, civilian, national government) And in the words of another respondent, *'You may have great equipment, but if you don't have the will, then you can leave the theatre.'* (Respondent 77, military)

Another respondent explains how this will to defend puts Finland in a unique position within Europe: *'Of course, the strategic challenges are specific for Finland, no other country has the same geopolitical strategic position, but the unity, the will to defend, they are rather unique in Europe, I would say, and are related to the compulsory conscription.'* (Respondent 87, academic)

It is not just conscription that explains the closeness between the armed forces and Finnish society. Respondents also point at stories about the armed forces in the past, that have an important role in Finnish society: *'Yes, if you think about the Finnish culture more broadly, how veterans are respected and how Finland for example celebrates Independence Day. It's very solemn, not such a festival as in many countries. Stories related to WWII, it's very Finnish. It still continues after generations.'* (Respondent 87, academic)

On the other hand, some think these stories are losing their influence as Winter War is a long time ago and society is diversifying: *'It has been really strong; grandfathers were in Winter War. It has been really important. But now we are 70-80 years from the war, and we are forgetting about it. Our youngsters don't know anyone who's been in the war.'* (Respondent 75, military) And in the words of another respondent, *'Russia is a kind of story and stories are more significant than the rational part. They are making that collectivity in society. And I'm not sure that we have those stories anymore.'* (Respondent 82, academic)

Immersion in public administration and government strategy

The FDF have, according to most respondents, a strong position within the security domain: *'I think that there is a kind of dilemma or internal dispute, competition, that should we focus on Russia or should we have a more broad approach and role regarding hybrid threats, intelligence, these kinds of issues. But currently Finnish military are quite a strong player in the security field. If they want something they quite often will get it, unlike Finnish police. ...the thing is because they are very well organized, very well resourced and there is always some Colonel to participate in whatever working group. And others do not have those resources. They will end up writing reports and obviously they get to have their say in those documents.'* (Respondent 84, academic)

Another respondent confirms, explaining how the FDF have a better position than the police: *'The police are not very good at explaining what they are doing and why the money is needed. The armed forces are very good at this kind of PR work, how to touch people's feelings. The police think that everybody knows what they are doing so they don't have to explain. ... It's such a closed profession. The fathers and mothers were also in the police usually. They don't know that they should communicate more.'* (Respondent 72, civilian, national government)

Most likely, the National Defence Courses play a role in this strong position of the FDF in public administration and government strategy as well. As was mentioned before, the courses are organized by the FDF and are attended by the Finnish elite, including the political elite, with parliamentarians from all political parties forming about 8% of the participants (Hart, 2023).

Immersion in performance

As discussed, immersion in performance is quite low in Finland. However, some respondents recognize the need to change in relation to new threats: *'If we are looking at new security threats, there has to be overlapping between the capabilities. When I was telling you that everyone is supervising their own areas, this is fighting against this idea.'* (Respondent 78, academic)

Immersion in the law

Interestingly, some respondents point out legal limitations for a larger domestic role: *'The law is quite strict and that's why I think there is not so much collaboration between the military and other organizations in domestic things or problems.'* (Respondent 90, academic)

However, the analysis in section 7.2 has shown that there are many possibilities for the FDF to support civil authorities.

In summary, the data indicate that while most respondents claim a relatively strict separation between Finland's military and civil domains, in reality, both domains are heavily immersed in three of the four dimensions (performance being the lone exception), with the FDF having a strong position in both society as well as public administration and strategy. According to one respondent, the topic deserves more research: *'I always found it interesting that nobody has really looked or discussed the theory of civil-military relations. Of course, the military sociology has been very small in Finland. Some researchers are interested in social cohesion, military identity. But we don't think about issues like if the Finnish officer corps is so far away from society that they have different values, and how to control that. I have sometimes been wondering if we should do something about it.'* (Respondent 91, academic)

7.7 ANALYSIS

All three security and stability related threats identified in chapter 4 can be found in the country-specific literature. Recent reports emphasize the changing geopolitical environment, new security threats, such as climate change, organized crime, pandemics and hybrid threats, foreign influence activities and increasing polarization in Finnish society. In addition, some authors point at the strengthening of the role of the state and exceptional measures taken such as new intelligence laws and surveillance measures, which may put pressure on liberal democracy. When asked about security threats for Finland, Finnish respondents first and foremost point at the Russian threat, more specifically the risk of conventional war on the one hand and cyber threats on the other. They are less worried about the threat posed by terrorism, organized crime or declining social cohesion, although they do recognize these threats may rise in the future.

Looking at recent changes in the domestic role of the armed forces, continuity is in fact the word that resonates from the interviews. Respondents characterize their country as one where change is always slow, unless triggered by a major shock. The prime recent example of such a shock is of course the Finnish NATO membership, after public opinion shifted almost overnight. A relevant recent development is the transformation of the

total defense model into the comprehensive security model. This could imply demilitarization and a less influential role for the FDF, which would match the changing threat environment after the Cold War. However, both academic authors and respondents in the interviews argue that in practice the implications have been few. As for hybridization, the Finnish Border Guard can be considered a hybrid organization. In the civilian domain, the close cooperation between the Border Guard, the Police and Customs stands out, but the FDF are not involved in this cooperation. Militarization of the police has been limited in Finland.

The relatively small domestic role of the FDF can mainly be explained by historical reasons and the security environment: the main task of the FDF is to defend Finland against an armed attack and not be 'distracted' by other tasks. As the external threat of Russia has remained relevant, even in the two decades after the end of the Cold War, drivers for a growing domestic role have been largely absent in Finland. The history of civil war explains the reluctance to use the military in police tasks. Furthermore, the comprehensive security model is a model of silos in which each organization preferably sticks to its own tasks. Finally, similar to the Netherlands and Sweden, respondents have mixed attitudes about a domestic role for the military.

In line with the relatively slow changes in the past, respondents expect change for the future to be incremental as well, unless a big crisis takes place that necessitates change. In the area of conscription, gender neutrality is an important topic and respondents expect small steps to make conscription more gender neutral (e.g. call-up days for women). Respondents expect little or no change in police tasks, following from the wish to separate warfare from law enforcement. Support to civilian authorities can only be delivered if the armed forces have spare capabilities, as the defense of Finland against armed attack always takes priority. Consequently, with the increasing Russian threat not much development can be expected. Most development is expected in the cyber domain and in the intelligence area, where respondents recognize the need for better cooperation between civilian and military authorities.

Looking at the separation versus immersion dichotomy, Finland considers itself to be Huntingtonian. However, when looking at other dimensions than the task dimension (law, society and public administration), the amount of immersion is actually very high. There are relatively few legal limitations to a domestic role for the FDF, although the law does state that the defense of Finland always takes priority. Once support is given, there are relatively few restrictions regarding the use of force. As for immersion in society, due to conscription the military is very visible. It also works actively to promote itself in society. Interestingly – also from a perspective of civilian control – the FDF have the

legal obligation to foster the will of the population to defend the country. Finally, as discussed, the FDF have a strong position in the security domain as well. The Security Committee, chaired jointly by the Ministry of Defense and the Prime Minister's Office, plays an important role in that. Furthermore, the National Defense Courses, organized by the FDF, provide the armed forces with access to and influence over the country's elite.

The data clearly show that alignment between the government, the population and the military regarding the 'proper' role of the FDF is in fact very strong in Finland. There are strong ties between the FDF and the political level on the one hand, and between the FDF and the population on the other. Finnish culture and history play an important role here. The prime task of the armed forces is to defend Finland against an armed attack, and as the Russian threat is considered the prime threat by all players, a debate on new domestic roles for the military has simply hardly come up at all. The cyber domain is perhaps the only exception, related to grey zone threats where again Russia (but also China) is seen as the prime risk. The mere existence of conscription (for men) most likely fosters this alignment, as more or less all men have been through the same experience, which has shaped their opinions on what the role of the armed forces should be. In this sense, the Finnish case can be considered the opposite of the Dutch case, in which there was alignment on a changing role for the armed forces.

Finland may be considered a case in which the traditional separation versus immersion dichotomy is less appropriate (as has been argued by Schiff for countries like Israel and India as well (Schiff, 1995), as it is a stable democracy (even taking the above-mentioned challenges into account) and has a high amount of immersion at the same time. As the external threat has not really diminished after the Cold War, the work of Desch on the impact of a changing threat environment is not so relevant in the Finnish context (Desch, 1998) and the balance between the republican exchange and the control exchange (Levy, 2012) has not changed significantly. Consequently, this study has not provided evidence for a rebalancing effort by the state, as was the case in the Netherlands. For example, there have been no militarization efforts, large budget cuts or burden redistribution as have taken place in many other western countries in that era.

What does this mean for civilian control of the armed forces? On paper, at least, civilian control is firmly established and there are clear rules on the powers of the armed forces when supporting other authorities. On the other hand, this study has shown that the FDF have a lot of influence in public administration and security strategy, both in a formal way (e.g. the Security Committee) and in an informal way (e.g. the National Defense Courses). The Finnish situation arguably does not match the subjective control that for Janowitz matched the immersion paradigm. Rather, it matches Travis' "pragmatic civilian

control' as the preferred model (Travis, 2017, 2020). In fact, pragmatism characterizes the Finnish culture. And although formally civilian control is firmly in place, the Finnish situation shows elements of Bland's theory of shared responsibility as well (Bland, 1999), with the military participating in political decision-making. Taking the work of Levy, a high external threat in combination with militarization leads to a high level of autonomy for the military (Kuehn & Levy, 2021a). I would argue that the Finnish case confirms this theory, as demilitarization efforts have largely been unsuccessful and the position of the FDF remains strong.

APPENDIX: TABLE 7.1: POLICY OPTIONS FOR A CHANGING DOMESTIC ROLE OF THE ARMED FORCES

Domain	What	Why	Why not	Preconditions
Civic education	- General conscription for men - Women on voluntary basis - Discussion about gender equality. - Common call-up day for men and women - Information days at schools - Social conscription - Variation in time: from short security course to regular military service - National Defense Courses	- External threat - Foster social cohesion and strengthen equality - Integration of migrants - Positive effect National Defense Courses on the position of the military	- Operational needs do not justify conscription for the entire age group (men and women) - Defense related education in schools is considered as militarization of society by some	- Social cohesion argument only works with large numbers and when gender neutral - Must generate additional operational value, strengthen equality and the will to defend the country
Police tasks	- Reluctance to use the armed forces for police tasks - Use of military materiel in exceptional occasions - Legal possibilities are there: search, arrest, traffic, security and surveillance, explosives. Use of force is allowed	- Armed forces can provide specific capabilities in exceptional situations - Resource potential	- Risk of using violence against the population - Impact on the reputation of the armed forces when using violence - Police can deal with police matters, supported by Customs and Border Guard - Preference to separate law enforcement from warfare	- Only in extraordinary situations (e.g. the pandemic) - No use of conscripts in contact with the population - Only when police resources are insufficient and always under police command - First task of the FDF (military defense of Finland) must not be jeopardized - Principles: respect for human rights, proportionality, least harm, purpose limitation
Cyber domain	- Cooperation and coordination - Cyber conscripts - Cyber version of Border Guard, Customs and Police?	- Difficult to attribute cyber-attacks - Cyber capabilities are too separated	Legal obstacles, for example in sharing information	Legal aspects must be dealt with

Domain	What	Why	Why not	Preconditions
Crisis management	Support civilian authorities in case of crises and disasters	Uncontroversial, appreciated role		Never in the lead
Intelligence	Cooperation between military and civilian actors	Grey-zone threats	Legal obstacles	Legal aspects must be dealt with
Hybrid forces	- Border Guard is a hybrid force and multipurpose authority - Close cooperation between Police, Customs and Border Guard - Police reserve with armed forces personnel?	- Support each other in remote locations - Motivated by lack of resources - Hybrid warfare situations	Preference for a separation of agencies	May use each other's powers on request (or in emergencies without request)



8

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE NETHERLANDS, SWEDEN, AND FINLAND: FROM SEPARATION TO IMMERSION?

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The past three chapters presented the results of three case studies: the Netherlands, Sweden, and Finland. The topics discussed include the position of the armed forces in these countries, civil-military relations, recent developments in the domestic role of the armed forces and explanations for these developments as well as future policy options. At the end of each chapter, the balance between separation and immersion in each case study was discussed, followed by an analysis.

This chapter presents a comparison between the three countries, based on the interview data and while also relating these results to the relevant literature. The first part of this chapter contains an analysis of similarities and differences between the three case studies in various aspects: security challenges for liberal democracy, the extent of hybridization, and the extent of immersion (section 8.2). These similarities and differences will then be explained and elaborated within the context of civil-military relations theory (section 8.3).

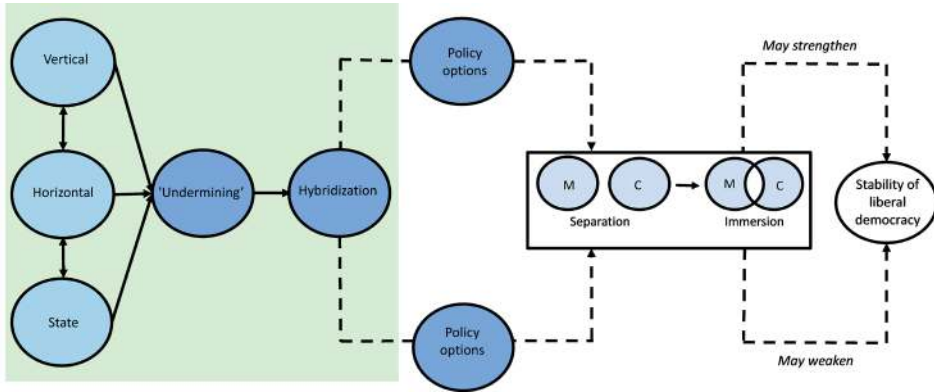
The second part of this chapter will compare policy options mentioned by respondents in each country for a future domestic role of the armed forces and look for possible trends. Then, the results of the case studies will be related to civil-military relations theory. Within this comparison, the following questions will also be answered: What changes in civil-military relations have already taken place, and how can this be related to civil-military relations theory? In what direction can we expect civil-military relations in Northwest European liberal democracies to develop? And, based on the empirical data, what impact can a changing domestic role of the armed forces have on the stability of liberal democracy?

For purposes of clarity, the conceptual model developed in chapter 2 will be used to illustrate what part of the model a specific section is focused on.

8.2 SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

In this section, similarities and differences between the three cases will be summarized and analyzed, focusing on (1) the extent to which democracy is under pressure, (2) security challenges, (3) the extent of hybridization, and (4) the extent of immersion.

This section is based on the first part of the model described in chapter 2, as is shown below.



Liberal democracy under pressure

As discussed and illustrated in chapter 4, liberal democracy in all three case studies is under pressure.

The World Values Survey data show that unlike older generations, younger generations do not consider living in a democracy as important. The differences between the three case studies are quite large, with the Swedish population finding it almost twice as important to live in a democracy as the Dutch population, with Finland in between.

Data from IDEA and V-Dem show a decline in almost all indicators for liberal democracy in all three countries in the last 10 years. For Finland and the Netherlands, the decline in civil liberties and in impartial administration stand out. While Sweden's score is generally higher than that of the other two nations, it shows a deterioration in fundamental rights, civil liberties, and absence of corruption. Furthermore, representative government is declining in Sweden and the Netherlands.

The World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators show a marked decline in political stability in all three countries in the past 20 years. There is no clear change in either country in the rule of law indicator. The last relevant indicator, control of corruption, shows a relatively small decline.

Lastly, the Fund for Peace cohesion indicators show that all case studies have had a clear decline in the security apparatus indicator, which measures security threats to the state, serious criminal factors and perceived trust of citizens in domestic security. The 'factionalized elites' indicator (measuring fragmentation of state institutions) shows a decline in Finland and the Netherlands, but less so in Sweden. As a final indicator, group grievances (divisions and schisms between groups in society) are a lot higher in the Netherlands than in the two Nordic countries.

Security challenges

In chapter 4, three main security challenges for liberal democracy were identified, matching the three forms of ‘undermining’ of liberal democracy: (1) the struggle by states to provide security in an era where the blurring of internal and external security leads to new security threats (vertical undermining), (2) the decline of social cohesion in society leading to unrest and instability (horizontal undermining), and (3) the undermining of liberal democracy by the state.

Chapters 5-7 focused on country-specific security challenges related to these three main challenges. The respective sections show that with respect to new security threats most security challenges are similar. So-called ‘grey zone threats’ are rising in all three countries. For example, threats in the cyber domain such as digital espionage and cybercrime, or foreign influence operations. Organized crime is a growing problem in the Netherlands and in Sweden as well. In Sweden, it is related to gang violence in the bigger cities, which has slowly been spreading to the rest of the country. Organized crime has been less of a problem in Finland so far. This may be related to the remote location of the country. However, the Finns do fear it could rise in the future.

The second security challenge - the decline of social cohesion - has been mainly a problem in the Netherlands and Sweden and less so in Finland. The strong social cohesion is discussed by Finnish respondents as due to factors like the existence of an external threat, conscription, and the nation’s very low immigration rate, which has left the population largely homogeneous.

Examples of state undermining can be found in each case study as well, for example in migration and terrorism legislation and policies and in new intelligence legislation. The COVID-19 pandemic stands out in this respect as well. In both the Netherlands and Finland, emergency legislation was activated and in both countries there were complaints that the government had so much trust in experts for determining their policies that it resembled a technocracy instead of a democracy. Sweden seems to be the most committed to respecting regular legal processes, which is one of the reasons there was a very liberal policy during the pandemic. However, the new government installed in the Fall of 2022 announced harsh measures in the fight against organized crime and gang violence, and in the effort to curtail migration. Interestingly, in all three cases, respondents do not easily come up with examples of state undermining, although when asked about policy options, they do seem to be able to reflect on this risk. As was noted in chapter 5, as almost all respondents are part of the state apparatus, it may be difficult to see specific measures taken by the state as undermining liberal democracy.

It should be noted that, in addition to these three challenges, respondents in Finland and Sweden first and foremost speak about the external threat of Russia, when asked about security threats, while Dutch respondents hardly mention this threat. It should also be noted that the interviews for this dissertation took place between 2020 and early 2022. At this time, Finland and Sweden were more aware of the Russian threat than the Netherlands. A lot has changed since the Russian-Ukraine war (see also the epilogue of this dissertation). As discussed in chapter 5, while Dutch respondents do not emphasize the Russian threat, this threat is mentioned by government reports (Algemene Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst et al., 2021, 2022).

As will be discussed later in this chapter, the existence of an external threat has an impact on the domestic role of the armed forces as well.

Hybridization

Hybridization refers to the process in which the clear separation between the armed forces and the police in a domestic context disappears (Dahlberg & Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2020, see also chapter 2). As described in chapter 2, hybridization can consist of a constabularization of the armed forces, a militarization of the police and/or the growth of gendarmerie-type forces.

Constabularization of the armed forces

As the Dutch case study shows, there may be a relation between the two types of constabularization: the experience of the Dutch armed forces with stability operations has stimulated the use of capabilities for police tasks in the Netherlands. A prime example is the use of search capabilities that have been developed to search for explosives in an expeditionary context, to look for drug laboratories in the Netherlands. Interestingly, the same development has not taken place in Sweden and Finland, although both countries have participated in stability operations. For Sweden, regular armed forces personnel have not been used for police tasks in stability operations. Finland has taken the conscious decision not to use the newly developed capabilities in the domestic context.

The literature on constabularization shows that a growing use of the armed forces for (police) tasks in a domestic context is mainly related to transborder security threats, when the police is overburdened, or a more robust performance by the authorities is deemed necessary (Edmunds, 2006). The increasing use of the Dutch military forces for security and surveillance duties is a glaring illustration of this dynamic. A recent example is the use of Army personnel to guard a court building in a prominent organized-crime trial. The decision to increasingly involve the armed forces in these tasks is related to the growth in violent organized crime. On the one hand this growth asks for a more robust

performance by the authorities and on the other hand, due to the growing number of people that must be protected, it leads to an overburdening of the police. Political reasons may play a role as well. After the murder of both a lawyer and a journalist by an organized crime group, authorities are eager to show they take security and surveillance seriously. Earlier this century, in response to the terrorist threat, a joint unit of police, Marechaussee and Marines personnel was created. This unit, the Special Intervention Service (*Dienst Speciale Interventies*), performs national operations of special forces, such as counter-terrorism operations or the arrest of dangerous criminals.

Sweden has had the least amount of constabularization of the three case studies. As explained in chapter 6, the domestic role of the armed forces is heavily regulated by the law, with support to civil authorities getting last priority. Recent legal changes have made it possible for the armed forces to assist civil authorities with helicopters and in case of a terrorist attack. However, there are no joint units like in the Netherlands and no specific police tasks have been attributed to the armed forces. Interestingly, as shown in the previous section, the security challenges Sweden is confronted with are largely comparable with the Netherlands. Section 8.3 will explore explanations for the differences between the three countries investigated. While Sweden has seen little constabularization so far, the new Swedish government has announced “*the largest offensive against organized crime in Swedish history*” and the establishment of a coordinated serious organized crime council that will “*bring together all relevant government agencies to combat gang crime*” (Kristersson, 2022). The war language is clear, but it remains to be seen if this offensive includes a role for the armed forces as well.

As for Finland, the legal possibilities for the armed forces to support civil authorities, including police tasks, are quite extensive. However, in practice, such support does not regularly take place. A recent example was the COVID-19 pandemic where the Finnish government used both professional personnel and conscripts to quarantine the Helsinki region for a couple of weeks. The armed forces have been used sporadically to assist the police in public order management. However, Finland has found a different solution for situations in which the police is overburdened, namely close cooperation between the Police, Customs and Border Guard.

Militarization of the police

A second category of hybridization is militarization of the police. The emergence of this militarization in Sweden is discussed by respondents as a response to organized crime and gang violence. Respondents argue that with organized crime and gang violence rising, government performance needs to be more robust. The Swedish response so far has been more robust gear and materiel for the police, and joint training with the

Swedish armed forces. According to respondents from the police, they can perform at the same level of robustness as the military. Interestingly, though seeing no problem in this increasing level of robustness, some respondents with a policing background do criticize the military terminology that the police is increasingly using as not fitting in a policing context.

In Finland, the organized crime problem does not seem to be at the same level as it is in the Netherlands and Sweden. Respondents see some militarization in the police, but it does not stand out as much as in Sweden. The Netherlands, which has chosen to create a specific joint police and armed forces unit (the Special Interventions Service) for robust performance and has furthermore increasingly been using the Marechaussee and more recently even other parts of the armed forces in events where a more robust performance by the authorities was asked for, is comparable with Finland.

Gendarmerie-type forces and other hybrid forces

A third category of hybridization are gendarmerie-type forces, or more in general, hybrid forces. As shown, the Swedish governance model includes a separation between government agencies. Accordingly, Sweden does not have a hybrid force between the police and the armed forces. On the other hand, the Netherlands has a long tradition of a hybrid force in the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee. As explained in chapter 2, gendarmeries, in general, have 'profited' from the rise of new security threats caused by the blurring of internal and external security (Lutterbeck, 2005). The same trend is clear in the Netherlands, where the Marechaussee has grown from around 6000 employees in 2010 to around 7500 in 2021 and is expected to grow further towards 8000 employees in the coming years. Extra personnel have been added to the organization in response to the growing terrorist threat and in the fight against organized crime, in accordance with the analysis by Lutterbeck (Van Vark & Beuving, 2022).

In Finland, the Border Guard can be considered a hybrid force. It uses military ranks and procedure, and the officers are trained at the National Defense University. At the same time, it is positioned under the Ministry of the Interior. The Border Guard cooperates closely with the Police and with Customs. Personnel get basic training for all three organizations and on request can use the powers of the other authorities for crimefighting. (This model originated in rural areas of Finland, where all organizations involved had a lack of resources.) The basis of this model is that if the Police require assistance, they should turn to the Border Guard first.

Other than in the Netherlands, the Finnish Border Guard has not grown in recent years. This may be related to the fact that the main Border Guard task is border security, while

the Marechaussee has more (police) tasks and has particularly grown in those tasks. Interestingly, while Finnish respondents name the existence of the Border Guard and its collaboration with the Police and Customs as one of the reasons that the domestic role of the armed forces has not changed very much, the existence of the Marechaussee in the Netherlands does not seem to have had a similar effect. Section 8.3 will look for an explanation for this and other differences (and similarities) between the three case studies.

Concluding, the three case studies show evidence for a process of hybridization taking place, albeit in different ways, with the Netherlands showing most signs of constabularization, Sweden seeing some militarization of the police, and both the Netherlands and (to a lesser extent) Finland, having hybrid forces.

Separation versus immersion

Chapter 2 introduced the dichotomy in civil-military relations between separation and immersion. In the separation tradition, propagated by Samuel Huntington, military and civil domains are separated and there is 'objective control' whereby the civil domain is responsible for policy and the military domain for implementation. The military's autonomy in implementation is relatively strong (Huntington, 1957). On the other side of the civil-military relations spectrum, proponents of Morris Janowitz advocate for subjective control, meaning that professional soldiers are amenable to civilian control, because they are integrated in society and share its values (Janowitz, 1960).

Separation and immersion can be found in the ideal types described by Angstrom as well (Angstrom, 2013). In the first type, which is the inherent norm for a democratic regime, civil and military are separated and there is civilian supremacy over the military. This ideal type comes from the Huntingtonian tradition and it usually has consequences for the domestic role of the armed forces as well, namely a clear distinction between organizations responsible for internal security and external security.

An alternative to this ideal type is the second ideal type described by Angstrom, namely an intertwining of civil and military (or: immersion in the Janowitzian tradition). The other two ideal types described by Angstrom are military supremacy over civilians (military dictatorship) and civil and military parity.

Where do the case studies *currently* stand on this spectrum?¹⁹ All three countries originally come from a Huntingtonian tradition. However, when focusing on different

19 Note that the *development* in the balance between separation and immersion will be described in section 8.5.

dimensions of immersion, a different picture emerges. As is clear from table 8.1 below, only a few areas of strict separation can be identified.

Immersion	Netherlands	Sweden	Finland
Society			
Law			
Public administration / strategy			
Tasks			

Table 8.1: Immersion in the Netherlands, Sweden, and Finland

Societal dimension

Studying the societal dimension, the Netherlands provides the clearest example of a separation between the military and society, which has grown after the suspension of conscription. On the opposite side of this spectrum is Finland, where military and society are very much intertwined because of conscription and the large number of reservists all over the country. Sweden takes a middle position but is moving towards immersion with the reinstatement of conscription and the creation of new bases all over the country.

Legal dimension

As for the legal dimension, in all three case studies, the possibility for the armed forces to support civil authorities has been established in various laws. In Sweden, the legal possibilities are more restricted than in the other two cases, which limit specific areas support can take place (terrorism, helicopters) and obligate decision-making at a high level. Except in case of a terrorist attack, the Swedish armed forces are not allowed to use coercion or violence against civilians. No such limitations exist in either Finland or the Netherlands. In Sweden and Finland, support can only be given when civilian resources have been depleted and when the defense of the country is not jeopardized. In the Netherlands, there is no ranking between the core tasks of the armed forces. This reflects the discussion earlier in this section of the security threats, where it is clear that Sweden and Finland are very much aware of the Russian threat, while Dutch respondents have barely mentioned this threat (although this would most likely be different at the time of writing, almost three years after the onset of the war in Ukraine). Swedish and Finnish legislation is very clear about support to the civil authorities by the military always taking place under civilian control.

Public administration and strategy dimension

In the area of public administration and strategy, the Finnish armed forces stand out with their strong position when compared with other organizations such as the police. Although total defense has been replaced with comprehensive security, building on the role of defense in this model, the Security Committee is placed under the Ministry of Defense, and the FDF organize National Defense Courses for the nation's elite.

In Sweden, because of its governance model, there is a strict separation between agencies. However, with the recent decision to reinstate the total defense model the position of the Ministry of Defense and the armed forces has become stronger. Recently, the new Swedish government has decided to create a Minister for Civil Defense at the Ministry of Defense and has moved several agencies (Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency – MSB and Psychological Defence Agency – MPF) from the Ministry of the Interior to this ministry. The National Defense Courses, that were abolished after the end of the Cold War, have been reinvigorated as well.

Finally, in the Netherlands, the armed forces have been largely absent from public administration and from public debate as well. The current government has, for the first time, published a comprehensive security strategy, comprising both internal and external security, and has created a national security council under the Prime Minister, with participation (amongst others) of the Minister of Defense, Chief of Defense and Head of the Military Intelligence Service. This could potentially ameliorate the position of the armed forces.

Task dimension

Finally, the task dimension. There is a clear trend towards more immersion in the Netherlands, although until recently developments have been slow. The COVID-19 crisis may have served as an accelerator of immersion and recently the armed forces were used for security and surveillance tasks. Although, in legal terms, Sweden has expanded the possibilities for a domestic role of the armed forces, in practice not much has changed so far. The same is the case for Finland.

All in all, none of these three case studies seem to be fully in the Huntingtonian paradigm (or the first ideal type of Angstrom), where the military and civilian domain are separated. In fact, Finland seems to be in the Janowitzian paradigm (or the second ideal type of Angstrom) in all dimensions except the performance of concrete tasks. The trend in the Netherlands and Sweden is in that direction as well, although there are differences with how the dimensions are expressed in each country, with Sweden moving towards more immersion in the dimensions of society and public administration, and

the Netherlands moving towards more immersion in the task dimension and possibly also in public administration and strategy.

The next section will explore explanations for the similarities and differences between the three case studies.

8.3 EXPLANATIONS FOR SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

This section explains the similarities and differences between the three case studies and relates the explanations offered by the respondents to possible explanations in the literature. This section builds on the country-specific data discussed in chapters 5-7 and in particular the country-specific analysis at the end of each chapter. The country-specific data consists of respondents' answers, scientific literature, (government) reports, policy documents and articles from the media. These documents were found through a search on government websites, through recommendations by respondents and using search engines (see also section 3.3). Based on this comparative analysis, four possible factors stand out. They are (1) the historical context, (2) the governance model and legal framework, (3) the changing threat environment and (4) the alignment of the political elite, military and population. These factors will be explained in the first part of this section. In the second part of this section, these factors will be related to factors found in the civil-military relations literature.

First, it is important to realize the differences in historical context between the three case studies. An important difference between the Netherlands, on the one hand, and Finland and Sweden, on the other hand, is the absence (in the case of the Netherlands) or presence (in the case of Sweden and Finland) of a direct external threat, specifically Russia (Aaltola et al., 2014; S. Larsson, 2021; Valtonen & Branders, 2021). This has been the main reason for the development of the total defense model in the 1950's in both Sweden and Finland. Finland has never abandoned this model, although it transformed the model into the comprehensive security model after the end of the Cold War. Sweden has abandoned the total defense model (although it is rebuilding it now) but has kept the domestic role of the armed forces very small. The main reason, according to the respondents, is the Ådalen incident in the 1930s. According to the respondents, while it occurred almost 100 years ago, is still ingrained in the Swedish collective memory, preventing a larger domestic role for the armed forces. The historical context in the Netherlands is very different. The Netherlands have never felt the external threat to the same extent as Finland and Sweden have felt it. However, since the housing riots of

the 1970s and 1980s, the government has been reluctant to use the armed forces in a domestic context, especially in public order management.

A second factor explaining similarities or differences between the three case studies is the governance model. In Sweden, there is a very strict separation, independence, between agencies, which is stipulated in the Constitution. In line with this strict separation, the legal possibilities for the armed forces to support the police are limited and there are no hybrid organizations or joint units. Finland, although less strict, has a similar model. It has developed a model of comprehensive security, but respondents describe this model as a silo model in which each agency sticks to its own tasks, and this is confirmed in the literature (Lehto & Limnell, 2021; Valtonen & Branders, 2021). The legal possibilities for the armed forces to support the civilian authorities are quite extensive, but the silo culture works against this. Additionally, in Finland, there is close cooperation between the Police, Border Guard (which has hybrid elements) and Customs. Consequently, the Border Guard and Customs are the primary organizations to give support to the Police when needed. Again, the situation in the Netherlands is different. In this country, a factor contributing to the (until recently) small domestic role of the armed forces is the existence of the *Marechaussee*, a hybrid force (Lutterbeck, 2004). As a police organization with military status and training, it is the first organization to support the police when needed. Additionally, the country has experience with joint units of police and armed forces personnel, such as the Special Interventions Service.

Thirdly, looking at the recent past (since the end of the Cold War), for the Netherlands, the changing threat environment has impacted the domestic role of the armed forces. Fukuyama's 'the end of history' discourse led to the suspension of conscription and large budget cuts in the armed forces (Hoffenaar, 2017; R. Moelker, Noll, et al., 2015). As a result, the military had to find ways to stay active, which they did through stability operations. The performance of police tasks in these operations (for example searching for explosives) has stimulated the use of such capabilities in the domestic context as well, which was welcomed by the civilian authorities in an era when 'new' cross-border security threats were on the rise. Finland has always felt the Russian threat and was not affected so much by new security threats (Hyvönen & Juntunen, 2021). And for Sweden, the so-called 'strategic time-out' after the end of the Cold War did lead to enormous budget cuts for the armed forces, but this period was too short to cause any meaningful change, certainly in combination with the Swedish model of separate agencies and the reluctance to involve the military in police tasks (Kronvall & Petersson, 2016). In that respect, it must be noted that Sweden only sent police personnel to perform police tasks in stability operations.

A fourth and final factor impacting the domestic role of the armed forces based on the data seems to be the alignment (or the absence thereof) between the political elite, the armed forces and the population, as is shown in the analysis section of all three case studies. In Finland, all three actors are convinced that the core task of the armed forces is to defend the country against external threats, and consequently, there is alignment on continuity, not on change. Conscription plays an important role here, as almost every Finnish family has a connection with the military. Furthermore, the armed forces have a strong position in public administration and strategy, evidenced by, for example, their role in the Security Committee and their role in organizing the National Defense Courses. The Netherlands, by contrast, has seen alignment in the three actors for a changing (and growing) domestic role. The changing threat environment has been an important driver. While, on the one hand, the distance between the armed forces and the population is large, popular support for the armed forces, and specifically its domestic role, is growing. Sweden is somewhere in the middle, with the population supporting a larger domestic role for the armed forces, but the political elite and military itself is reluctant. Consequently, there is no alignment in Sweden on a changing role and changes have therefore been small and slow.

How do these empirical results relate to the literature on the changing domestic role of the armed forces? As concluded in chapter 2, literature aiming to explain the drivers for and variance in the domestic role of the armed forces is relatively scarce. In their study of fifteen western liberal democracies, Schnabel and Krupanski have identified three *common traits*: the armed forces are never the primary internal security provider, the role of the armed forces in disasters is undisputed and, lastly, the threat of terrorism has impacted the role of the armed forces in recent years. These three traits are largely confirmed in the case studies of this dissertation: in all three countries, the police are the primary internal security provider and the role of the armed forces in disasters is undisputed. As for the threat of terrorism, this has impacted the role of the armed forces in both Sweden and the Netherlands, leading to new legal possibilities and/or new cooperative arrangements (for example, the Special Interventions Service in the Netherlands). The threat of terrorism is less evident in Finland, and consequently this has not really affected the domestic role of the armed forces there.

Schnabel and Krupanski have subsequently defined ten factors that can explain the *variation* in the domestic role of the armed forces: type of political system (monarchy vs republic), presence or absence of a constitution, extent of constitutional restrictions, historical context, military history, presence of gendarmeries or home guards, presence of services within the armed forces with explicit internal roles, external determinants (such as geographical conditions), recent or ongoing internal conflicts, membership in

military alliances (Schnabel & Krupanski, 2018). There is some overlap with the factors identified in the case studies, but there are some differences as well. First, the last factor Schnabel and Krupanski identified, the fact that Sweden and Finland have not been NATO members (although this has recently changed) could contribute to their focus on the task of the armed forces to defend the country. This dissertation has identified other factors named by Schnabel and Krupanski as playing a role as well, such as the historical context, the governance model and the related legal / constitutional possibilities and restrictions, and the presence or absence of hybrid organizations.

Schnabel and Krupanski do not emphasize the changing threat environment, which based on the data gathered in this dissertation seems to be an important factor in explaining change or continuity in the domestic role of the military. They also do not mention alignment between the political elite, military, and the population as a factor. In chapter 2, it has been shown how Schiff argues that alignment (or concordance) between the actors can be an important factor in the prevention of domestic intervention by the military (Schiff, 1995). The data compiled in this dissertation indicate that concordance between the three actors is an explanatory factor for the variation in the domestic role of the armed forces as well. In the Netherlands, the three actors are aligned on change in the domestic role of the armed forces, in Finland, on continuity, and in Sweden there is thus far no alignment between the actors for change. Furthermore, Schiff argues that separation theory is too much focused on institutional aspects and fails to take cultural and historical conditions into account. She names India and Israel as examples. The data also show that Finland is a good example of a stable democracy where military and civil domains are largely immersed.

Another aspect related to alignment is Feaver's principle-agent theory in which he states that when preferences of civilian and military actors do not align, military actors may have an incentive to 'shirk' from the orders given by civilian actors (Feaver, 2005). This 'shirking' can aim for a larger or a smaller role. The possibilities for the armed forces to 'shirk' are presumably larger if they have a stronger position in public administration, as is the case in Finland in particular. Respondents confirm this, stating that the Finnish armed forces have such a strong position that they will usually get what they want. Could this also be an explanation for the Dutch armed forces slowly getting a bigger domestic role after the Cold War? After the Cold War, the Dutch armed forces were confronted with large budget cuts and needed a new cause to justify their existence and rebuild societal support. In other words, they, like the armed forces of other western countries, had institutional interests to look for new roles (Bigo, 2006; Dahlberg & Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2020; Kalkman, 2019; Kalkman & de Waard, 2017; Lutterbeck, 2005). They may have found this new role in both stability operations and a larger domestic

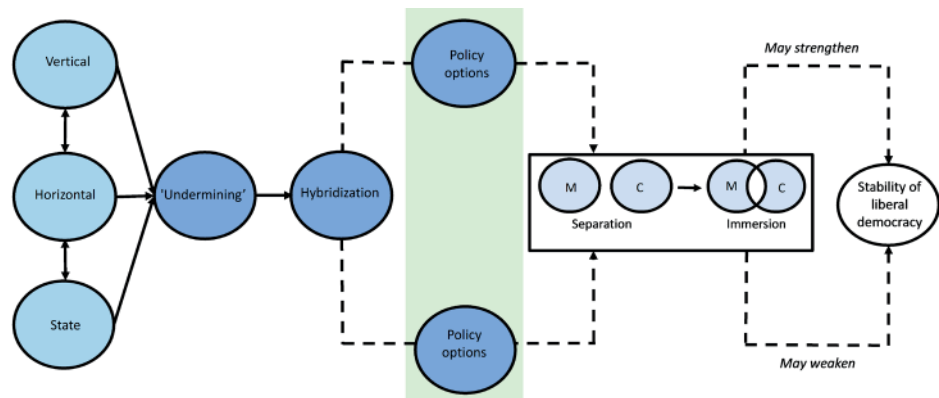
role. As the Finnish armed forces never suffered these budget cuts, there was no need to look for a different role. Sweden is more comparable with the Netherlands in that respect but as has been shown, other factors have prevented hybridization there. This raises the question whether there are examples of the armed forces in the case studies attempting to not fulfil a certain domestic role. In the Netherlands, some examples can be found during the COVID-19 pandemic, where the armed forces were in some cases reluctant to assist, and in other cases reluctant to commit capabilities for a longer period (Zijderveld & Van Vark, 2025). In Finland, there is the example of the armed forces using force in support of the police during a large demonstration. The armed forces concluded that this was detrimental to their reputation and that, therefore, they should ideally no longer carry out this duty. In Sweden, support for a larger domestic role seems to be growing on the civilian side, while the military is still reluctant.

The changing security situation is an interesting factor in this respect as well. On the one hand, it has been shown that after the end of the Cold War, the changing security situation for at least the Netherlands (absence of an external enemy and later the rise of new security threats such as terrorism and organized crime) has stimulated a larger domestic role. Both functional reasons (the changing threat environment) and institutional interests may have played a role in this increase. In Sweden, the growing concern about organized crime and gang violence could lead to calls for a larger domestic role. On the other hand, with the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the war continuing today, the external threat in Europe is back.

The next section will focus on policy options for the future and will consider these developments.

8.4 POLICY OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE DOMESTIC ROLE OF THE ARMED FORCES

This section, based on the second part of the model described in chapter 2, shown below, is framed by the question, what policy options for a future domestic role of the armed forces have been suggested or reflected on by the respondents.



A summary of policy options can be found in table 8.2 below, which is a compilation of the information found in tables 5.2 (Netherlands), 6.1 (Sweden) and 7.1 (Finland). Respondents were asked whether they saw a role for the armed forces in police tasks (with several subcategories), civic education (including conscription), cyber threats, intelligence, and crisis management. In addition, they were asked whether they see a role for hybrid forces in the future.

Table 8.2: Future policy options

Tasks	Netherlands	Sweden	Finland
Police tasks			
- Public order management			
- Security and surveillance			
- Organized crime			
- Terrorism			
- Expert support			
Hybrid forces			
Civic education			
- Conscription			
- National Defence Courses			
Intelligence			
Cyber threats			
Crisis management			

This table show, firstly, that the performance of police tasks by the armed forces, in support of the police, remains controversial in both Sweden and Finland, except for expert support and of support in case of a terrorist attack. Due to the reasons explored in section 8.3, such as the historical context and governance model, respondents are reluctant to consider a larger or different role. One exception in Sweden may be the fight against organized crime and gang violence where some respondents consider

the use of the armed forces as an option. The use of the armed forces for public order management according to the respondents, will likely remain controversial in all case studies. The Dutch case study demonstrates that it is mainly the use of armed forces personnel that is controversial. In the other two cases as well, respondents state that the risk of the armed forces using violence against civilians is a primary reason not to involve them in this task. They also wonder whether the armed forces could have a meaningful contribution in police tasks, as they are not trained for crimefighting. The use of military materiel is less controversial: in Dutch cases where demonstrators come equipped with heavy materiel, as has happened with the farmers protests in recent years, armed forces materiel has been used on several occasions. Respondents also consider the use of logistical expertise for public order management as acceptable (for example: in determining the best route for a demonstration). And in Sweden, specific military materiel has been used as well.

As for civic education, the armed forces already play a role in Finland, both by means of conscription and in facilitating the National Defense Courses. As Sweden has decided to revive these courses and to reinstate conscription, the trend in that country seems to be in the same direction. However, it should be noted that the main reason to keep conscription (Finland) or reinstate it (Sweden) is not related to civic education, but to the growing external threat. The fostering of social cohesion (including a better integration of migrants) is considered by the respondents (but also government authorities) to be a useful by-product. For this by-product to materialize, the respondents consider it necessary that conscription is gender neutral (which in Finland it is not) and involves most (preferably all) of the generation. In the Netherlands some developments towards stimulating young people to serve in the armed forces have been made, but these are primarily related to recruitment issues in the armed forces, rather than to civic education purposes. In this regard, expanding civic education to include defense-related coursework in schools is controversial, even in Finland, where some see it as a militarization of society.

In all three cases, respondents acknowledge that there is potential for the armed forces to play a bigger role in the cyber domain and intelligence, as well as for improved collaboration between civil and military authorities. They state that the cyber domain is borderless by nature, making it very difficult to distinguish whether an incident constitutes cybercrime, has elements of cyber war, can be attributed to organized crime, a foreign state, etcetera. Therefore, and because of the scarcity in expert personnel, they consider combining capabilities of civil and military actors to make sense. Both Finland and Sweden have experimented with cyber conscripts, hoping to interest them in a role as cyber reservist afterwards. The same holds true for intelligence, where respondents

recognize that the armed forces have a different way of looking at problems (outside-in) that is complementary with the police *modus operandi* (inside-out). Using the armed forces for intelligence operations could help in identifying the networks behind concrete cases. At the same time, respondents recognize the legal obstacles for better cooperation in this area.

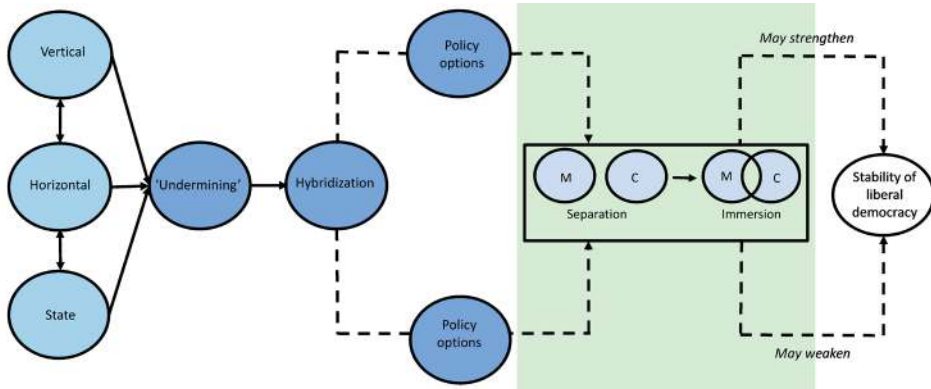
Crisis management is and will probably remain the least controversial area for the armed forces to support the police. In all three countries, the armed forces supported the civil authorities during the COVID-19 pandemic: in hospitals, care homes, in vaccination campaigns, and testing. The reputation of the armed forces as a trustworthy partner in cooperation has been beneficial. Respondents generally see this as a natural role for the armed forces to support civilian authorities, although they state the armed forces should never be in the lead.

Finally, hybrid forces. As discussed before, the Netherlands has a hybrid force, the *Marechaussee*, and has also been working with joint units of civilian and military personnel. Sweden and Finland have been more reluctant. Both countries prefer a separation of agencies. However, in Finland, the Finnish Border Guard shows elements of a hybrid force, and there is close cooperation between the Police, Customs and the Border Guard. According to the respondents, this makes the need for a hybrid force between the police and armed forces smaller. This close cooperation was created for pragmatic reasons, primarily to support each other in remote locations and to efficiently use scarce resources. Another development in Finland could follow from the large group of reservists that have completed conscription. To keep them action-ready, an option could be use them as a reserve force for the Police. In Sweden, some suggestions have been made to create a hybrid force, building on the Home Guard or re-establishing the Cold War '*Beredskapspolis*'. Respondents name the usefulness of such a hybrid force in dealing with grey-zone threats or augmenting the police when needed, but thus far opposition has been too strong and the preference to separate agencies prevails.

It must be noted that both Sweden and Finland have recently installed new governments, which in both cases are more rightwing oriented than their predecessors. To what extent this will lead to new policy options for a domestic role of the armed forces remains to be seen. After chapter 9, an epilogue is devoted to recent developments after the Russian-Ukraine war. As will be shown, this could have both a positive and a negative effect on the domestic role of the armed forces.

8.5 IMPACT OF A CHANGING DOMESTIC ROLE ON CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

This section is based on the third part of the model described in chapter 2, as is shown below.



As discussed in section 8.3, all three case studies show a trend towards more immersion (with Finland already immersed in three out of four dimensions) and more hybridization, though developments and speed differ per country. These differences can be explained by differences in historical context and governance, the changing threat environment, and alignment between the political elite, military and population. Looking at policy options as identified by the respondents (section 8.4), most respondents expect a (slowly) growing domestic role for the armed forces (and therefore: more hybridization and immersion) in the next 10 years, especially related to cyber threats and intelligence, and in the Netherlands (and possibly Sweden) for police tasks as well.

This section evaluates the impact of a changing domestic role and the trend towards immersion in terms of civil-military relations.

As described in chapter 2, the preferred model for civil-military relations in a liberal democracy has for a long time been a model in which the military and the civil domain are separated and there is civilian supremacy and control over the military, the Huntingtonian model. However, as Janowitz has already written in the 1960s, a model of immersion may be fitting the liberal democratic state as well. According to Janowitz, this would lead to an active military citizenship whereby the armed forces are immersed in society to such an extent that they do what civil actors ask for. As discussed, Finland fits the Janowitzian model better than the Huntingtonian model, although the principle of civilian control is clearly embedded in the relevant legislation and although in tasks

there is still quite a clear division between the armed forces and other security organizations particularly the police.

As described in chapter 2, the focus of the civil-military relations field of research is on civilian control (Feaver, 1999). Looking at the three case studies, the principle of civilian control is in fact very clear in all three. The data show that this principle is clearly defined in relevant legislation in both Finland and Sweden. In the Netherlands, article 97 of the Constitution states that the government has supreme authority over the armed forces, from which it could be inferred that the armed forces act under civilian control, although one respondent suggested to define the principle of civilian control in case of domestic tasks more clearly.

In addition to the law, culture plays a significant role as well in determining the degree of civilian control over the armed forces. As shown in the Dutch case study, the Dutch armed forces are very loyal to the government in general and to the Minister of Defense in particular even though there are possibilities to influence policies. Nevertheless, some respondents on the civilian side talk about the 'military mindset' in explaining why they feel there should be reluctance to expand the domestic role of the armed forces. In their eyes, military personnel are too dominant, find it difficult to accept civilian control and have difficulty in de-escalating in contacts with the population. The same sentiment can be found in Finland and Sweden, where some consider that being in a supporting role is against the professional identity of the military. In the Netherlands, the research shows that the metaphor of 'green on the streets' has had a strong effect in civil authorities being reluctant to involve the armed forces in domestic tasks and in Sweden this is a factor as well.

In the case study chapters, I used the leading works of Desch, Levy, Kuehn, Travis and Bland to evaluate the trend towards immersion from a control perspective. Desch expects civilian control to weaken when external threats become smaller and internal threats rise, with Levy and Kuehn adding that this is only the case if these internal threats are militarized (Desch, 1998; Kuehn & Levy, 2021b, 2021a). Based on these theories, as there is no clear change in the Finnish threat environment, continuity in civilian control would be expected, which is what the data show as well. The Finnish military has always had, and still has, a strong position, and demilitarization efforts (for example, by transforming the total defense model into a comprehensive security model) have had mainly cosmetic effects. The Finnish case study matches Travis' theory of 'pragmatic civilian control' or perhaps rather Bland's theory of shared responsibility (Bland, 2001; Travis, 2017).

In the Netherlands, the external threat has declined after the end of the Cold War and internal (or rather: cross-border) threats have risen. Based on the work of Desch and the work

of Levy and Kuehn, the expectation would be that civilian control would weaken, if these threats would become militarized. Although some respondents have addressed concerns about a military mindset and some 'war language' has been detected (for example, the mayor of Eindhoven warning of a civil war in his city during the COVID pandemic) there is no real evidence of militarization. This research has also shown that although the position of the Dutch military in public administration and strategy has become a bit stronger, there are no signs of a weakening of civilian control. Sweden, interestingly, does show some signs of militarization, with the transfer of two civilian agencies to the Ministry of Defense. However, this militarization is not related to an increasing internal threat, but to the rising external threat posed by Russia in recent years. Both Sweden and the Netherlands have created a National Security Council, which is a clear example of 'pragmatic civilian control', a viable model according to Travis in this era of rising grey zone threats.

Focusing a bit further on the role of the armed forces in public administration and government strategy, Brooks has suggested normalizing the military's role in politics (Brooks, 2019). She considers the military to be a government institution comparable with other government institutions in the sense that it can influence government policies and has institutional interests. She argues that the military has for a long time been seen as an exceptional actor, because it can use lethal force, commissioned by the state, but against the state as well. In established liberal democracies, however, it would make more sense to consider the role of the armed forces as a bureaucratic actor than the possibility for a coup.

The Finnish Defence Forces, because of their historical and current position in the security domain, can be considered an important bureaucratic power. In the Netherlands, the opposite seems to be the case: respondents state that the armed forces have been too absent in public administration, have been inward-looking and should increase their professional visibility. The Swedish situation is somewhere in between. Armed forces in all three countries have relations with politicians and with society in general. Because of their size, they are a relatively large employer and have impact on the economy through their procurement projects. Armed forces personnel can speak out in public and have been increasingly seen to do so, especially since the start of the war in Ukraine.

Both the Netherlands and Sweden have recently taken steps in the direction of the Finnish comprehensive security model with the establishment of a National Security Council, in which all relevant security actors participate. Both countries have decided to establish this council at the Prime Minister's Office, while the Finnish Security Committee is headed by the Ministry of Defense. In Finland, normalizing the role of the military in politics could mean moving the Security Committee to the Prime Minister's Office.

A challenge in the Finnish context has been to bridge the siloes between the pillars of comprehensive security in the implementation phase, especially at the national level, where bureaucratic politics and competition between organizations about budgets tend to hinder cooperation. During the COVID-19 crisis, this led to the Prime Minister of Finland creating her own coordination structure instead of using the existing model (Safety Investigation Authority, 2021). The *National Defence Courses* have been created to create a network and bridge the siloes, but apparently there is still room for improvement.

Normalizing the role of the military in politics and public administration could have an impact on the role of the military in society as well. As has been seen in both the Netherlands and Sweden, the creation of an all-volunteer force has led to a disconnect between the armed forces and society. Sweden has recently reintroduced conscription (though in small numbers) and the Netherlands is taking efforts to make young people serve in the armed forces as well. This could lead to a better connection between the armed forces and society in both countries. Wallenius has identified other ways to increase societal anchoring, such as communication, visibility, and support to civil authorities (Wallenius et al., 2019b). Normalizing the role of the military in politics could in that sense also lead to a better connection between the armed forces and society, just as an increase in domestic tasks or increasing visibility in public debate could do so as well. In that way, immersion in one area could lead to immersion in another area.

After having discussed the topic of civilian control, it is important to note that some authors consider this heavy focus on civilian control as misplaced in liberal democracies. Bland has suggested speaking about 'civilian direction' of the military (Bland, 2001). Others suggest studying other dimensions, such as military roles and missions and military effectiveness (Bruneau, 2018; Edmunds, 2006). Bruneau argues that the military needs to be both under democratic civilian control and effective (and efficient, although that is much harder to measure) in its missions at the same time (Bruneau, 2018). In line with Bruneau, for this dissertation, a relevant question is whether the strong focus on civilian control in established liberal democracies may have a negative impact on its effectiveness in dealing with new challenges and thereby on the stability of liberal democracy.

Although in general it is always difficult to say anything about the 'effectiveness' of any government performance, Sweden stands out here as the most obvious case where legal and cultural limitations have made it difficult to involve the armed forces in domestic tasks. As explained in chapter 6, a special law allows for the involvement of the armed forces in case of a terrorist attack. However, for the fight against organized crime there are no legal possibilities and most respondents are very reluctant to change this. All three countries struggle with the possible role of the armed forces in the cyber domain, where it

is often very difficult to determine whether an organized crime group or a foreign actor is behind a threat. An interesting experiment described by respondents in both Sweden and Finland in this respect is the use of cyber conscripts. So far, they do not play a role in the civil domain, but this could change towards the future. In the area of intelligence, respondents from all three countries recognize that combining the capabilities of both civil security organizations (mainly the police) and the armed forces could be helpful, as they are trained to work from a different perspective (inside-out versus outside-in). However, legal restrictions make sharing intelligence between these organizations very difficult. Finally, the weaponization of migration, as has recently happened in Belarus and in 2015/2016 in Russia as well, could be another area where legal and cultural constraints following from the principle of civilian control limit effective performance by the government.

As suggested by Bruneau (Bruneau, 2018), a solution could be to investigate how the capabilities of the armed forces could be used effectively in a domestic context, while remaining under civilian control (or rather perhaps, in Bland's words, 'civilian direction') at the same time. Looking at the case studies, a few possibilities pop up.

Based on the data, a first option to create joint units of police and armed forces personnel that operate under police command. The Special Interventions Service in the Netherlands serves as a prime example. As explained in chapter 5, this unit is used in case of a terrorist attack or a high-risk arrest. Armed forces personnel in this unit are trained to perform police tasks. At the same time, they acquire valuable experience in a domestic context that they can use in future international operations as well.

A second option, as has been seen in the Netherlands as well, is a hybrid force such as a gendarmerie that could operate as an in-between step on the escalation ladder from the police to the armed forces, providing a more robust performance than the police and at the same time preventing militarization of the police and constabularization of the armed forces. As explained, the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee, a police organization with military status, has expanded in recent years. Other countries with comparable forces have seen the same development. For a country like Sweden that has been confronted with security challenges that require a more robust performance by the authorities (particularly organized crime and gang violence) but prefers not to involve the armed forces in domestic police tasks, a hybrid force may be a viable solution. At the same time, some respondents see the mere existence of a hybrid force as a form of immersion that should be avoided in a liberal democracy.

A third option is the Finnish model for the Border Guard. This is a civilian organization with specific tasks in border control, but its officers receive military training, which is

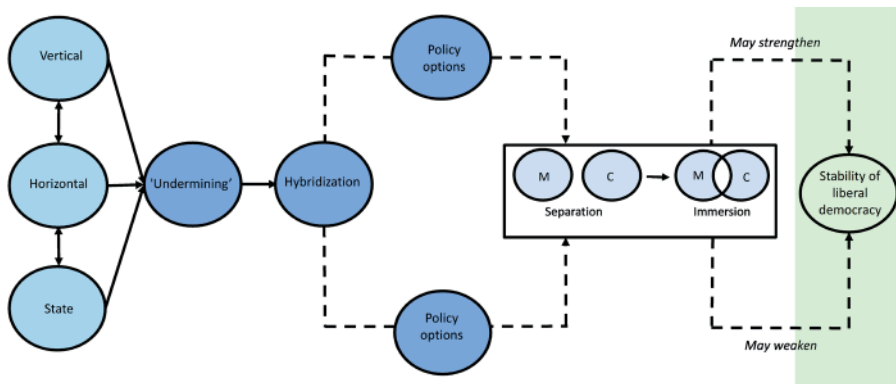
aimed at the integration of the Border Guard in the Finnish Defence Forces in case of war but can be useful in a domestic setting as well. As has been shown, the cooperation between the police, Customs and Border Guard in Finland guarantees that help can always be found with one of the partner organizations in case it is needed.

A fourth option would be to let the armed forces support the police on a case-by-case basis, for which there are many legal possibilities in the Netherlands and Finland and a few specific options in Sweden. This type of support has grown in the Netherlands in recent years, and less so in the other two countries. Case-by-case support requires adequate training for the armed forces personnel involved and some clear boundaries set in advance, for example that the armed forces personnel always operate under police command and that they cannot use violence against civilians in public order management. Another relevant question is how to prioritize capabilities for the various tasks. For example, in Finland the defense of the country always gets priority and support to other authorities can only take place when the required capabilities are not needed for that task. In the Netherlands, at least in theory, all core tasks of the armed forces are equal. Furthermore, a relevant question is whether to aim for the development of dual capabilities that can be used in both an international and a domestic context.

Having discussed the impact of a changing domestic role of the armed forces on civil-military relations, the impact on the stability of liberal democracy, the main research question of this dissertation, will now be discussed.

8.6 IMPACT OF A CHANGING DOMESTIC ROLE ON THE STABILITY OF LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

This section is based on the fourth part of the model developed in chapter 2, as is shown below.



What is the impact of a changing (and in many instances growing) domestic role of the armed forces, of more immersion and more hybridization on the stability of liberal democracy? As has been shown in chapter 4, three forms of undermining of liberal democracy can be distinguished, namely 1) vertical undermining (the blurring of internal and external security leading to new security threats), 2) horizontal undermining (declining social cohesion, social unrest, and the creation of parallel societies), and 3) undermining of liberal democracy by the state. As appears from the last part of the above model, a growing domestic role of the armed forces, more immersion and more hybridization, could have both positive and negative effects on the stability of liberal democracy. This section contains a general analysis of positive and negative effects based on the respondent's answers and the relevant literature. In the concluding chapter of this dissertation, this analysis will be refined and the possible effect of concrete policy options on the stability of liberal democracy will be evaluated (section 9.1).

Positive effects

With regard to positive effects, as it was explained in chapter 2, the military is a regime and state's main protector (and thus provides stability). Respondents recognize this positive effect on stability: *'In this world we live in, with growing uncertainty for people, the armed forces and gendarmeries are an implicit certainty. A form of stability and continuity and certainty which you don't speak about because it's always there. Until it's gone. Then a crisis is just around the corner. In a democratic society the armed forces can be a self-evident certainty.'* (Respondent 47, Netherlands, academic)

In other words, the armed forces can have a stabilizing effect simply by being there. Since the end of the Cold War, however, the armed forces have increasingly been absent from Dutch and Swedish societies and public administration. The armed forces in both countries suffered large budget cuts and conscription has been abolished (Sweden) or suspended (the Netherlands). This has increased the distance between the armed forces and society. The recent war in Ukraine has had an enormous effect on the awareness of both political parties and the public in both countries (in Sweden, this process started already in 2014) of the necessity to have armed forces that are sufficiently strong, leading to increased defense spending.

In Finland, the situation has been different from the other two countries. The country has always kept its large armed forces and general conscription for men. In Finland, the armed forces have the specific task to foster the will to defend the country, which could influence stability as well. Comparing World Values Survey data, the will to defend the country is much higher in Finland and Sweden than in the Netherlands, as can be seen in table 8.3 below. For Sweden, this may be a leftover from the Cold War period and / or

the fact that both Sweden and Finland have not been NATO members (though of course both countries have recently joined NATO).

Table 8.3: Willingness to fight for your country (Haerpfer et al., 2020)

	Finland ²⁰	Netherlands	Sweden
Yes	74,8	46,7	80,5
No	18,3	40,9	15,6
Do not know	6,2	11,8	3,0
No answer	0,7	0,6	0,9

A second positive effect to consider, referred to above as well, is the role of conscription, either military or social. As elaborated on in chapter 2, there is quite some evidence for the contact hypothesis, meaning that close personal contact with fellow citizens from different social or ethnic groups leads to better social integration and cohesion and a feeling of national identity. Recent research on the transformation of 15 European countries from a conscription-based military to an all-volunteer force and in other countries that still have conscription for at least part of the population confirms this (Ronconi & Ramos-Toro, 2022; Rosman, 2020; C. M. Weiss, 2022). Rosman’s research shows no significant difference in this respect between serving in the military or an alternative national conscription (Rosman, 2020). Most of the Finnish respondents in this research believe firmly in this effect of conscription and both in the Netherlands and Sweden this is one of the arguments used to reinstate a form of conscription. Respondents also expect a better integration of migrants that take part in a conscription system and a recent article indicates that conscription indeed has a positive effect on labor market integration (Bontenbal et al., 2024). Further research, also in different countries, is needed to find out if this really is the case (see also chapter 9).

As shown in chapter 2, gender neutrality has been named a precondition for conscription to foster social cohesion in the whole population. Sweden and the Netherlands have already made their conscription systems gender neutral (although conscription is still suspended in the Netherlands). The Finnish government has recognized the importance of gender neutrality but struggles with the possible impact of making the whole generation serve, as this would not be necessary for operational security needs.

As the literature indicates that conscription fosters social cohesion and integration it could play a role in countering horizontal undermining (Bontenbal et al., 2024; Ronconi & Ramos-Toro, 2022; Rosman, 2020; C. M. Weiss, 2022). There are a few caveats: for

20 As shown in chapter 7, data from 2022 show an even higher percentage of willingness in Finland.

conscription to play this role, most of the generation (or preferably the whole generation) needs to participate, including both men and women. Respondents from all three countries either confirm this effect (for Finland) or based on their expertise state they expect this effect (for Sweden and the Netherlands). At the same time, the fundamental question whether conscription is compatible with liberal democracy in the absence of fundamental security needs has to be considered. On the other hand, with declining social cohesion and growing social unrest undermining liberal democracy, such a need could be present, in addition to security needs following the growing external threat.

A third positive effect concerns the vertical undermining of liberal democracy by new security challenges, particularly grey zone threats, where the distinction between internal and external threats, or internal and external security actors, is not always so clear-cut. As is evident in the Netherlands, and to a less extent in Finland, a hybrid force, such as a gendarmerie, has distinct advantages in such a situation, combining both police and military capabilities, powers, and training that allows for a layered approach to security threats, while at the same time preventing police militarization (Van Vark & Beuving, 2022). In Sweden in particular, authorities are struggling with increasing gang violence and organized crime, forcing the police to become more and more robust. According to some respondents this leads to a militarization of the police in both equipment and language, making community policing more difficult.

Negative effects

A changing domestic role of the armed forces, leading to hybridization and more immersion of civil and military domains, may have negative effects as well that may not be immediately visible. When speaking about 'militarization', in western liberal democracies the tendency is to think about tasks: soldiers in the streets, or police officers that look and act like soldiers. However, militarization may also take place in less visible ways. For example, chapter 7 shows that the Finnish armed forces are immersed in society, public administration and government strategy and the law. They lead the Security Committee, organize the *National Defence Courses*, influence a large percentage of males through conscription and, according to respondents, are a very influential actor in the security domain. In fact, the only domain where the FDF does not have a large role is in the performance of specific tasks. Though, in name, the Finnish model has developed from 'total defense' to 'comprehensive security', the position of the Ministry of Defense and the FDF remain strong (Valtonen & Branders, 2021; Virta & Branders, 2016). The new Swedish government has taken measures increasing the position of the Ministry of Defense as well. It has decided to move the responsibility for civilian defense and crisis preparedness from the Ministry of Justice to the Ministry of Defense. A new minister for civil defense at that ministry is responsible for those tasks (Kristersson, 2022). Whether

this is a form of 'necessary' or 'surplus' militarization (Schulzke, 2018) is an interesting question to study in the coming years of the new government.

Following this line of thinking, some authors state that an increased dependence of civil authorities on the armed forces could upset the balance between civil and military authorities, and various respondents in all three countries have also referred to this risk as is evidenced by the 'mixed attitudes' factor influencing the domestic role of the military that was found in each case study (Kalkman, 2019; Zijderfeld & Van Vark, 2025). In this respect, path dependence theory is of relevance as well. Chapter 2 has described several countries in Latin America where path dependence has led to both a growing involvement of the armed forces in domestic security and a militarization of the police. Sometimes there have been short positive effects on crime rates, but generally public security has worsened, and levels of violence have only gone up. The situation in European liberal democracies is very different, but at the same time we have seen that various countries have struggled with scaling down the domestic use of the armed forces after an incident. France and Belgium after the terrorist attacks of 2015 and 2016 stand out in this respect (Claerman, 2018). To avoid path dependence taking place, an adequate exit strategy seems to be an important precondition.

A third line of arguments about negative effects focuses on institutional interests. After the end of the Cold War, armed forces in many western liberal democracies were looking for new roles and purposes. As was discussed in chapter 2, some authors claim they framed security threats in certain ways to further their own institutional interests. Authors such as Bigo see the growth of gendarmeries as evidence for this and are of the opinion that this hybrid model is a form of immersion that should be avoided in a liberal democracy as it would further the armed forces institutional interests (Bigo, 2001, 2006; Bigo & Tsoukala, 2008). As described in chapter 6, this line of thinking has been influential in Sweden, where the authorities wish to keep a strict separation between agencies. On the other hand, as discussed above, the consequence of this strict separation has been a certain militarization of the police in response to new security threats involving high levels of violence, in particular gang violence. There are some indications for institutional interests playing a role in the case of the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee as well (Van Vark & Beuving, 2022).

A fourth line of arguments concerns the balance in liberal democracy between order and legitimacy. As was described in chapter 4, based on the work of Weiss, liberal democracies need to maintain both order and legitimacy. To keep legitimacy with the public, the police aim to de-escalate and use minimum force and police work is heavily regulated in the law. The armed forces on the other hand need to have what is called

‘escalation dominance’ for them to be able to win a war and that may include the use of maximum force. Weiss argues that because of this, they cannot be expected to have the same sensitivities to civil liberties as the police which is why there should be care in using the armed forces for domestic tasks, especially where there is contact with the public, such as in public order management (T. Weiss, 2011, 2013). This line of argument was used by many of the Swedish respondents.

On the other hand, some of the Dutch respondents are not convinced this supposed ‘military mindset’ really exists, claiming that violence is a last resort for the armed forces as well, while the police can use violence if necessary. Others argue that an increased use of the armed forces, for example in the fight against organized crime, could lead to more legitimacy as well (Muller, 2006). These arguments are used in the Dutch case study where respondents see a disconnect between the armed forces and society and expect that a larger domestic role could lead to more support in society. In Sweden as well, some respondents support this position. Interestingly, as the Swedish case study shows, public opinion is quite positive about a larger domestic role for the armed forces, especially in the fight against organized crime and in crisis management (Berndtsson et al., 2021; Weibull, 2005).

The final chapter of this dissertation will come back to the research question and sub-questions identified in chapter 1, providing an answer to these questions and insight into the theoretical contributions of this research. Furthermore, it will identify the limitations of the research, provide suggestions for further research and identify some practical implications.



9

CONCLUSION

9.1 RESEARCH RESULTS AND THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

The main research question for this dissertation was: how can the armed forces in Northwestern Europe strengthen liberal democracy and what are the consequences for civil-military relations in theory and practice? In this section I will answer this question and the underlying sub-questions and in doing so identify the theoretical contributions this research has made.

1. To what extent is liberal democracy in Northwestern Europe under pressure and what are the security and stability related challenges undermining liberal democracy in Northwestern Europe?

Democracy studies is a broad research field. As explained in chapter 2, this dissertation does not cover the whole scientific debate on the topic of liberal democracy. Instead, it has addressed the link between the stability of liberal democracy and the role of the armed forces in case of democratic backsliding. Earlier research addressing the connection between liberal democracy and the armed forces has focused on the role of the armed forces in new democracies, mainly with the aim of limiting its role and preventing future coups (Bruneau & Matei, 2008).

This research illustrates that liberal democracy in Northwestern Europe is indeed under pressure, even though this is still a very stable part of the world. It identified three security and stability-related challenges that are undermining liberal democracy. First, the blurring of internal and external security and the rise of new security threats (vertical undermining). Secondly, declining social cohesion, social unrest, and the creation of parallel societies (horizontal undermining), and lastly the undermining of liberal democracy by the state. (Elements of) these challenges can be found in all three case studies of this research.

These results have provided new insights into the link between democracy and security in times of democratic backsliding. The research shows that these challenges do not only undermine the stability of liberal democracy in the researched cases but have also impacted the role of the armed forces (see sub-question 2 below).

2. What is the current position of the armed forces in Northwestern Europe on the CMR dilemma, to what extent has this position changed in recent years and how can these changes be explained?

The security and stability related challenges mentioned above could lead to or ask for a different role of the armed forces in a domestic context and in fact recent years have seen a hybridization of the armed forces and the police taking place in western liberal democracies, although the extent of this hybridization differs. A hybridization of the armed forces and the police implies that a strict separation model is not an option. However, civil-military relations theory is still heavily influenced by two classical works written in the 1950s and 1960s respectively (Huntington and Janowitz). In this field of study, the preferred model for a liberal democracy is a Huntingtonian model of separation between the civil and military domains. This research explored whether this model is applied in practice, by studying recent developments in the domestic role of the armed forces in the Netherlands, Sweden, and Finland, comparing them, and looking for explanations for the differences found.

The research furthermore shows the most constabularization is taking place in the Netherlands, with the armed forces increasingly supporting the police in several tasks, while Sweden is the most reluctant to use the armed forces for these purposes. Not surprisingly, Swedish respondents point at a certain militarization of the police, as a more robust response has been employed to deal with the growing organized crime problem and gang violence. Both the Netherlands and Finland have experience with a hybrid force. In terms of civil-military relations, none of the countries researched is in the Huntingtonian paradigm and, in fact, Finland seems to fit the Janowitzian model in all dimensions investigated (public administration and strategy, society, law) except for the task dimension, in which the civil and military domain remain largely separated. Sweden and the Netherlands are moving in that direction as well.

These findings indicate that the separation versus immersion dilemma in civil-military relations theory does not seem to be a dilemma in practice, as separation and immersion elements mix in all three cases and the trend is clearly in the direction of immersion. The research has shown how separation and immersion may exist at the same time in a liberal democracy. Its results thus provide evidence for Schiff's concordance theory and especially her argument that one should take cultural and historical factors into account when looking at the relation between the military and the civil domain and that the military, the political elite and the population should aim for a cooperative relationship that may involve separation but does not require it.

As the research shows, the trend towards immersion is related to the three security and stability related challenges that liberal democracies have been encountering, which have led to hybridization. The research confirms the three *common traits* identified by Schnabel and Krupanski (Schnabel & Krupanski, 2018) in the (changing) domestic role of

the armed forces: the armed forces are never the primary internal security provider, the role of the armed forces in disasters is undisputed and finally, the threat of terrorism has impacted the role of the armed forces in recent years.

Besides explaining the move from separation to immersion, the research also aimed to explain the variation in hybridization and immersion between the three countries, building on the work that has been done by authors like Schnabel and Krupanski (2018). From the data four main relevant factors can be identified, namely the differences in historical context between the three case studies, the governance model and legal framework, the changing threat environment, and the existence or absence of alignment between the political elite, military and population on change or continuity.

The first two factors can be found in the work of Schnabel and Krupanski (2018) as well. The research adds two relevant factors to their analysis, namely the changing threat environment and, using Schiff's concordance theory, alignment between the political elite, military and population (Schiff, 1995). While Schiff focuses on coup prevention, arguing that alignment between the military, the political elite and the population prevents coups, this research indicates that her theory can be used to explain (changes or continuity in) the domestic role of the armed forces as well.

3. What policy options can be developed for the future role of the armed forces in a domestic context in Northwestern Europe and how will this change the domestic role of the armed forces?

In recent years, the use of the armed forces for police tasks in the Netherlands has grown, and this trend is set to continue, with perhaps the only controversial task remaining the use of force against civilians, particularly in public order management. Based on the data, no such development can be expected for Sweden and Finland anytime soon, with possibly the exception of the fight against organized crime and gang violence in Sweden. All three countries struggle with the cyber domain and intelligence, recognizing that better cooperation between military and civil authorities is essential, but also complicated within existing legal frameworks. The armed forces in Finland have traditionally played a large role in civic education and conscription and Sweden is moving in that direction as well. In the Netherlands, developments are very slow in this respect. Finally, looking at hybrid forces, some discussion has taken place in Sweden and Finland, but no concrete decisions have been taken.

The data furthermore seem to indicate that the trend towards hybridization will most likely continue in the coming years. While the use of the armed forces for police tasks

remains controversial in Sweden and Finland, the expectation is that hybridization in the cyber domain and in intelligence will grow in all three countries. The use of the armed forces in these areas is less visible and thus less controversial on a political level. With a growing awareness of threats in the grey zone between war and peace, and cyber-attacks taking place daily and on a large scale in all three countries (Algemene Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst et al., 2022; Analistennetwerk Nationale Veiligheid, 2022; Ministry of the Interior, 2023; Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap, 2021; Säkerhetspolisen, 2023), the expectation is for the trend for closer cooperation between military and civilian organizations, and even the private sector, to persist. To recall the argument of one of the respondents, in section 5.5, *'Why would the armed forces protect the harbor of Rotterdam in case of a physical attack, and not in case of a cyber-attack?'* And in intelligence, civilian and armed forces capabilities clearly complement each other, but the legal framework to collect and share information is lacking. While a growing body of academic literature addresses the issue of grey zone threats, this research indicates the need for further research into the implications for security organizations to establish options and boundaries and it adds to the academic debate on the blurring of military and police roles.

In the answer to sub-question 5, I will elaborate on the impact of various policy options on the stability of liberal democracy.

4. What would the consequences be of a changing domestic role for civil-military relations in Northwestern Europe?

Civil-military relations literature focuses primarily on civilian control over the armed forces. A relevant question is whether this strong focus on civilian control in established liberal democracies is necessary and whether it may negatively impact the effectiveness of these democracies in dealing with new challenges. This research suggests that this is indeed the case. It shows how separation and immersion may exist at the same time in a liberal democracy and what that means for civil-military relations, including the workings of civilian control (or: civilian direction) of the military.

Building on the work of Bruneau (Bruneau, 2018) on military effectiveness, this research has explored how and with what tasks the military can be effective, while still being under civilian control. As 'new' security challenges, following from the blurring of internal and external security, put pressure on the stability of liberal democracy in all three cases, a strict separation between primarily the armed forces and the police makes it more difficult to act on these challenges. In addition, legal and cultural constraints following from the principle of civilian control may limit effective performance by western liberal

democratic governments. Consequently, the research has explored policy options for a different role of the armed forces in the future. Making the boundaries between the police and the military more permeable could possibly facilitate a more effective performance. Depending on the specific context of a country, the exact form or shape of this permeability could differ, varying in a case-by-case basis, via joint units, to hybrid organizations such as the Finnish Border Guard or the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee.

As for civilian control, this research follows the line of thinking of authors like Brooks, Travis and Bland (Bland, 1999; Brooks, 2019; Travis, 2017). Brooks has criticized the heavy emphasis on the exceptional nature of the armed forces, related to the risk of a coup (Brooks, 2019). She proposes normalizing the role of the military in politics by considering the military a bureaucratic actor like other government actors. The Dutch and Finnish case study are prime examples of two opposite sides of one coin in this respect. While the Dutch armed forces have been largely invisible in government strategy and public administration, the Finnish Defence Forces have been a strong bureaucratic actor, influencing government policies, the country's elite (through the National Defense Courses), and the men through conscription. From a perspective of civilian control, the risk of the armed forces becoming a too dominating bureaucratic actor than is fitting in a liberal democracy seems to be bigger than the risk of the armed forces committing a coup. All three cases have moved towards what Travis (Travis, 2017) calls 'pragmatic civilian control' (the Netherlands and Sweden) or perhaps even what Bland (Bland, 1999) calls 'shared responsibility' (Finland). Based on this dissertation's findings, pragmatic civilian control could be a useful mode to employ in the area of grey zone threats.

Combining the two perspectives, the main contribution to the theoretical field of civil-military relations of this research lies in providing reflections on how to increase the effectiveness of the armed forces in a domestic context (which is called for due to the challenges for liberal democracy), while remaining under civilian control (or direction). It indicates that the classical literature on separation and immersion and the focus on civilian control of the military is too limited for established liberal democracies, particularly in an era where they are confronted with democratic backsliding and a changing threat environment (particularly the rise of grey-zone threats) at the same time.

This calls for new models, for which the Finnish model for comprehensive security seems to be a good example, provided the balance in this model does not tilt towards one of the actors (of which there are indications in Finland). It also calls for new forms of cooperation between security organizations, such as joint units or hybrid forces. Finally, in the task dimension, this calls for a differentiation, with a role for the armed forces in

the cyber domain or the fight against organized crime being more appropriate than a role in public order management.

This would mean the end of a strict separation between civil and military domains and a move towards immersion. In this respect, the research has shown that, when it comes to immersion, the focus on tasks can obscure the other dimensions that can be distinguished. This dissertation has explored three other dimensions, namely the law, society and public administration and strategy. Looking at these dimensions as well, it becomes clear that in Finland, where there is quite a strong separation between the military and civil domain in tasks, the armed forces are immersed in society, public administration, and the law. It is important to consider Brooks' argument to view the armed forces as a regular bureaucratic actor to become alert to possible undue influence of the military. This undue influence may become visible in other dimensions than just the task dimension. While most respondents consider Finland to be in the Huntingtonian paradigm, this research shows that the country is closer to Janowitz' model, and Sweden and the Netherlands are moving in the same direction. In fact, the research has shown that immersion in one dimension can lead to more immersion in another dimension.

5. To what extent could a changing domestic role of the armed forces and a new balance in civil-military relations either contribute to the stability of liberal democracy in Northwestern Europe, or alternatively, detract from its stability? What are the opportunities and caveats for a new balance?

This dissertation departed from the hypothesis that the undermining of liberal democracy by three security and stability related challenges has contributed to a hybridization of the armed forces and the police and subsequently to an immersion of civil and military domains. A further hypothesis was that an increasing hybridization and immersion of the military and civil domain could have both positive and negative effects on the stability of liberal democracy.

This research has indeed identified both positive and negative effects. On the positive side, the armed forces can have a stabilizing effect simply by being there, which signifies the necessity for countering the disconnect between the armed forces and society that has formed in the Netherlands and to a less extent Sweden. This confirms Brooks' argument to view the armed forces as a regular bureaucratic actor, instead of an exceptional organization that may commit a coup. The armed forces are primarily an asset, not a threat, in a stable liberal democracy. Secondly, a form of conscription can foster social cohesion, which could counter the horizontal undermining of liberal democracy. As shown in chapter 2, the academic literature points at a positive effect of conscription

on social cohesion. The Finnish respondents share this perspective for the Finnish situation. As the research shows that declining social cohesion is an important challenge for liberal democracy, the potential role the armed forces could play is relevant to consider. Thirdly, new security challenges with a hybrid character ask for a different role for the armed forces and hybrid forces such as gendarmeries can be helpful in dealing with these challenges as well. This is an important contribution this dissertation makes to the academic literature on gendarmeries, which is relatively limited (for exceptions, see: (Bigo, 2006; Gobinet, 2008; Lutterbeck, 2004; P. Neuteboom, 2010; Van Vark & Beuving, 2022)).

On the negative side, there needs to be alertness to processes of militarization and a distinction between 'necessary' and 'surplus' militarization is necessary. This will become even more important in the coming years, as many European liberal democracies are investing heavily in their militaries and implementing a whole-of-society approach as an answer to the growing Russian threat. The militarization debate in established liberal democracies tends to focus on tasks (militarization of the police, or the performance of police tasks by the military). However, this research has shown that there are other ways in which the military may increase its influence on society and politics. Secondly, there should be awareness of the risk of path dependence and attention to civilian authorities not becoming too dependent on support by the armed forces. Most literature on path dependence focuses on Latin American countries (see chapter 2 for this literature). This research provides more insight in how path dependence processes may take place in European liberal democracies. It is important, thirdly, to take possible institutional interests of the armed forces (for either an increasing, decreasing or changing role) into account. Finally, the balance between order and legitimacy should be kept in mind when considering new or changing domestic roles for the armed forces.

Looking at specific policy options and their impact on the stability of liberal democracy, the policy options defined in section 8.4 can be categorized on the three challenges for liberal democracy (vertical undermining, horizontal undermining and state undermining). As crisis management is not linked to a particular form of undermining, it does not fall in a specific category

Regarding vertical undermining, five policy options can have an effect, namely the fight against organized crime, security and surveillance, intelligence, civic education and cyber threats. For horizontal undermining, three policy options can play a role in countering this security challenge, namely public order management, civic education and intelligence. Finally, with four policy options the risk of state undermining is there,

namely for public order management, civic education, intelligence and the fight against organized crime.

At first sight, there seems to be a thin line between a role for the armed forces in countering horizontal undermining and a role in state undermining. Three policy options fall in both categories. Looking at the policy options involved, it is clear why. Public order management is the most controversial policy option seen in the three case studies. When sticking to, for example, logistical advice in the background, this could be an acceptable role in case of demonstrations. When moving to the use of military materiel, this would already be a lot more controversial, and the use of personnel has been called unacceptable by a large majority of respondents in all three case studies, as not fitting a liberal democracy.

Civic education includes conscription, and the *National Defence Courses* organized in Sweden and Finland. As has been shown in the previous part of this section, conscription could play a role in fostering social cohesion. *National Defence Courses* could help in promoting understanding of relevant security challenges and how to deal with them and increase resilience against their adverse effects (related to vertical undermining), could stimulate social cohesion between participants (horizontal undermining), but could also lead to securitization and fostering institutional interests of the security actors involved (state undermining).

The intelligence policy option is related to all three forms of undermining as well. With respect to vertical undermining, both better sharing of information between the armed forces and civil security organizations and the use of armed forces specific intelligence capabilities could be useful in countering certain security threats, including developments in social unrest (horizontal undermining). However, the use of armed forces intelligence capabilities to monitor the domestic population is politically sensitive and heavily regulated and could be a form of state undermining. A recent report about the Dutch Army Land Information Manoeuvre Centre, during the COVID-19 pandemic, concludes that the unit was stuck between the legal framework and new security threats (and in the specific case went out of line) and that an adjustment of the legal framework is needed to facilitate information-led operations (Onderzoekscommissie Land Information Manoeuvre Centre, 2022).

The policy options 'organized crime', 'security and surveillance' and 'cyber threats' could be useful in countering new security threats. Particularly for organized crime and cyber threats, it may be difficult to differentiate between private or state actors' responsibility (and in some cases it may be combined). As shown in the Dutch case study, armed forces'

search capabilities, developed in Afghanistan, have been very useful in supporting the police in the search for drug laboratories. A joint special interventions unit of police and armed forces personnel in the Netherlands has been successful as well. On the other hand, as seen in the fight against terrorism, it is important to be alert to processes of securitization and state undermining. The use of war language can play a role here as well.

Based on this analysis of positive and negative effects it is clear that (current) security threats evolve; they are not constant. Some are internal, some are external, most are transborder. This means that the answer must be flexible as well: if the opponent operates without constraints, liberal democratic governments cannot afford to keep operating in stovepipes. As the research shows, this also means a strict separation or immersion standpoint should be off the table. Sometimes circumstances may demand the police to step up, other circumstances ask for a larger role of the armed forces. Hybrid or in-between forces such as the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee have advantages as well, as they facilitate a layered approach to security threats. Therefore, the research shows, it is not separation *or* immersion, but separation *and* immersion that is needed.

However, the third challenge to liberal democracy shows that the amount of immersion in a liberal democracy cannot be unlimited. In the task dimension, this means a clear definition is needed of where the armed forces can or cannot support and if they can, under what conditions (see also section 9.4). In the dimension of public administration and strategy, it means normalizing the role of the military in politics, public administration, and public debate, while at the same time preventing that its position becomes too strong, as it could lead to 'shirking' and de facto less civilian control (see also section 9.4). Institutional interests can play a role here. In the societal dimension, the positive effects of conscription on cohesion and the connection between the military and society should be considered, while at the same time surplus militarization of society must be prevented (see also section 9.4). Finally, considering the legal framework, it is important to identify both possibilities for armed forces support and constraints in the law, to provide clarity on mandates and to regularly evaluate the applicable laws (see also section 9.4).

After this general analysis of the results and theoretical contributions of this research, the rest of this chapter will focus on the limitations of the research (section 9.2), suggestions for future research (section 9.3) and practical implications (section 9.4).

9.2 LIMITATIONS

It should be noted that this research project has some limitations as well. They concern the possibility of generalizing findings to other cases, the impact of recent developments, practical limitations for a Dutch researcher studying other countries and finally, the theoretical perspective that was used.

Generalizability

Based on the three case studies, it is difficult to say to what extent the findings of this research can be generalized to other western liberal democracies, in Europe or even outside of Europe. This dissertation shows that even between these three cases, there are many differences, related to (amongst other reasons) historical context, cultural factors, security threats, etc. However, there are similarities as well. Chapter 4 has shown that liberal democracy is under pressure in the western world, not only in these three cases. The security challenges faced by western liberal democracies are similar as well.

Focusing on Europe, some liberal democracies, especially those coming from an Anglo-Saxon tradition, have a long history of a small domestic role for the armed forces, while other countries, for example France and Italy, are less reluctant to use the armed forces in a domestic context. Then there are some European countries (Spain, Portugal, Greece) where military rule is not something of the distant past, but lasted until the 1970s. And then there is Eastern Europe, where the process of democratization started after the end of the Cold War. Presumably, the findings of this research would be most applicable in neighboring countries in Northwestern Europe and less so when moving towards the south or the east of the continent. But even nearby, specific historical or cultural circumstances can heavily influence the role of the armed forces. An example could be Germany, where the history of World War II still has a lot of influence in policymaking today and the domestic role of the armed forces is relatively small.

Practical limitations

Further, as reflected on in chapter 3 as part of my positionality statement, as a Dutch researcher working for the Dutch Ministry of Defense, inevitably I have certain biases that most likely have had an impact on my research as well. Additionally, because of my background I have gathered the main bulk of data in the Netherlands, which may have influenced the outcomes of my research. Thirdly, although I have aimed for a diverse group of respondents, the number of interviews (92) and the fact that I have mainly interviewed respondents working at the strategic level, most likely has consequences for the outcome of the research. Interviewing frontline workers, for example, could have

resulted in different outcomes. Finally, language problems have limited the possibility to gather data in both Sweden and Finland

Theoretical perspective

The research is based on civil-military relations theory and more specifically the dichotomy between separation and immersion, a logical choice when studying the role of the military in society and politics. Civil-military relations theory stems from a background of political science and (military) sociology. However, the role of the military can be studied from other theoretical perspectives as well, such as philosophy, public administration, security studies, or law. These perspectives have been referred to throughout this dissertation, but the main emphasis and lens has been civil-military relations theory.

Additionally, because of the military being a security actor, the research has focused from the start on security challenges and the possible role of the military in countering these challenges. When talking about strengthening the stability of liberal democracy, these security challenges and what role the military could play in dealing with them are referred to. Of course, there are many other possibilities to strengthen the stability of liberal democracy, which are not in the realm of the military. For example, the election process, the institutions of liberal democracy or the legal framework. These possibilities fall outside of scope for this research.

9.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Based on the results of this research, several recommendations for future research can be identified.

Civil-military relations in times of democratic backsliding and a changing security environment

Civil-military relations research traditionally focuses on democratizing countries or the role of the military in autocratic regimes. Relatively little research has been done on civil-military relations in stable liberal democracies that are confronted with both democratic backsliding and a changing threat environment. This research has provided some insights in the possible implications for civil-military relations of these developments. However, more research is needed to better understand the impact of these trends and to develop new models for civil-military relations in the new context.

More cases in other areas

This research is based on only three case studies in a specific region, namely Northwestern Europe. It would be interesting to do further research in other parts of Europe and in western liberal democracies outside of Europe to find out whether the same trends are visible in those areas and whether the findings can be generalized to more western liberal democracies. Possibly, clusters of similar countries can be identified. This could contribute to the development of a new model for civil-military relations in established liberal democracies, including a new way to operationalize the concept of civilian control. This would subsequently facilitate a more quantitative way of researching the topic.

Synergy between stability operations and a domestic role

As shown in this dissertation, the participation of the Dutch armed forces in stability operations stimulated civilian authorities in the Netherlands to call upon the developed capabilities in a domestic context as well. The prime example is the development of search capabilities in Afghanistan, where they were used to find IED's. Upon return to the Netherlands, these same capabilities have been used to support the police in search operations as part of the fight against organized crime.

Interestingly, the same development has not taken place in Sweden and Finland while these countries have been involved in stability operations as well. It turns out that Sweden only used police personnel for stability operations. Finland did use armed forces personnel but abolished those capabilities when they were not needed anymore instead of finding a different use for them. It would be interesting to learn more about the choices other western liberal democracies have made in this regard and the extent to which institutional interests—namely, the desire to maintain newly acquired capabilities—have prevailed in different nations.

Additionally, it would be interesting to investigate what other synergies can be found between operations in a domestic context and stability operations. What capabilities used by the armed forces during stability operations are useful in a domestic context as well? And the other way around: to what extent can supporting the civilian authorities at home provide training possibilities for missions abroad? A recent report in the Netherlands suggests finding such possibilities in intelligence (see also below for 'grey-zone threats') (Onderzoekscommissie Land Information Manoeuvre Centre, 2022). And more on a general level, could 'normalizing the role of the military in politics' lead to a different status of the military advise in political decision-making on military missions abroad? Dutch history has had a few examples, Srebrenica being the most painful one, where critical advice by the military was apparently not a decisive factor considered by the government in the decision to send Dutch troops. The question that arises is will this

change if the military is increasingly immersed in public administration and strategy? Interestingly, this was also the only known case in Dutch history where the government apologized to veterans of the Dutchbat-III rotation (that served during the fall of the enclave) for sending them on an impossible mission (Chafekar, 2023; Rutte, 2022). This could be another indication that civil-military relations in the Netherlands are changing. Finally, there are clear parallels between the comprehensive approach used in stability operations to involve all actors in a mission area and the comprehensive security model used in Finland. It would be interesting to examine the parallels and discrepancies between the two models in more detail.

Military and society

This dissertation has looked at relations between the military and society from different angles. The research suggests that (a form of) conscription could contribute to social cohesion, while the suspension of conscription has led to a disconnect between the armed forces and society in the Netherlands, and to a lesser extent Sweden. With the reinstatement of conscription for part of the generation in Sweden and the implementation of the 'year to serve' in the Netherlands, it would be interesting to perform longitudinal research on the participants, comparing them with their peers on various indicators for social cohesion.

Polling results from Sweden suggest that the population is quite positive about a larger domestic role for the armed forces, while the political elite and the military are more hesitant. It would be interesting to investigate whether these differences exist in other western liberal democracies as well (and if they differ in the same direction), and if so, how the differences in opinion between the public and the elite can be explained and whether this will eventually lead to different policy decisions as well.

Another related topic concerns militarization. An increasing immersion of the armed forces in society could lead to a better connection between the armed forces and society, but also to the militarization of society. The Swedish decision to move several civilian agencies to the Ministry of Defense is interesting in that respect. In Sweden as well, some academics have criticized the responsabilization strategy employed by the Swedish government to make citizens more and the state less responsible for their security, which may induce fear and anxiety in the population. What would be the 'ideal distance' or 'ideal closeness' between the armed forces and society? To what extent can the militarization of society be necessary (for example, to foster resilience in the population), and when does 'necessary' evolve into 'surplus' militarization? To what extent can a 'whole of society approach' shift responsibility for security matters from the government

to the citizens? With the heavy investments in defense budgets and the increasing immersion of the military and civil domain, it seems time to examine boundaries.

Path dependence and institutional interests

Related to the previous point is path dependence. As described in chapter 2, the domestic use of the armed forces in Latin America has increased a lot in the past decades. Authors studying these developments have concluded that a process of path dependence is taking place. Increased violence by organized crime has led to a larger role for the armed forces and instead of leading to de-escalation, violence has only escalated, leading to an even larger role for the armed forces to get the problems under control and bring back stability. In Europe as well, governments in Belgium, France, and the UK have struggled with an exit strategy after using the armed forces in support of the police in response to terrorist attacks. It cannot be ruled out that institutional interests of the armed forces play a role in these processes as well, sometimes aiming for a larger domestic role and other times for a smaller domestic role. Following the argument of Brooks (Brooks, 2019) and normalizing the role of the military in politics, meaning that the military is seen as a bureaucratic actor like other government actors, calls for a critical attitude in case a new task or larger role is asked for, and if it concerns a temporary role, arrangements need to be set up from the start for scaling down of this task or role. This relates to Schulzke's ideas on necessary and surplus militarization as well (Schulzke, 2018).

Grey-zone threats

This research has explored policy options for the armed forces related to 'new' security threats that cross borders. Two areas where a larger role seems reasonable but difficult within existing legal frameworks are the cyber domain and intelligence operations. The cyber domain is borderless, and it is usually difficult to establish responsibility for an attack: organized crime, a foreign state, a terrorist group, or something else. Even the more skeptical respondents recognize that the armed forces should be involved in fighting threats in the cyber domain to some extent. However, given the relative newness of cyber threats, in all case studies, authorities are struggling to define a possible role and arrange for the appropriate legal framework.

The same holds true for intelligence operations. As I described in the Dutch case study, respondents recognize the complementarity of the armed forces *modus operandi* versus that of the police (looking outside-in instead of inside-out). During the COVID-19 crisis, an Army experimental unit performed open-source intelligence operations in the Netherlands, aiming to better prepare operations during that time. However, the current legal framework does not allow the armed forces to perform intelligence operations in a domestic context, and the unit was shut down. A recent report, mentioned above as

well, has advised the government to revise the legal framework for the armed forces, to facilitate the use of the armed forces for new threats in the grey zone between peace and war (Onderzoekscommissie Land Information Manoeuvre Centre, 2022).

Another grey-zone threat, which perhaps surprisingly has hardly been mentioned by my respondents, concerns the weaponization of migration (Adamson & Greenhill, 2023; Lubinski, 2022; Petty, 2022). In the last decade, there have been several examples of countries leading migrants to western countries in an effort to destabilize the receiving country, for example Russia leading migrants to the northern tip of Norway but also to Finland in 2015/2016, and Belarus establishing an air bridge with some Middle eastern capitals in 2021/2022 and leading migrants to Lithuania, Latvia, and Poland.

A role for the armed forces with respect to these threats is foreseeable (or already in place) and further research is needed to establish options and boundaries.

9.4 PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Coming back to my positionality, as an aspiring 'pracademic' (practitioner-academic), it has been important for me from the start of my PhD to think about the practical implications of my research results. In this section, some recommendations for practice are made, with a focus on the Netherlands, but also making a few suggestions for the other two cases.

1. Normalize the role of the military in politics. The comprehensive security model used in Finland can be a good model to get all the relevant security players at the table, preferably from both the public and the private sector. Such a model matches the whole-of-society approach that the Dutch government has recently embraced. Ideally, coordination takes place at the level of the Prime Minister, with the help of a National Security Council. Such a council, when given the proper mandates, can enhance both military effectiveness and civilian control (Bruneau et al., 2009). Both the Netherlands and Sweden have recently decided to create such a council and include the armed forces as a regular participant. For Finland, this would mean redesigning the Security Committee and reducing the military footprint. Foresight capabilities could be a useful element of such a model, and it can be explored if and how civil-military cooperation can be improved by practicing and training together.

Liaisons can be a good means to enhance cooperation between the various security actors. Fulfilling a post at a civilian security partner could therefore be made a required element in the career of a military officer (and vice versa). Another possibility to explore is the use of reservists for civilian security tasks. It should become easier

to 'job-hop' between organizations in the security domain, for example starting a career in the armed forces, move to the Police or Customs or even a private security organization, and at a later age return to the armed forces. Normalizing the role of the military in politics could also have implications for the role that military advise plays in political decision-making about military operations. In the Netherlands, this would mean taking the military advise more seriously and adjusting the organization of the Ministry of Defense and the decision-making process accordingly.

2. Take the domestic role of the armed forces more seriously. In all three countries, the domestic role of the armed forces is relatively underdeveloped. In Sweden and Finland, it formally gets last priority; in the Netherlands, all three core tasks are officially equal, but in practice the support to civil authorities gets last priority. This also has an effect at the strategic level, with relatively few policy capabilities dedicated to the development of this role. At the operational and tactical level, it means that pursuing a career in the national operations domain is virtually impossible. Dutch respondents in this field even state that fulfilling a post in this domain is considered bad for your career. Being an equal partner in cooperation with other security organizations means this will have to change.
3. Implement a Comprehensive Security Course in the Netherlands. Both Finland and Sweden have good experiences with their *National Defence Courses*, to enhance awareness of relevant security issues, practice relevant scenario's and create a network among participants. The research suggests the relevance of creating such a course in the Netherlands as well. This could possibly be a joint effort under the responsibility of the National Security Council and the possibility should be explored to open the course to senior level personnel from security organizations, government institutions, companies, but also to personnel from other sectors, such as the cultural sector, the health sector, politics, etc. These courses can be organized on lower (provincial, local) levels as well.²¹
4. Design new ways of working and organizing to deal with grey-zone or hybrid threats. These threats cannot be classified as either 'internal' or 'external' threats, which means they cannot be dealt with by a pillarized system. Trying to deal with these threats with a pillarized approach is difficult and can lead to unwanted side effects,

21 In april 2023, a first try-out Masterclass National Security was organized jointly by the Netherlands Defence Academy and the National Coordinator for Terrorism and Security. Currently, this has developed into a *Leadership in National Security Course*, which takes place three times a year, with around 20 participants, and lasting for 9 days spread out over a few months. A future National Defense Course (with more participants, fulltime) could be the result of further development.

such as a militarization of the police or the military operating outside of the law, as has been seen in the Netherlands with the Army unit that was collecting open-source intelligence on the Dutch population during the COVID-19 pandemic. As this research shows, hybrid organizations such as the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee or to a less extent the Finnish Border Guard (and its cooperation with Police and Customs) can facilitate a layered approach and make it easier to deal with these threats. Sweden could consequently consider the usefulness and appropriateness of a hybrid organization as well, or other options to facilitate cooperation, such as joint units comparable with the Special Interventions Unit in the Netherlands.

At the same time, all three countries struggle with threats in the cyber domain and with legal possibilities (and obstacles) to share intelligence between security partners. This calls, in addition to a comprehensive approach and better cooperation between or integration of (certain units of) security organizations, for an adjustment of the legal framework, particularly for the grey zone between peace (regular laws) and war (emergency laws). However, this is the area where the third security challenge for liberal democracy identified, the undermining of liberal democracy by the state, becomes relevant as well. Ways must be found to enhance cooperation and sharing of intelligence without becoming a surveillance society.

Grey zone threats include foreign influence operations with the use of disinformation by foreign actors. As described in chapter 6, the Swedish government has created a special agency to counter these operations and to create awareness in the population, thereby contributing to a resilient population. In times of war, the agency also gets an offensive task, in countering these foreign influence operations. The new government installed in 2022 moved this agency from the Ministry of the Interior to the Ministry of Defense, under a new Minister for Civil Defense. Finland has a long history of resilience building measures in the population as well, amongst other measures making use of voluntary defense organizations. The Netherlands could learn from these examples, investing in population awareness, including for example media literacy training for younger and older generations.

5. Expand the possibilities for military and social conscription. Recent research and experiences in Finland show that conscription contributes to social cohesion. With social cohesion under pressure in liberal democracies, my research shows this could be a valuable means to foster cohesion and stimulate a sense of collectivity in younger generations. Sweden already has call-ups and an online assessment for all 18-year-olds and an increasing number of young people serve. Assessing all 18-year-olds would be useful in the Netherlands and Finland as well. As shown, Finland has been struggling with how to make conscription gender-neutral, as it does not want to double the yearly number of conscripts in the military. Expanding conscription

to social conscription would be a possible way to deal with this. Finland has also decided to introduce a 'call-up day' for all 18-year-olds, making sure that all young people learn about the armed forces and consider this a viable career option. For the Netherlands, in addition to an online assessment for all 18-year-olds, the 'year to serve' could be offered to a higher number of participants, and a similar option could be created at the police and other relevant sectors such as health care. Youth can be stimulated to participate, for example, by offering them a (financial) contribution to their subsequent education or even, as has recently been suggested by a Dutch opinionmaker, by offering them a start-up capital to invest for example in a house (Schimmelpenninck, 2023). In addition to fostering social cohesion, (social) conscription can also help prevent labor shortages in participating organizations (both for regular and reserve personnel) and can help these organizations in dealing with new threats (think for example of the Swedish and Finnish cyber-conscripts). The next step for the Netherlands would be to include more obligatory elements in the process.

6. Define clear boundaries for the support of the armed forces to civil authorities in a domestic context. The research shows that the Dutch armed forces increasingly support the civil authorities, particularly the police, in policing tasks. In the fight against organized crime, which is becoming more violent, this is defensible. Having the armed forces assist the police in security and surveillance tasks can free up police capabilities for other tasks, such as criminal investigations. The same goes for search capabilities, as has been seen in the Netherlands as well. At the same time, using the armed forces in public order management, where there is a risk of using violence against civilians, is rightly more controversial. However, with protesters becoming more violent and/or using heavy materiel, as has happened in the Netherlands with the farmers protests, the authorities need to be able to act decisively, which could call for involvement of the armed forces. As explained, in Sweden legal provisions forbid the use of violence by the armed forces against civilians, with the only exception being a terrorist attack. For the Netherlands as well, I would recommend debating the possibilities for the armed forces to support the civilian authorities in policing tasks and set clear boundaries for this support. This could entail legal provisions about the armed forces support always being used under civilian control, only using personnel that has received police training, only using armed forces materiel but not personnel for public order management and/or only using the armed forces for public order management tasks as a last resort. Both organizations (armed forces and the police) share the monopoly on violence, but public order management and law enforcement within state borders – in peace time – are primarily the responsibility of the police, which calls for clear boundaries for the support of the armed forces to civil authorities in a domestic context.



EPILOGUE: IMPACT OF THE WAR IN UKRAINE

Two years ago, the security situation in Europe changed fundamentally because of the war in Ukraine that started with the Russian invasion on February 24th, 2022. The war caused a shockwave through the western world and Europe especially and has had enormous consequences for defense policies. Many countries, including the three countries in this research, decided to substantially increase their defense budgets. Since the start of the war, many European countries, the US, and Canada have delivered defense materiel, including (heavy) weapons, to Ukraine. At the same time, the focus within Ministries of Defense shifted towards their core task of defending the country against a foreign attack, at the expense of international crisis operations and domestic tasks.

What could be the impact of the war in Ukraine on the results presented in this dissertation? To start with security challenges, while the blurring of internal and external security has certainly not disappeared, more focus in domestic discourse has gone to external security threats, more specifically the threat posed by Russia. This could have an impact on the second part of the model, namely the extent of hybridization. With more focus on an external threat, there could be less incentives to constabularize the armed forces and involve them in domestic policing tasks. As Sweden and Finland were already quite reluctant to move in this direction, this reluctance can be expected to grow. In the Netherlands, public and political debate has clearly shifted towards rebuilding the armed forces, including for example acquiring heavy materiel that had been abolished before, such as tanks (Parlementaire redactie, 2023).

Moving to the next section of the model, what could be the impact of the war in Ukraine on the policy options identified in this dissertation? With more focus on external threats, as mentioned above, there could be less incentives to involve the armed forces in police tasks. However, the effect on, for example, cyber threats and intelligence could be different, as politicians and citizens alike become more aware of the cyber threat coming from foreign actors that could harm domestic security and have in some cases already done so. Another interesting area is that of civic education. As shown in the case studies, Sweden has already started to partly rebuild conscription some years ago. The Netherlands MoD has started to promote a 'year-to-serve', and the Christian-democrats have proposed (social) conscription (Sanders, 2023; Winterman, 2023). The external security threat posed by the war in Ukraine could provide an extra incentive to either expand or reinstate conscription. Sweden has also reinstated the National Defense Courses it used to have in the past and the Netherlands as well has started a pilot working towards such a course in 2023.

What about the impact on civil-military relations? The impact of the war in Ukraine could potentially be large. Certainly, the armed forces have become more visible in public

debate this past year in two of the cases where they were not so visible before, namely Sweden and the Netherlands. This could lead to more immersion in public administration, government strategy, but also in society. In the Netherlands, the Ministry of Justice and Security and the Ministry of Defense have announced a joint letter to Parliament (expected by the end of 2024) on resilience against military and hybrid threats, with the two pillars being societal resilience and military readiness. The letter will provide the outline for a Dutch whole-of-society approach and symbolizes the changed position of the armed forces. The first steps towards such an approach have been taken already (such as the creating of a National Security Council and the above-mentioned Leadership in National Security course).

Most likely, the consequence of the measures concerning conscription mentioned above will be an increasing immersion of the military in society. Additionally, the new Swedish government that was instated in the Fall of 2022 has decided to move several civilian agencies (MSB – the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency and MPF – Psychological Defence Agency) from the Ministry of the Interior to the Ministry of Defense, under the responsibility of the newly created Minister for Civil Defense. This move can also be seen as a move towards immersion.

On the other hand, the focus on national defense could lead to less immersion in the task dimension. Thus far, there have not been any examples in the three cases of this research, but the French government has already announced it will decrease its domestic Opération Sentinelle after already having ended its anti-jihadist operation Barkhane in the Sahel. Increasing investments will be made in preparing the French military for a high-intensity conflict in Europe itself, with an increase in personnel, heavy materiel, rockets, drones, and more reservists (Van der Ziel, 2022). The consequences of an increased immersion in society, public administration, and strategy, in combination with possibly a decreased immersion in tasks, remain to be seen.

Then for the final part of the model, the stability of liberal democracy, I argued in chapter 8 that the armed forces can have a stabilizing effect simply by being there. With the armed forces growing, this stabilizing effect can be expected to grow as well. Another positive effect on the stability of liberal democracy could be the reinstatement of conscription. Depending on the numbers, this could also have a secondary positive effect through an increase in social cohesion and in resilience of the population.

As for negative effects, with a stronger position of the Ministry of Defense in public administration (as evidenced in Sweden for example with the move of several civilian agencies from the Ministry of Justice to the Ministry of Defense), alertness to processes

of militarization is important, as well as to institutional interests of the armed forces, that have finally seen their budgets increase (in Sweden and the Netherlands) after a long period of cutbacks.

All in all, the war in Ukraine could have quite some effect on the results of this dissertation, but to which extent exactly remains to be seen. Much will depend on the length and outcome of the war, combined with other developments in the security domain.



ANNEX

THIS ANNEX CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS:

Annex 1: Information sheet and consent form for the research

Annex 2: Interview questions

Annex 3: Codebook (atlas.ti)

ANNEX 1: INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM



Universiteit
Leiden

Information sheet

Purpose of the research

The research is being conducted by Annelies van Vark, MA, LL.M, under the supervision of prof. mr. dr. Maartje van der Woude and prof. mr. dr. Erwin Muller. The purpose of the research is to gain insight in the possible contribution of the armed forces in strengthening liberal democracy in North-western Europe. For more information, please consult the attached short outline of the research.

Procedure

You will participate in research in which we will collect information by interviewing you and recording your answers. A transcript of the interview will be made.

You do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to answer. Your participation is voluntary, and you are free to discontinue your participation at any time.

Confidentiality

Your privacy will be protected as good as possible. As indicated above, this research project involves making an audio recording of an interview with you. Transcribed segments from the audio recording may be used in publications (e.g. journal articles and book chapters). In the case of publication, pseudonyms will be used, unless you have given us explicit permission in the informed consent form to use your name, for example in a quote.

The audio recordings, transcripts and other documents created or collected as part of this study will be stored on a secured server at Leiden University. The research data will be destroyed or anonymized within 10 years of the initiation of the study.

The research data will only be made available to persons from outside the research group in case of necessity (for example in the case of a check on scientific integrity). In such a case, the data will be anonymized.



Questions

In case of any specific questions regarding the use of personal data, you can contact either the researcher or the data protection officer of Leiden University by sending an email to privacy@bb.leidenuniv.nl. You can also contact the data protection officer to make a request to view, change or delete your data. Finally, you have the right to file a complaint with the Dutch Data Protection Authority.

Informed consent form

By signing this consent form I recognize the following:

1. I have been adequately informed about the research by means of a separate information sheet. I have read the information sheet and have been able to ask questions about the research. These questions have been answered to my satisfaction.
2. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this research and understand that I can refuse to answer questions and I can withdraw from the research at any time, without having to give a reason.

In addition to the above it is possible to give your specific consent for different parts of the research. For each part you can choose to give your consent or not.

	Yes	No
1. I consent to the processing of the data that are collected during my interview in the way that has been described in the information sheet.	☐	☐
2. I consent to have my interview audio recorded and to have my answers transcribed in text.	☐	☐
3. I consent to the use of my answers for quotes in research publications and during presentations.	☐	☐
4. I consent to the use of my real name for the abovementioned quotes.	☐	☐

Name participant:

Signature:

Date:

Name researcher:

Signature:

Date:

ANNEX 2: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What do you see as the main security and stability related challenges for Finland²²?
2. To what extent are these challenges specific for the Finnish context and / or liberal democracies in Northwestern Europe?
3. How would you describe the domestic role of the armed forces in Finland and what characterizes civil-military relations in the Finnish context?
4. To what extent has the domestic role of the armed forces in Finland changed in the past 20 years? How do you explain and evaluate this change (if applicable)?
5. How do you expect the domestic role of the armed forces to evolve in the next 10 years? How do you explain and evaluate this change (if applicable)?
6. To what extent should the armed forces have a domestic role in:
 - a. Civic education
 - b. Public order management
 - c. Fight against organized crime
 - d. Cyber threats
 - e. Crisis management
 - f. Intelligence
7. In what other areas than the above mentioned do you see a possible role for the armed forces in a domestic context?
8. To what extent do you see a relation between the role of the armed forces in stabilization operations and the role in a domestic context?
9. What could be the consequences of a changing domestic role of the armed forces for:
 - g. The position of the armed forces in the security domain
 - h. Civil-military relations and cooperation
10. Do you have suggestions for other people that I could interview for this research project?

22 The interview questions for the Netherlands and Sweden were exactly the same. Due to the specific context of each country, follow-up questions have differed to gain more insight in that specific country.

ANNEX 3: CODEBOOK (ATLAS.TI)

[illegible]

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SUMMARY

Liberal democracy is under pressure. This dissertation examines the challenges for liberal democracy in terms of security and stability and the contribution that the armed forces can make to strengthening the stability of liberal democracy in Northwest Europe. Three cases are examined, namely the Netherlands, Sweden, and Finland. This dissertation also examines the consequences for civil-military relations in theory and practice.

The first part of this dissertation is based on a literature review and an analysis of relevant databases on liberal democracy. This analysis confirms that liberal democracy is under pressure in the west in general, and also specifically in the three countries surveyed, although these still score relatively high in the various databases. Three explanatory factors emerge from the study that can be further specified as three forms of undermining, namely 1. The intertwining of internal and external security and the emergence of new security threats (vertical undermining), 2. Declining social cohesion, increasing social unrest and the formation of parallel societies (horizontal undermining) and 3. Undermining of liberal democracy by the state.

These developments have led to a certain hybridization of the police and armed forces in various Western countries. However, in the field of civil-military relations, the preferred model for a liberal democracy is one based on Huntington's work, in which the military and civilian domains are strictly separated. The emphasis in this field is on civilian control of the armed forces and how this can best be safeguarded. In the three countries mentioned, this dissertation investigates to what extent a hybridization of the armed forces and police has indeed taken place, how differences and similarities between these countries can be explained, which policy options are envisaged for the future and what the impact on civil-military relations in these three countries would be.

The three countries were studied based on literature research and expert interviews with representatives in the armed forces and several civilian partners (at strategic level), policy departments, local administrators (only in the Netherlands) and academics. The focus of the interviews was on the Netherlands, with a total of 50 interviews. In Sweden and Finland, 21 interviews per country were conducted. Most of the data collection took place during the COVID-19 pandemic and many interviews were conducted via MS Teams.

'Hybridization' is a collective term for three processes, namely the constabularization of the armed forces (armed forces performing police tasks), the militarization of the police (police using military material and equipment, tactics, and language) and the emergence of hybrid organizations such as gendarmeries. The study shows that most constabularization takes place in the Netherlands, where the armed forces are increasingly supporting the civil authorities (and the police in particular), while Sweden is the

most reticent in this area. There has been some militarization of the police in Sweden in response to increasing problems with organized crime and gang violence. Hybrid organizations exist in both the Netherlands and Finland.

Regarding civil-military relations, not only tasks were examined, but also three other dimensions, namely legislation, society, and governance and strategy. None of the countries studied appears to fully fit Huntington's model and apply a strict separation between the civil and military domains on these four dimensions. In fact, the study shows that Finland fits better in Janowitz's model on three of the four dimensions (tasks excluded), which is based on immersion of the armed forces in the civilian domain, based on the idea that the armed forces will then automatically do what society wants, which means that there is civilian control. Sweden and the Netherlands are also moving towards this model.

How can the similarities and differences between the three countries be explained? The historical context plays an important role here. Sweden and Finland have long felt the threat from Russia, and this has led to a focus of the armed forces on the defense of the territory. All three countries have also had negative experiences with the domestic deployment of the armed forces for police tasks, sometimes already in the distant past, as a result of which people have become reluctant to deploy them. Another important factor relates to governance: in Sweden there has traditionally been a strict separation between government agencies, which have a high degree of independence. In line with this, the legal possibilities for the armed forces to support the police are limited. The Finnish model is similar. The Netherlands has a hybrid organization (the *Marechaussee*), but also mixed units (such as the Special Interventions Service).

For the Netherlands, the changing threat picture after the Cold War has influenced the domestic role of the armed forces. The suspension of conscription and extensive cutbacks led to a search for new tasks. These were found in stability operations. The experiences that the armed forces gained there in the execution of police tasks also proved useful in a domestic context. This fitted in well with the emergence of new threats. Finland was much less affected by the emergence of new threats and has always continued to feel the Russian threat. In Sweden, the so-called 'strategic time-out' after the end of the Cold War was probably too short to lead to meaningful change, certainly in combination with the Swedish reluctance to deploy the armed forces for police tasks.

A final factor that has influenced the domestic role of the armed forces is the presence or absence of alignment between the political elite, the armed forces and the population. In Finland, these three actors agree on continuity in the role of the armed forces (namely: a focus on external threats), while in the Netherlands there is alignment for

change, driven by changes in the threat picture. Sweden is somewhere in between, with a population that supports a greater domestic role for the armed forces, while the political elite and the armed forces are reluctant. As a result, alignment is lacking, and little change is visible.

When asked about policy options for the future, respondents see the greatest need for better cooperation or integration of civil and military in the cyber domain and in the field of intelligence. This requires adjustment of the legal framework. In the field of police tasks, Dutch respondents expect further development (although the deployment of personnel in the context of public order management remains controversial), while little movement is expected in Finland and Sweden. In Sweden, the fight against organized crime and gang violence could be an exception. Finland has never abolished or suspended its conscription system and since research shows that this can strengthen social cohesion, this could also be an interesting option for the Netherlands.

The research shows that the heavy emphasis in the field of civil-military relations on civilian control in the West limits the effectiveness of countering new security threats. A better focus would be how the capabilities of the armed forces can be deployed effectively in a domestic context under civilian control. This could include mixed units, hybrid organizations or support by the armed forces to the police. All countries in this research are moving towards a model of 'pragmatic civilian control', which is appropriate in this era of grey zone threats. This also means a normalization of the role of the armed forces in politics, in which it is no longer regarded as an exceptional actor that could carry out a coup (which is unrealistic in the average Western liberal democracy), but as a regular bureaucratic actor. The Finnish model for 'comprehensive security' could be a good model for this. In this model, all security players sit at the table on an equal basis. Sweden and the Netherlands have recently taken steps towards this model by setting up a National Security Council chaired by the Prime Minister.

What does an increasing immersion of the military and civil domain and an increasing hybridization of the armed forces and the police mean for the stability of liberal democracy? The research shows several positive and negative effects. On the positive side, it has become clear that the armed forces can contribute to the stability of liberal democracy simply by being there, which argues for a smaller distance between the armed forces and society. Secondly, it has become clear that a form of conscription (military or social) can contribute to social cohesion and thus counteract the horizontal undermining of liberal democracy. Thirdly, new security challenges of a hybrid nature require a different role for the armed forces; hybrid organizations can also be helpful here.

On the negative side, too much militarization must be prevented (the distinction between 'necessary' and 'surplus' militarization is relevant here) and authorities must be alert to 'path dependence', whereby civilian authorities become increasingly dependent on the contribution of the armed forces, making it difficult to scale it down. Thirdly, possible institutional interests of the armed forces as a bureaucratic actor striving for a larger, smaller or different role must be considered, and fourthly, the balance between order and legitimacy must be kept in mind at all times.

For the policy options studied, this means that a greater role for the armed forces is conceivable in countering vertical undermining, for example in combating organized crime, surveillance and security, or threats in the cyber domain. On the other side of the spectrum we find public order enforcement, where restraint is in order, to prevent undermining of liberal democracy by the state itself, especially where the deployment of personnel is concerned. Conscription can contribute to social cohesion and thus prevent horizontal undermining, but an excessive role for the armed forces in the field of education would not be appropriate. When using military intelligence, the purpose for which it is used should be considered, with combating organized crime probably being more acceptable than use for public order enforcement.

In conclusion, it can be said that security threats are constantly evolving in the present time. Some are internal, some are external, most are cross-border. This means that the answer to these threats must also be flexible: if the opponent is not stove piped, we cannot be either. This means that a strict separation between military and civilian domains is not appropriate. Sometimes circumstances will call for a greater role for the police and at other times a greater role for the armed forces is required. Hybrid organizations such as the Marechaussee can also have advantages, as they facilitate a layered approach to security threats.

At the same time, the third challenge to liberal democracy shows us that the degree of immersion in a liberal democracy cannot be unlimited. In terms of tasks, this means that it must be clearly defined where the armed forces can provide support and where not, and under what conditions. In terms of governance and strategy, this means normalizing the role of the armed forces in public administration, while preventing its position from becoming too strong, which could put pressure on civilian control. Institutional interests can play a role in this. In the field of society, a form of conscription could contribute to social cohesion, while at the same time an excessive degree of militarization of society should be prevented. Finally, concerning the legal framework, it is important to clearly define both the possibilities for military support and the limitations in the law, to provide clarity about powers and to regularly evaluate the legal framework.

SAMENVATTING

De democratische rechtsstaat staat onder druk. Dit proefschrift onderzoekt de uitdagingen voor de democratische rechtsstaat op het gebied van veiligheid en stabiliteit en de bijdrage die de krijgsmacht kan leveren aan het versterken van de stabiliteit van de democratische rechtsstaat in Noordwest-Europa. Daarbij worden drie casussen onderzocht, namelijk Nederland, Zweden en Finland. Ook onderzoekt dit proefschrift wat de consequenties daarvan zijn voor civiel-militaire relaties in theorie en de praktijk.

Het eerste deel van dit proefschrift is gebaseerd op literatuuronderzoek en een analyse van relevante databases over de democratische rechtsstaat. Deze analyse bevestigt dat de democratische rechtsstaat onder druk staat in het westen in het algemeen, en ook specifiek in de drie onderzochte landen, hoewel deze nog altijd relatief hoog scoren in de verschillende databases. Uit het onderzoek komen drie verklarende factoren naar voren die nader gespecificeerd kunnen worden als drie vormen van ondermijning, namelijk 1. De verwevenheid van interne en externe veiligheid en de opkomst van nieuwe veiligheidsdreigingen (verticale ondermijning), 2. Afnemende sociale cohesie, toenemende sociale onrust en de vorming van parallelle samenlevingen (horizontale ondermijning) en 3. Ondermijning van de democratische rechtsstaat door de staat.

Deze ontwikkelingen hebben geleid tot een zekere hybridisering van politie en krijgsmacht in verschillende westerse landen. Echter, in het vakgebied van de civiel-militaire relaties is het voorkeursmodel voor een democratische rechtsstaat een model gebaseerd op het werk van Huntington, waarin het militaire en civiele domein strikt gescheiden zijn. De nadruk in dit vakgebied ligt op civiele controle over de krijgsmacht en hoe deze het best gewaarborgd kan worden. Dit proefschrift onderzoekt in de drie genoemde landen in hoeverre er inderdaad een hybridisering van krijgsmacht en politie heeft plaatsgevonden, hoe verschillen en overeenkomsten tussen deze landen verklaard kunnen worden, welke beleidsopties voor de toekomst worden voorzien en wat de impact op civiel-militaire relaties in deze drie landen is.

De drie landen zijn onderzocht op basis van literatuuronderzoek en expertinterviews met vertegenwoordigers van de uitvoering bij de krijgsmacht en een aantal civiele partners (op strategisch niveau), beleidsdepartementen, lokale bestuurders (alleen in Nederland) en academici. Het zwaartepunt voor wat betreft de interviews lag op Nederland, met in totaal 50 interviews. In Zweden en Finland zijn 21 interviews per land afgenomen. Het merendeel van de dataverzameling heeft plaatsgevonden tijdens de COVID-19 pandemie en veel interviews zijn dan ook via MS Teams afgenomen.

‘Hybridisering’ is een verzamelterm voor drie processen, namelijk de constabularisering van de krijgsmacht (krijgsmacht die politietaken uitvoert), de militarisering van de politie (politie die gebruik maakt van militair materieel en uitrusting, tactieken en taal) en de opkomst van hybride organisaties zoals gendarmeries. Uit het onderzoek blijkt dat de meeste constabularisering plaatsvindt in Nederland, waar de krijgsmacht in toenemende mate de civiele autoriteiten (en met name de politie) ondersteunt, terwijl Zweden het meest terughoudend is op dit gebied. In Zweden heeft wel een zekere militarisering van de politie plaatsgevonden in reactie op de toenemende problemen met de georganiseerde criminaliteit en bendege geweld. Zowel in Nederland als in Finland is sprake van hybride organisaties.

Voor wat betreft civiel-militaire relaties is niet alleen gekeken naar taakuitvoering, maar ook naar drie andere dimensies, namelijk wetgeving, samenleving en bestuur en strategie. Geen van de onderzochte landen blijkt volledig in het model van Huntington te passen en een strikte scheiding toe te passen tussen het civiele en militaire domein op deze vier dimensies. Sterker, uit het onderzoek blijkt Finland op drie van de vier dimensies (taakuitvoering uitgezonderd) beter in het model van Janowitz te passen, dat uitgaat van ‘immersie’ (letterlijk: onderdompeling) van de krijgsmacht in het civiele domein, vanuit het idee dat de krijgsmacht dan automatisch zal doen wat de samenleving wil en er daarmee dus sprake is van civiele controle. Zweden en Nederland bewegen ook in de richting van dit model.

Hoe kunnen de overeenkomsten en verschillen tussen de drie landen verklaard worden? Hierbij speelt de historische context een belangrijke rol. Zweden en Finland hebben lange tijd dreiging vanuit Rusland gevoeld en dit heeft geleid tot een focus van de krijgsmacht op de verdediging van het grondgebied. Ook hebben alle drie de landen negatieve ervaringen gehad met de inzet van de krijgsmacht voor politietaken, soms al in het verre verleden, waardoor men terughoudend is geworden met de inzet daarvoor. Een andere factor die van belang is heeft betrekking op governance: in Zweden is van oudsher sprake van een strikte scheiding tussen overheidsorganisaties, die over een grote mate van zelfstandigheid beschikken. In lijn daarmee zijn de wettelijke mogelijkheden voor de krijgsmacht om de politie te ondersteunen beperkt. Het Finse model is vergelijkbaar. Nederland beschikt juist over een hybride organisatie (de Marechaussee), maar ook over gemengde eenheden (zoals de Dienst Speciale Interventies). Voor Nederland heeft het veranderende dreigingsbeeld na de Koude Oorlog de binnenlandse rol van de krijgsmacht beïnvloed. De opschorting van de dienstplicht en omvangrijke bezuinigingen leidden tot een zoektocht naar nieuwe taken. Die werden gevonden in stabilisatieoperaties. De ervaringen die de krijgsmacht daar opdeed bij de uitvoering van politietaken bleken ook bruikbaar in een binnenlandse context. Dit sloot goed aan bij

de opkomst van nieuwe dreigingen. Finland werd veel minder geraakt door de opkomst van nieuwe dreigingen en is bovendien altijd de Russische dreiging blijven voelen. In Zweden was de zogenaamde 'strategische time-out' na het einde van de Koude Oorlog vermoedelijk te kort om tot daadwerkelijke verandering te leiden, zeker in combinatie met de Zweedse terughoudendheid om de krijgsmacht voor politietaken in te zetten.

Een laatste factor die de binnenlandse rol van de krijgsmacht beïnvloed heeft is de aan- of afwezigheid van alignment tussen de politieke elite, de krijgsmacht en de bevolking. In Finland zijn deze drie actoren het eens over continuïteit in de rol van de krijgsmacht (namelijk: een focus op externe dreigingen), terwijl in Nederland sprake is van alignment voor verandering, gedreven door veranderingen in het dreigingsbeeld. Zweden zit hier tussen in, met een bevolking die een grotere binnenlandse rol voor de krijgsmacht steunt, terwijl de politieke elite en de krijgsmacht terughoudend zijn. Als gevolg daarvan ontbreekt alignment en is er weinig verandering te zien.

Gevraagd naar beleidsopties voor de toekomst zien respondenten de meeste noodzaak tot betere samenwerking of integratie van civiel en militair in het cyberdomein en op het gebied van intelligence. Dat vereist wel aanpassing van wettelijke mogelijkheden. Op het gebied van politietaken verwachten Nederlandse respondenten een verdere ontwikkeling (waarbij de inzet van personeel in het kader van openbare ordehandhaving wel controversieel blijft), terwijl men in Finland en Zweden weinig beweging verwacht. In Zweden zou de bestrijding van de georganiseerde criminaliteit en bendege geweld daarop een uitzondering kunnen vormen. Finland heeft haar dienstplicht nooit afgeschaft of opgeschort en aangezien uit onderzoek blijkt dat dit de sociale cohesie kan versterken, zou dit voor Nederland ook een interessante optie kunnen zijn.

Uit het onderzoek blijkt dat de sterke nadruk in het vakgebied van civiel-militaire relaties op civiele controle in het westen de effectiviteit van het optreden tegen nieuwe veiligheidsdreigingen beperkt. Een betere focus zou zijn hoe de capaciteiten van de krijgsmacht in een binnenlandse context effectief kunnen worden ingezet onder civiel gezag. Daarbij kan gedacht worden aan gemengde eenheden, hybride organisaties of steunverlening. Alle onderzochte landen bewegen richting een model van 'pragmatische civiele controle', hetgeen past bij deze tijd van grey zone threats. Dit betekent ook een normalisering van de rol van de krijgsmacht in de politiek, waarbij zij niet langer wordt beschouwd als een exceptionele actor die een coup zou kunnen plegen (hetgeen in de gemiddelde westerse democratische rechtsstaat onrealistisch is), maar als een reguliere bureaucratische actor. Het Finse model voor 'comprehensive security' zou daarvoor een goed model kunnen zijn. In dit model zitten alle spelers op het gebied van veiligheid op gelijkwaardige basis aan tafel. Zweden en Nederland hebben recent stappen richting dit

model gezet door een Nationale Veiligheidsraad in te richten onder voorzitterschap van de Minister-President.

Wat betekent een toenemende immersie van het militaire en civiele domein en een toenemende hybridisering van de krijgsmacht en de politie nu voor de stabiliteit van de democratische rechtsstaat? Uit het onderzoek komt een aantal positieve en negatieve effecten naar voren. Aan de positieve kant is duidelijk geworden dat de krijgsmacht een bijdrage kan leveren aan de stabiliteit van de democratische rechtsstaat simpelweg door er te zijn, hetgeen pleit voor een kleinere afstand tussen de krijgsmacht en de samenleving. Ten tweede is duidelijk geworden dat een vorm van dienstplicht (militair of civiel) kan bijdragen aan sociale cohesie en daarmee de horizontale ondermijning van de democratische rechtsstaat tegen zou kunnen gaan. Ten derde vragen nieuwe veiligheidsuitdagingen met een hybride karakter om een andere rol van de krijgsmacht; hybride organisaties kunnen hierbij ook behulpzaam zijn.

Aan de negatieve kant moet te veel militarisering voorkomen worden (het onderscheid tussen 'noodzakelijke' en 'surplus' militarisering is daarbij relevant) en moeten autoriteiten alert zijn op 'pad afhankelijkheid', waarbij civiele autoriteiten steeds afhankelijker worden van de bijdrage van de krijgsmacht en het moeilijk wordt deze af te schalen. Ten derde moet rekening gehouden worden met mogelijke institutionele belangen van de krijgsmacht als bureaucratische actor om te streven naar een grotere, kleinere of andere rol en ten vierde moet te allen tijde de balans tussen orde en legitimiteit in het oog gehouden worden.

Voor de onderzochte beleidsopties betekent dit dat een grotere rol voor de krijgsmacht voorstelbaar is bij het tegengaan van verticale ondermijning, bijvoorbeeld bij de bestrijding van de georganiseerde criminaliteit, bewaken en beveiligen of dreigingen in het cyberdomein. Aan de andere zijde van het spectrum treffen we openbare ordehandhaving, waarbij terughoudendheid op zijn plaats is om ondermijning van de democratische rechtsstaat door de staat zelf te voorkomen, zeker waar het de inzet van personeel betreft. Dienstplicht kan bijdragen aan sociale cohesie en daarmee horizontale ondermijning tegengaan, maar een te grote rol voor de krijgsmacht op het gebied van educatie zou niet passend zijn. Bij het gebruik van militaire intelligence zou de afweging kunnen zijn voor welk doel deze gebruikt wordt, waarbij de bestrijding van georganiseerde criminaliteit vermoedelijk acceptabeler is dan gebruik voor de openbare ordehandhaving.

Concluderend kan gesteld worden dat veiligheidsdreigingen in de huidige tijd zich voortdurend ontwikkelen. Sommigen zijn intern, anderen extern, de meeste zijn

grensoverschrijdend. Dat betekent dat het antwoord daarop ook flexibel moet zijn: als de tegenstander niet verzuild is, kunnen wij dat ook niet zijn. Dat betekent dat een strikte scheiding tussen militair en civiel domein niet passend is. Soms zullen de omstandigheden vragen om een grotere rol van de politie en op andere momenten ligt een grotere rol voor de krijgsmacht voor de hand. Hybride organisaties zoals de Marechaussee kunnen ook voordelen bieden, aangezien zij een gelaagde benadering voor veiligheidsdreigingen faciliteren.

Tegelijkertijd laat de derde uitdaging voor de democratische rechtsstaat ons zien dat de mate van immersie in een democratische rechtsstaat niet onbeperkt kan zijn. Op het gebied van taken betekent dit dat helder gedefinieerd moet worden waar de krijgsmacht kan ondersteunen en waar niet, en onder welke voorwaarden. Op het gebied van governance en strategie betekent dit een normalisering van de rol van de krijgsmacht in het openbaar bestuur, waarbij voorkomen moet worden dat haar positie te sterk wordt, waardoor de civiele controle onder druk komt te staan. Daarbij kunnen institutionele belangen een rol spelen. Op het gebied van de samenleving zou een vorm van dienstplicht bij kunnen dragen aan sociale cohesie, terwijl tegelijkertijd een te grote mate van militarisering van de samenleving voorkomen moet worden. En ten slotte, op het gebied van wettelijke mogelijkheden, is het van belang om zowel de mogelijkheden voor militaire steunverlening als de beperkingen helder te definiëren in de wet, om helderheid te verschaffen over bevoegdheden en het wettelijk kader regelmatig te evalueren.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Annelies van Vark was born in IJsselstein on 16 September 1978. After obtaining her master's degree in political science (cum laude) at Leiden University in 2001, she started working at the Immigration and Naturalization Service. After switching jobs to become Personal Assistant to a Member of Parliament, she started a bachelor's in law (2002-2005), followed by a master's in public international law (2005-2007), both at Leiden University. In 2005, she started working at the Ministry of Defense, specifically at the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee, in various positions. She switched to the Defense Staff in 2023, where she is currently working on scalability of the armed forces. Meanwhile, in 2019 she started her PhD project at the Dual PhD Centre of Leiden University, followed by a transfer to the Van Vollenhoven Institute (VVI) at Leiden Law School in April 2020. At the VVI, she is an external PhD candidate, supervised by prof. dr. mr. Maartje van der Woude and prof. mr. dr. Erwin Muller. In addition to her regular job and her PhD, she is a duo-member of the Leiden city council for the christian-democratic party (CDA), a member of the supervisory board of vfonds (fund for freedom, democracy, and veterans), and an editor for Militaire Spectator, a journal in military science. She has lived in Leiden since 1998 and is married to Jason Treurniet. Together they have two daughters, Eva and Noa.

