Adaptive Acquiescence?

A Case Study of Finland's Security Policy Following Russia's Annexation of Crimea

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Abstract

This Master's Thesis analyses how Finland handled the seemingly difficult security political situation that emerged in the aftermath of Russia's annexation of Crimea. Considering the unequal power relation between Finland and Russia, it is also an assessment of how the weaker part handled an asymmetrical relationship. Hans Mouritzen's (1988) theory of adaptive acquiescence therefore serves as the theoretical framework for the analysis. This theory stipulates that a regime orientation can be labelled *adaptive acquiescence* if a regime is submitting to external pressure through adaptation and toleration of infringements in order to preserve its core regime values (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 61-62). Due to a distinct element of causality, this is analysed as a theory-testing process tracing, and is consequently also an evaluation of the theory. The main finding is that Finland to a large extent displayed acquiescent adaptive behaviour during the period under analysis (18 March 2014 - 31 December 2016). This was done through a combination of *indirect adaptive acquiescence*, where adaptive measures are initiated with potential allies against the perceived threat, and *direct adaptive acquiescence*, where adaptive measures are directly related to the presumed threat. I find the theory largely to still be fruitful despite its unnecessary complexity.

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I am responsible for all potential errors.

JEM
Oslo, 11 May 2017

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List of Abbreviations

BALTOPS	Baltic Operations
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
EAPC	Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
EC	European Community
EU	European Union
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
FIIA	Finnish Institute of International Affairs
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTS	Maanpuolustustiedotuksen Suunnittelukunta
	[The Advisory Board for Defence Information]
NACC	North Atlantic Cooperation Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NORDAC	Nordic Armaments Cooperation
NORDCAPS	Nordic Coordinated Arrangement for Military Peace Support
NORDEFCO	Nordic Defence Cooperation
NORDSUP	Nordic Supportive Defence Structures
NORTAT	Nordic Tactical Air Transportation
NRF	NATO Response Force
PfP	Partnership for Peace
SoI	Statement of Intent

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1 Introduction

"If you compress the spring all the way to its limit, it will snap back hard." (President of Russia, 2014, p. 10). This metaphor was used by Russia's President Vladimir Putin in his Kremlin speech in conjunction with Russia's annexation of Crimea. His intention was to illustrate how NATO's eastward expansion had gone too far as Ukraine was heading towards membership in the organisation. President Putin continued his address in more unambiguous terms: "[...] NATO remains a military alliance, and we are against having a military alliance making itself at home right in our backyard or in our historic territory." (President of Russia, 2014, p. 11). Although several post-Soviet states in Eastern Europe had already become members in the alliance, this was where Russia drew the line. In other words, Russia could not accept NATO-forces in Ukraine, and especially not on the strategically located Crimean peninsula, which had been under Russian jurisdiction until 1954 (Sakwa, 2015, p. 13). The former Russian territory was thus reclaimed. To use Putin's words, the spring snapped back.

Russia's annexation of Crimea on 18 March 2014 sent shockwaves across the continent, as a sovereign European country lost part of its territory due to a military intervention. Considering the severity of the action, and the military strength of Russia, it is not surprising that this event also created uncertainty beyond the borders of Ukraine. Still, some countries seemed more exposed and vulnerable to external aggression than others. The only other European country with an on-going discussion about NATO-membership at the time, as well as a shared border with Russia, was Finland. Although this debate had been going on for decades prior to the annexation, it had not resulted in membership in the alliance. Finland was thus without any guarantee of military assistance when its eastern neighbour seized territory from another one of its neighbouring states. However, with Putin's statements above in mind, it did not seem like a sensible security political measure to pursue membership either. Considering that the two countries share a 1340 km long border (Tilastokeskus, 2017), and that Finland was part of the Russian empire for more than a century (Jussila, 2004), it seems evident that Finland also could be characterized as Russia's "backyard" and historical territory. In other words, Finnish NATO-membership could have been just as unacceptable to Russia as membership for Ukraine.

It is therefore interesting to analyse how Finland handled the seemingly difficult security political situation that emerged in the aftermath of Russia's annexation of Crimea. As Finland seemed somewhat vulnerable to external aggression without NATO-membership and

Russia appeared reluctant to accept additional NATO-members in its neighbourhood, it is interesting to consider whether Finland adapted its security policy in order to better cope with the new security political situation in the area. Considering the unequal power relation between Finland and Russia, this analysis also assesses how the smaller, weaker part handled such an asymmetrical relationship.

Several researchers have developed theoretical frameworks for the political adaptation of small states (e.g. Petersen, 1977; Rosenau, 1981). However, Hans Mouritzen (1988) provided one of the most comprehensive ones in form of his theory of adaptive acquiescence, which also links the adaptive behaviour of small states to an asymmetrical power relationship. The essence of his theory is that a regime orientation can be labelled *adaptive acquiescence* if a regime is submitting to external pressure through adaptation and toleration of infringements in order to preserve its core regime values (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 61-62). As this may be a useful theory for how Finland as a small nation handled its larger neighbour in the aftermath of Russia's annexation of Crimea, it will serve as the theoretical framework for the following analysis. From a theoretical point of view it is therefore interesting to consider whether his theory, which was published during the final years of the Cold War, is still applicable three decades later in a period that has been characterized as a "new Cold War" (BBC, 2016a).

1.1 The research question

The research question for the following analysis is therefore:

To what extent, and in what way, did Finland display acquiescent adaptive behaviour, as defined by Mouritzen's (1988) theory, in the aftermath of Russia's annexation of Crimea?

In other words, this is an assessment of whether external pressure from Russia can be detected, to which Finland responded with security political adaptation and toleration of infringements in order to preserve basic regime values. The following analysis is therefore also a thorough test of Mouritzen's (1988) theory. The selected analytical method is consequently a theory-testing process tracing, where empirical evidence are applied to evaluate the presence or absence of various parts of a theoretically defined process, as well as the process in its entirety (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, p. 14-15).

Although *acquiescence* might be a difficult term to grasp, it was crucial to include in the research question, as it specifies the characteristic nature of the adaptive behaviour in an

asymmetrical power relationship. This term will be explained and discussed in more detail below, but for now the definition of the verb *to acquiesce* should serve as an indication of what this implies. This is defined as "to accept or agree to something, often unwillingly" (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.-a). Adaptive acquiescence is therefore not preferred, but may be the only way to handle the disadvantageous power relation in a pressing situation. The purpose of the analysis is thus to reveal whether this specific kind of adaptive behaviour characterized Finland in the years following Russia's annexation of Crimea, and if so the extent and manner of this.

As the *aftermath* of an event might just as well imply a few months as a few years, the exact timeframe should be specified. The start date is set to 18 March 2014, which marked the official annexation of Crimea by Russia (Sakwa, 2015, p. 105). Although this was not an isolated incident, but a continuation of the crisis in Ukraine, it represented a distinct and severe individual event that had repercussions beyond the bilateral conflict between Russia and Ukraine. It therefore seemed like a suitable starting point for the present analysis. The end date is set to 31 December 2016, which seemed natural as this Master's Thesis was finalized during the first half of 2017. The period under analysis is thus close to three years (18 March 2014 - 31 December 2016). This seemed like a sufficient timeframe in order to detect potential elements of acquiescent adaptation in the aftermath of Russia's annexation of Crimea, and also to properly test Mouritzen's (1988) theory.

As will be further elaborated on below, Mouritzen (1988, p. 65) differentiates between indirect and direct adaptive acquiescence, where the former indicates adaptive behaviour directed at potential allies against a perceived threat, whereas the latter implies adaptive behaviour directed at the presumed threat *per se*. The focus should therefore be on potential adaptation in conjunction with Finland's *security policy*. In other words, it is *not* relevant to discuss potential adjustments to domestic military forces in the present analysis. The following discussion will rather consider whether Finland as the weaker part in an asymmetrical power relationship attempted to improve its security political situation through adaptive measures, either directly or indirectly related to the stronger part in this unequal bilateral relation.

1.2 Outline of the analysis

Chapter two will present relevant background information, which in this case is Finland's security political development in the two decades prior to Russia's annexation of Crimea. This

is intended to make it more comprehensible why some security political measures after 18 March 2014 may be regarded as changes and potentially as elements of adaptive acquiescence.

Chapter three will present and operationalize Mouritzen's (1988) theoretical framework. The chapter also discusses the theory's place in the theoretical literature. This will be followed by the analytical method, where case study as research design, theory-testing process tracing as research method, a qualitative research strategy, as well as qualitative substitutes to the established research criteria of validity and reliability will be discussed.

The three subsequent chapters represent the main empirical analysis. *Chapter four* evaluates whether the period under analysis can be characterized by external pressure from Russia. Given this, *chapter five* proceeds to evaluate whether Finland adapted to this pressure through security political changes and toleration of infringements. *Chapter six* analyses potential elements of adaptive behaviour further with specific focus on the effect of these adaptive measures.

Chapter seven ties together the empirical findings, and thus evaluates the extent and manner in which Finland displayed acquiescent adaptive behaviour during the period under analysis. Empirical implications, in terms of potential further research, and theoretical implications, in terms of a critical assessment of Mouritzen's (1988) theoretical framework, will also be provided in this final chapter.

2 Background: Finland's Security Policy 1992-2014

Finland's security policy was fundamentally altered in 1992, which therefore serves as a suitable starting point for this chapter. This year marked the end of the *Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance*, which had been at the core of the distinctive relationship between Finland and the Soviet Union during the Cold War (Salomaa, 2015a, p. 184). Finland preserved its territorial independence during this period, but e.g. foreign policy decisions were subject to the approval of the Kremlin (Kankkonen, 1979, p. 16). In other words, it was difficult for Finland to establish security political relations with the West until this bilateral agreement was terminated on 20 January 1992, a few weeks after the Soviet Union was dissolved (Salomaa, 2015a, p. 184). This opened new doors for Finland in terms of western cooperation. The process towards membership in the European Union (EU) was initiated already in March, as a membership application to the then European Community (EC) was signed (Klinge, 2003, p. 160). In addition, the year marked Finland's initial formal contact with NATO, which in turn led to observer status in the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) in June (Karvinen & Puistola, 2015, p. 118). In other words, 1992 marked a major shift in Finland's security policy, as the eastern control was replaced with new western possibilities.

The last security- and defence political report before Russia's annexation of Crimea presented NATO, the European Union (EU) and the Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFCO), as well as the bilateral relationships with Sweden and the United States (US), as important aspects of Finland's security policy (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2012). The purpose of this chapter is therefore to provide an overview of how these security political relations developed in the two decades prior to the annexation. This will make it more understandable why some of the security political decisions after 18 March 2014 may be regarded as changes, and in turn potentially be labelled as adaptive acquiescent behaviour.

2.1 NATO - partnership, but not membership

The eagerness to get involved in NATO seems evident from the section above. Discussions regarding involvement in the NACC were in fact initiated in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs already in April (Karvinen & Puistola, 2015, p. 118). The NACC was a multinational forum, which had been established in conjunction with the dissolution of the Soviet Union with the intention of improving relations between NATO-members and countries outside the NATO-framework (Lindley-French, 2015, p. 81). On 4 June 1992 Finland received a formal

invitation to attend the next NACC-meeting (Karvinen & Puistola, 2015, p. 118), and consequently participated in these council meetings until the more comprehensive Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) succeeded it in 1997 (Lindley-French, 2015, p. 97).

Prior to this transition Finland had joined NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP)-program in May 1994 (Karvinen & Puistola, 2015, p. 208). This had been launched a few months earlier, and was intended to increase the cooperative ability between countries inside and outside the NATO-structure (Lindley-French, 2015, p. 87). In other words, whereas the NACC was a consultative forum, the PfP-program was intended to contain actual collaboration. According to Karvinen and Puistola (2015, p. 207-208) there were three justifications for Finland's decision to participate in this program. First of all, with the on-going crisis in the Balkans, Finland had a desire to contribute to peacekeeping operations. Secondly, improved interoperability in such missions was regarded as important. Thirdly, participation was considered essential in order to have access to information on the development of the relationship between NATO, Russia and other eastern European countries. It thus represented a clear intention of cooperating more closely with NATO-forces.

The PfP-program was regarded as an important development in the security- and defence political report that was launched in June 1995 (Puolustusministeriö, 1995, p. 22). Still, it was some uncertainty in Finland of what participation actually would entail (Karvinen & Puistola, 2015, p. 208). However, this was soon clarified as Finland became active in several NATO-led operations within a few years. First of all, Finland provided troops to the implementation force in Bosnia-Herzegovina (IFOR) in 1996, as well as to the stabilisation force (SFOR) that took over at the end of the year (Dahl & Järvenpää, 2014, p. 128). Secondly, Finland has provided forces to the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Kosovo (KFOR) between 1999 and 2010 (Karvinen & Puistola, 2015, p. 164), to which Finland was even entrusted with leadership over a multinational brigade (Dahl & Järvenpää, 2014, p. 128). Thirdly, Finland contributed troops to the international security assistance force in Afghanistan (ISAF) until it ended in 2014 (Salomaa, 2015b, p. 231).

In addition, Finland became involved in the NATO Response Force (NRF) in 2008 (Karvinen & Puistola, 2015, p. 144). The NRF had been established in 2003 with the intention of increasing the capability of reacting swiftly, as the force is able to deploy in less than five days and be operational for a month without reinforcements (Lindley-French, 2015, p. 111). However, Finland's participation was at the lowest possible level, which meant that Finland would only join the complementary pool of the NRF, and thus not commit to any future activities (Karvinen & Puistola, 2015, p. 144). In other words, Finland seemed reluctant to get

too involved in NATO at this point.

Although potential NATO-membership was discussed regularly during the two decades prior to Russia's annexation of Crimea, it seems to have been more important to continue the security political line of staying militarily non-aligned. This was highlighted in security- and defence political reports as early as 1995 (Puolustusministeriö, 1995, p. 44), and as late as 2012 (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2012, p. 75). Considering that the political parties were split in their NATO-stance (Karvinen & Puistola, 2015, p. 218), it seems to have been difficult to find consensus to change this security political line. When Russia annexed Crimea in March 2014, Finland was thus without NATO-membership, and therefore also without any guarantee of military assistance (Salomaa, 2015b, p. 263).

The sections above indicate that Finland became an active NATO-partner in the two decades prior to Russia's annexation of Crimea, although it did not result in membership in the alliance. The partnership was also primarily directed at cooperation in external conflicts, and not at Finland's own security.

2.2 The European Union (EU) - membership, but not security?

The membership application to the EC in March 1992 was followed by two years of negotiations on terms and conditions regarding Finnish membership, until a final agreement was reached in March 1994 (Klinge, 2003, p. 161). The popular support was assured through a referendum in October 1994, as 57% voted in favour of joining the EU (Store, 2014, p. 104). Membership in the organisation could therefore be initiated already the following year (Virrankoski, 2012, p. 412). Finland was consequently an EU-member for two decades prior to Russia's annexation of Crimea. In order to evaluate whether any alterations can be detected during the period under analysis it is therefore relevant to consider how far this policy field developed in the EU prior to this incident.

The treaty that established the European Union in 1993 seemed to provide security policy with a prominent place, as the Common Foreign- and Security Policy (CFSP) was regarded as one of three main pillars (Dover, 2010, p. 244). However, this was also a clear indication that the Member States wanted to maintain control over these policy areas, as the CFSP-pillar was intended to be intergovernmental, and the decision-making to be based on unanimity, which gave every Member State veto power (Dover, 2010, p. 244). In order to cope with the consequently slow development of this policy field, an amendment that enabled abstention was implemented at the end of the decade (Hix & Høyland, 2011, p. 313). At the

same time, the *Saint Malo Declaration* called for a unitary military defence capability for the EU (Peters, 2010, p. 176). The European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) was consequently launched as a project for the following decade (Howorth, 2014, p. 10).

Despite the ambition for a European defence, the EU was far from having a unitary security- and defence policy at this point. In order to maintain the momentum, the specific *Helsinki Headline Goal* was launched at the turn of the century, with a goal of 60000 troops available for deployment within 60 days by 2003 (Hix & Høyland, 2011, p. 315). However, by 2003 it became evident that the Member States were unwilling to meet these initial targets (Dover, 2010, p. 249). The proposed Constitutional treaty in 2005, which e.g. demanded improved military contributions, was consequently regarded as unacceptable (Dover, 2010, p. 250). In other words, despite several ambitious plans, the actual development remained slow much due to the Member States desire for control. The development was also slowed down by the overlap of EU- and NATO-memberships, as 11 of 15 EU-members were also members of NATO. Following the enlargements in 2004 and 2007, the ratio was 21 of 27 (Claes & Førland, 2010, p. 163). In other words, NATO was the main arena for security political cooperation for most EU-members. Security policy was thus given lower priority in the EU.

At the end of the decade, the Treaty of Lisbon represented a seemingly more successful attempt at developing the security- and defence political field, as a specific obligation was added to the cooperation. The *mutual defence clause* stated an obligation of aid and assistance between the Member States if an armed aggression should occur on EU-territory (Koutrakos, 2012, p. 206). Although this may seem like a major step in the security and defence policy of the EU, it is worth noting that the obligation was purely between the Member States (Koivula, 2016, p. 116). In other words, the EU was not provided with any explicitly stated role regarding its implementation. It is therefore not comparable to the guarantee of mutual assistance in NATO (Koivula, 2016, p. 116). Despite quoting the obligation in Finland's security- and defence political report in December 2012, the same report highlighted the absence of any arrangements for a common defence in the EU (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2012, p. 87).

In other words, despite two decades of various attempts to develop this policy field in the EU, the progress was slow and the results were modest. Finland's security political relation with the EU was thus based on a rather uncertain obligation between its Member States, and a security- and defence policy that was still in the making, when Russia annexed Crimea in March 2014.

2.3 NORDEFCO - a new framework for Nordic cooperation

The Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFCO) was established through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) by the five Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) on 4 November 2009 in Helsinki (Nordic Council, 2009). This merged three former areas of cooperation between the Nordic countries: The *Nordic Armaments Cooperation* (NORDAC), which primarily concerned the production and procurement of defence materiel (Marsh, 2006, p. 244); the *Nordic Coordinated Arrangement for Military Peace Support* (NORDCAPS), which concerned cooperation in international military operations (Herolf, 2006, p. 73); and the *Nordic Supportive Defence Structures* (NORDSUP), where the idea was to develop national operative capacities through mutual defence mechanisms (Saxi, 2011, p. 18). As NORDEFCO in this way became the new framework for security- and defence political cooperation between the Nordic countries, it is relevant to consider how this developed between November 2009 and March 2014.

"The purpose of the Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFCO) is to strengthen the Participants' national defence, explore common synergies and facilitate efficient common solutions." (Nordic Council, 2009, p. 3). The intention is thus to increase the security and reduce the costs through collaboration. However, NORDEFCO is not an organisation *per se*, but rather a framework for cooperation (NORDEFCO, 2011, p. 6). Its main structure was quickly established, with five main areas of cooperation: *Strategic Development, Capabilities, Human Resources & Education, Training & Exercises* and *Operations* (NORDEFCO, 2011, p. 7). Although *Armaments* replaced *Strategic Development* in 2013 (NORDEFCO, 2014, p. 8), the idea of developing and evaluating the cooperation within five different areas was preserved. The following will therefore present the main achievements that were highlighted in the annual reports regarding the progress during the preceding year.

The first year of NORDEFCO's existence was primarily a year where the basic structure was established (NORDEFCO, 2011, p. 4). However, some achievements were highlighted in the annual report. First of all, a *General Security Agreement*, which made it easier to exchange classified information, and second of all, a decision that facilitated the exchange of staff officers between the Nordic countries headquarters or Ministries of Defence (NORDEFCO, 2011, p. 8). The report for 2011 deemed the *Combined Joint Nordic Exercise Plan 2012-2016*, a five-year plan for military training and exercises, as well as the establishment of a *Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations*, as major achievements (NORDEFCO, 2012, p. 2). Although exchange of personnel and information, as well as exercise plans and education centres, are important aspects for the functioning of a security-

and defence political cooperation, they can hardly be described as major developments. In other words, the development was fairly modest during the first two years of NORDEFCO's existence.

Similarly, some achievements in 2012 were highlighted (NORDEFCO, 2013, p. 2). First of all, a so-called Letter of Intent on *Nordic Tactical Air Transport* (NORTAT) was signed in November 2012, which was intended to improve the cooperation on military air transportation, and thus reduce costs and increase availability (NORDEFCO, 2013, p. 2). Although this only presented an intention, it was an important step towards the MoU on NORTAT that was signed the following year (NORDEFCO, 2014, p. 12). Another achievement that was regarded as important in 2012 was the newly established *NORDEFCO-Baltic meetings*, intended to increase the cooperation between the Nordic countries and the Baltic states (NORDEFCO, 2013, p. 2). The effect of this was already seen in 2013 as a *Combined Joint Nordic-Baltic Exercise Program 2014-2018* was established (NORDEFCO, 2014, p. 12). This was thus regarded as a main achievement in 2013, along with the MoU on NORTAT, and the establishment of *Armaments* as a new area of cooperation (NORDEFCO, 2014, p. 12).

One month after the report for 2013 was launched Russia annexed Crimea. The MoU on NORTAT should thus be regarded as the most significant addition to the cooperation. This implies that the development of NORDEFCO was gradual and cautious within specified areas of cooperation and without major supplements or amendments prior to March 2014.

2.4 Sweden - similar security political paths

In much the same way as the end of the Cold War enabled Finland to get more involved in western organisations, it also facilitated increased security political cooperation with its western neighbour Sweden. The initial focus was on cooperation between the two countries respective navies (Salonius-Pasternak, 2014a, p. 4). Considering that both the Finnish and Swedish Coastal Ranger-units already used Swedish as their working language, this was a natural area where cooperation could be developed (Salonius-Pasternak, 2014a, p. 5). This is substantiated by the similarities between the two countries archipelagic coastlines. This resulted in various bilateral naval exercises with particular focus on how to defend in these coastal areas (Salonius-Pasternak, 2014a, p. 5).

Although the bilateral collaboration in the 90's was primarily focused on cooperation at sea, their similar paths in terms of involvement in multinational organisations created

additional arenas where the two countries could work together. Sweden also became an EU-member in 1995, as well as an active NATO-partner through participation in NACC-meetings and the PfP-program (Herolf, 2006, p. 69). In addition, the two countries collaborated in the previously mentioned predecessors to NORDEFCO, namely on procurement and production of defence materiel (NORDAC) from 1994 (Marsh, 2006, p. 244), and on cooperation in international operations (NORDCAPS) from 1997 (Herolf, 2006, p. 73). The cooperation with Sweden was thus regarded as important in the security- and defence political report from 1997 (Puolustusministeriö, 1997, p. 24). It also stated that the cooperation between the two countries should be further expanded (Puolustusministeriö, 1997, p. 44).

The equivalent assessment from 2001 stated that the bilateral cooperation indeed had become closer (Puolustusministeriö, 2001, p. 24). This was substantiated by a bilateral agreement signed a few weeks later, which provided a mutual permission to land military aircrafts at each other's territory in case of an emergency (SopS, 53/2001). This indicates increasing trust and cooperation between the two countries. The report from 2001 also referred to the advantages of NORDCAPS (Puolustusministeriö, 2001, p. 60). Considering that Sweden had joined Finland as a peace partner in the NATO-led peacekeeping operations in Bosnia and Kosovo (Dahl & Järvenpää, 2014, p. 128), the coordination of Nordic forces in international operations had become highly relevant. A few years later, the two countries also operated together in Afghanistan (Salonius-Pasternak, 2014a, p. 5). Sweden was therefore regarded as an important cooperation partner in the security- and defence political report from 2004 (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2004, p. 70).

In 2006, the so-called *SEA Surveillance Cooperation Finland-Sweden* was established, with particular focus on situational awareness, monitoring of the Baltic Sea area and interoperability between the two countries navies (Salonius-Pasternak, 2014a, p. 5). Although the cooperation seemed to become ever closer towards the end of the decade, as e.g. through the establishment of NORDEFCO in 2009, one specific development seemed to point in the other direction. Whereas Finland continued to base its national defence on general conscription (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2009, p. 79), Sweden had decided to switch to a professional army during the following decade (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2009, p. 57). This transition occurred already in July 2010 (Rekryteringsmyndigheten, 2017). Considering the importance of interoperability and common standards in security political cooperation, this seemed like a setback for the development.

The two countries were also split in terms of participation in the NATO-led military operation in Libya in 2011, as Sweden contributed, whereas Finland did not (Valtioneuvoston

kanslia, 2012, p. 69). Nevertheless, the security political relationship was still regarded as close in the security- and defence political report in 2012 (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2012, p. 69). In fact, the following years rather indicated that the bilateral cooperation was becoming even more comprehensive. Despite the positive development in the collaboration between the Nordic countries, it became evident during 2013 that the split between NATO-members (Denmark, Iceland and Norway), and the two countries outside the alliance (Finland and Sweden), would limit the further progress of the cooperation. This led to discussions regarding a more comprehensive bilateral military partnership between Finland and Sweden at the beginning of 2014 (Salonius-Pasternak, 2014a, p. 5). However, this did not lead to any specific developments before Russia's annexation of Crimea in March.

To sum up, the security political cooperation between Finland and Sweden became increasingly comprehensive during the two decades prior to this incident. However, the development was gradual and included few specific bilateral agreements.

2.5 The United States (US) - information and defence materiel

Although the initiation of Finland's security political orientation towards the West largely can be linked to the year 1992, the bilateral relationship with the US got off to an even earlier start as two bilateral security political agreements came into force already in December 1991 (SopS, 94/1991; SopS 95/1991). The first of these considered the security of military information (SopS 95/1991). This has been regarded as a basic document for the further development of the bilateral relationship, as it was supplemented with additional agreements in the following decades (Salonius-Pasternak, 2012, p. 5). The second agreement was on the procurement of defence materiel, and more specifically goods and associated services, as well as research and development (SopS, 94/1991). This paved the way for the decision in 1992 to renew the Finnish Air Force by moving from Soviet MiG's to American F/A-18 Hornet fighter jets. These were received from 1995 and have characterized the Finnish Air Force ever since (Ilmavoimat, n.d.). In other words, the bilateral security political cooperation was quickly established within two important areas: information and defence materiel.

Finland's early involvement in NATO should also be regarded as a step towards more cooperation with the US, as the latter represents the core of the alliance. The desire to become more compatible with NATO-forces was thus essentially an approach towards US standards. The interoperability was put to the test already in 1996, as Finland operated under US command in Bosnia (Valtasaari, 2015, p. 92). Finland's security- and defence political report

from 1997 consequently acknowledged dialogue and cooperation with both NATO and the US as important operating channels (Puolustusministeriö, 1997, p. 32). Finland's support for a strong transatlantic relationship was therefore highlighted in the equivalent assessment from 2001 (Puolustusministeriö, 2001, p. 34). Three years later it was also specified that this relation was developing both bilaterally and through participation in the PfP-program (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2004, p. 79). The bilateral relationship with the US was thus continuously regarded as important for Finland in the security- and defence political reports.

Despite this emphasis in official reports on the importance of Finland's security political ties with the US, it was not linked to any specific developments in the bilateral relationship. This might be due to "The veil of secrecy that covers much of the cooperation [...]" (Salonius-Pasternak, 2012, p. 6). Nevertheless, during the summer of 2008 the two countries signed an MoU that was public (SopS, 52/2009). The MoU considered reciprocal defence procurement and was thus a continuation of the 1991-agreement, which was repealed in the process (SopS, 52/2009). The new MoU was similarly focused on research- and development, as well as the acquisition of goods and services, but specified that this included *defence* related means and services (SopS, 52/2009). In general however, it added few new elements to the bilateral relationship, which might explain the transparency of the agreement. The security- and defence political report that year thus highlighted the development of the bilateral cooperation with the US, and the particular focus on the procurement of defence materiel (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2009, p. 72-73).

In March 2012, a deal was struck between the two countries, where Finland would acquire so-called *Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missiles* from the US (Salonius-Pasternak, 2012, p. 3). This agreement significantly increased Finland's defence capability, at the same time as NATO, with the US at its core, strengthened its northern flank (Salonius-Pasternak, 2012, p. 8). In other words, the deal was not just a one-way purchase of defence materiel, but a mutually beneficial bilateral agreement. In addition, a more holistic agreement on research-, development-, testing- and evaluation projects was signed in May 2012 (SopS, 29/2012). With the latest developments in mind, it is not surprising that the US was presented as an important partner in the security- and defence political report at the end of the year (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2012, p. 13), and that the bilateral cooperation was regarded as comprehensive (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2012, p. 77).

In the two decades prior to Russia's annexation of Crimea, the bilateral security political relationship between Finland and the US thus developed gradually towards a comprehensive partnership. Still, it was primarily linked to defence materiel and information.

3 Theoretical Framework and Analytical Method

This chapter will first of all present relevant aspects from Mouritzen's (1988) theory of adaptive acquiescence. Second, the theoretical framework will be more specifically linked to the empirical case through operationalization and case-specific clarifications. Third, previous research on adaptive acquiescence will be considered. Finally, the analytical method will be presented, and thus the selected design, method and strategy for the analysis, as well as some crucial criteria to assure the quality of the research.

3.1 The theory of adaptive acquiescence

The theory of adaptive acquiescence was presented in Mouritzen's (1988) comprehensive publication *Finlandization: Towards a General Theory of Adaptive Politics.* Finlandization is a term that has been used to describe the distinctive political relationship between Finland and the Soviet Union during the Cold War (Kankkonen, 1979, p. 16). Attempts have also been made to transfer this term to other asymmetrical relations, most recently to the strained relationship between Ukraine and Russia (Brzezinski, 2014; Kissinger, 2014). However, political researchers have largely avoided the term, as it seems difficult to find consensus on what it actually implies. Considering that it has been used both as a warning against Willy Brandt's *Ost-Politik* (Kankkonen, 1979, p. 11), and as a potential solution to the crisis in Ukraine (Brzezinski, 2014; Kissinger, 2014), it seems evident that there are different interpretations of the term. Its linguistic connotation to one particular country is also unfortunate for a general analytical term on asymmetrical power relationships. Mouritzen therefore considered finlandization to be an "[...] unsatisfactory (and often misused) label [...]" (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 4), and in turn attempted to create a more useful theoretical concept in adaptive acquiescence.

In order to make the theory more comprehensible, the first part of this sub-chapter will follow Mouritzen's example and briefly contrast adaptive acquiescence with other potential regime orientations (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 10). The second part contains definitions and specifications, with Mouritzen's definition of adaptive acquiescence at its centre (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 61-62). The final part presents Mouritzen's typology of different variations of adaptive acquiescence (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 65).

3.1.1 Adaptive acquiescence in a typology of regime orientations

The direction of power and influence (society/ environment): 'the stream of causality'	How the 'stream' is met: society's relation to its environment	Basic Regime Orientation	Illustrations
favourable	domination — organized	domination	Classical Great Power posture, particularly in their respective spheres of interest
	domination — non-organized		
negligible	isolation — organized	quiescence	'Self-reliance' (e.g. Albania, Switzerland's general posture)
	isolation — non-organized		
balanced	balance — organized	balance	Most regimes in an interdependent world (typical posture for alliance members)
	balance — non-organized		
	acquiescence — organized, adaptive	adaptive acquiescence	Cf. Fig. 28.1 (Finland 1944–)
unfavourable	acquiescence — organized, non-adaptive	imposed domination	'Puppet regimes' or regimes with no value-systems of their own
	acquiescence — non-organzied (non-adaptive)	no regime or regime orientation	One or more sectors (economy, culture) of, typically, Third World societies where foreign domination is permitted ethnic groups under foreign domination

'modes of adaptation'

Figure 3.1: Adaptive acquiescence in a typology of regime orientations (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 10)

The figure above (figure 3.1) presents adaptive acquiescence as one of several basic regime orientations (third column). These are products of a certain direction of power and influence (first column), and a logically conceivable way of handling or exploiting this situation (second column). Adaptive acquiescence is thus a result of an unfavourable direction of power and influence, which is met with acquiescence in an organized and adaptive manner. These terms deserve some additional explanation. In the first column *unfavourable* implies that the unit in question is subject to more external influence than it can influence others, as opposed to *favourable* where the roles are turned (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 1-2). It is therefore conceivable that the latter will be met with a sense of *domination* and the former with a form of *acquiescence.* In an asymmetrical power relationship the direction of power and influence favours the stronger part, which indicates that the weaker part may have to resort to acquiescence in order to handle a dominating neighbouring country.

The additional branches in the second column indicate that acquiescence can take several forms, either as adaptive, organized or neither. If the acquiescence is both organized and adaptive, the orientation of the regime may be labelled adaptive acquiescence. Adaptive acquiescence is thus one of several conceivable *regime orientations*, or so-called *modes of adaptation*. It is clearly emphasized that there is no horizontal determinism in the figure, in

the sense that the power structure can be unfavourable, but the unit in question can still avoid acquiescence and adaptation (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 11). It is for instance conceivable that the power structure between Finland and Russia in the aftermath of Russia's annexation of Crimea may be regarded as unfavourable to the former, but that this was not met with acquiescent adaptive behaviour. The figure is in this way an indication of *probable* regime orientations in given circumstances. However, in order to evaluate any potential case of adaptive acquiescence it requires a more specific and comprehensive theory, which Mouritzen (1988) thus developed.

3.1.2 Definitions and specifications

A central element in Mouritzen's (1988) theory is his definition of adaptive acquiescence. This consists of four conditions, which all have to be present for a regime orientation to be labelled *adaptive acquiescence* (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 61). They are defined as follows:

> 1 The regime is under a net pressure from its salient environment, a pressure that challenges its basic regime values (the usual *condition* of adaptive acquiescence).
> 2 The regime is adapting to this pressure. Adaptive acquiescence - or any other mode of adaptation for that matter - logically presupposes an actor with a certain minimum of autonomy (as stipulated below).
> 3 The regime's *means* of adaption to the pressure consist in continuously tolerating infringements on its declared regime values (offering concessions relative to these values). Adaptive acquiescence, thus, is not carried out with enthusiasm, but rather with a certain resignation.
> 4 The infringements/concessions are of course tolerated in exchange for something, namely an increased probability of preserving at least the core of the regime values. This is the *goal* of adaptive acquiescence. 'Preservation' means, evidently, the maintenance of something that the regime already possesses. It cannot be expected to gain 'new' values, given the unfavourable conditions prevailing. Conditions (3) and (4) taken together imply that the regime in question is willing to live with a continuous *loss* of values. (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 61-62, italics in original).

These conditions will serve as a theoretical framework in the following empirical analysis. It is therefore relevant to clarify any potential uncertainties in conjunction with these.

Although the first condition is fairly comprehensible, some elements deserve

additional specifications. For instance, Mouritzen applies the term *basic regime values* without specifying what this implies. However, he states later in his publication that:

> The regime values of general autonomy ('independence' or a corresponding term) and control over territory ('territorial integrity') are emphasized in practically every major declaration. Regimes seek, by definition, to safeguard these values. (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 429).

In other words, *general autonomy* and *territorial control* are regarded as universally important values to regimes. Although *regime identity* is also regarded as important (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 41), he clarifies that it does not represent one specific value, but rather a value category (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 429). Elements within this category, as parliamentarism or rule of law, might well be considered fundamental to the regime, but it seems accurate that the two universal values mentioned above are even more basic for a regime. It seems evident that a regime's existence is more threatened if its territorial integrity or independence is under pressure, rather than its form of government or distribution of powers.

The second condition is also comprehensible, in the sense that *adapting to pressure* is an understandable phrase. Still, it is difficult to analyse various political alterations as potential elements of adaptation without a proper definition of the term. Although Mouritzen is discussing the different modes of adaptation at length, he does not provide an explicit definition of what changes should be regarded as adaptive. However, he clearly links adaptation to the external pressure from the previous condition. A standard formulation by James N. Rosenau, a pioneer in the study of adaptation politics, and also a great source of inspiration to Hans Mouritzen (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 15), seems to correspond with this:

> Any foreign policy behaviour undertaken by the government of any national society is conceived to be adaptive when it copes with or stimulates changes in the external environment that contribute to keeping the essential structures of the society within acceptable limits. (Rosenau, 1981, p. 38).

In other words, the security political alterations have to be related to the external changes in order to be classified as adaptive behaviour. This is therefore a viable way to separate changes that would have occurred regardless of the pressure from alterations that represent adaptive measures that were initiated in order to cope with the new situation.

At first glance, the third condition might seem like Mouritzen's attempt at a definition of adaptive behaviour, as it presents how adaptation may occur. However, this would imply that if a continuous toleration of infringements is detected, it would serve as a justification of the presence of both conditions two and three. In other words, it would be meaningless to treat these as separate conditions. Considering his emphasis that *all* conditions would have to be present in order to label the regime orientation as adaptive acquiescence (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 61), it seems more likely that these are intended to represent different aspects of the adaptation process.

However, to separate these conditions seems like a weakness in Mouritzen's theory, as the third condition seems to represent one particular example of the second. In order to evaluate whether the regime is adapting to external pressure, it seems obvious that the *means* of adaptation have to be considered in order to provide a proper conclusion to the second condition. The theoretical framework that Mouritzen provides has therefore been slightly modified, in the sense that conditions two and three are merged. Considering that the theory has a distinct element of causality, this seems logically sensible. There seems to be a causal link between the theoretical conditions, which creates a connection between the *cause* (condition one), *action* (conditions two and three) and *effect* (condition four). In other words, external pressure may lead to adaptive behaviour, which in turn may increase the probability of preserving core values. The same causal connection is difficult to detect between adaptive behaviour (condition two) and toleration of infringements (condition three). This potential causal process will be discussed further in conjunction with the choice of research method below (section 3.4.2), but it seems sensible to analyse adaptive acquiescence as a tripartite process, as presented above.

A justified objection to this adjustment to the theoretical framework might be that conditions should not be merged, considering Mouritzen's (1988, p. 61) emphasis on the importance of *all* conditions. Although it seems accurate to treat conditions two and three together in the analysis, they should also be considered separately in the conclusion in order to evaluate whether they were met in line with Mouritzen's original layout for the theory. The third condition will therefore be discussed in a separate section in chapter five below. This enables an evaluation of the third condition as originally presented in the theory, at the same time as it is discussed in conjunction with other elements of potential adaptive behaviour.

The terms used in conjunction with the third condition should be fairly intelligible. The condition implies that infringements on the previously defined basic regime values are tolerated repeatedly, which thus serves as a concession relative to these. It therefore contains

an element of resignation, in the sense that something undesirable but inevitable is accepted. The purpose of the final condition is thus to consider the intended effect of such behaviour, and more specifically whether the different elements of adaptation are intended to increase the chances of preserving the core values of territorial control and general autonomy. Overall, adaptive acquiescence is thus a *give and preserve-relationship,* rather than a more normal *give and take-relationship* (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 2).

3.1.3 A typology of adaptive acquiescence

In conjunction with the discussion of the final condition, an additional element will be added from Mouritzen's theory, namely his typology of four fundamental types of adaptive acquiescence (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 65). The typology is based on two distinctions. First of all, the adaptive behaviour can be either directly or indirectly related to the perceived threat. Second of all, the adaptive behaviour may have been initiated either as a response to a specific actor, or to handle more general unfavourable conditions which are not personified in an actor (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 63). The four types are explained as follows:

> Type I: direct, vis-à-vis an actor: Concessions are given directly to the actor that is seen as a threat. In return for these concessions, the regime expects to avoid negative sanctions that the actor in the environment is perceived as being able to exert. (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 64).

> Type II: indirect, vis-à-vis an actor: Concessions are given to an actor who is seen as a (potential) ally against the perceived threat from a presumed superior actor. (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 64).

> Type III: direct, vis-à-vis a non-actor: In the light of perceived unfavourable conditions that are not personified in a single actor in the environment, the regime is willing to live with infringements on its declared values. (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 66).

> Type IV: indirect, vis-à-vis a non-actor: Concessions are given to an actor that is seen as an ally against unfavourable conditions (non-personified) in the salient environment. (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 66).

Considering that the fourth condition concerns the intended effect of the adaptive behaviour, this typology is intended to contribute to this discussion by highlighting both who the

concession-receiver might be, and in turn the expected effect of the adaptation. In this regard there are fundamental differences between *direct* and *indirect* adaptive acquiescence. The direct variant implies that the intended effect is to avoid *negative sanctions* from the perceived threat, as e.g. more severe infringements (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 64). The expected effect from the indirect variant however, is to receive *positive sanctions* from a potential ally against the perceived threat. This can for instance be in the form of support or assistance (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 65). In other words, *direct adaptive acquiescence* is fundamentally different from *indirect adaptive acquiescence*, although both variations of adaptive behaviour are intended to protect core values (Mouritzen 1988, p. 65). The inclusion of this typology in the discussion of the final condition will thus facilitate a more nuanced conclusion, as the potential adaptive acquiescence may also be regarded as mainly direct or indirect. In this way, it will contribute to the understanding of *how* Finland potentially displayed acquiescent adaptive behaviour.

3.2 Operationalization and case-specific clarifications

With the theory presented, it is time to link it more specifically to the empirical case through an operationalization process. This is a crucial step in *quantitative* research, where specific measures are devised from the concepts (Bryman, 2012, p. 161). As will be further elaborated on below (section 3.4.3), the most fruitful research strategy for this particular analysis is argued to be *qualitative.* Based on both the research question and the conditions that Mouritzen's (1988) theory provides it seems more viable to enter into a qualitative discussion of different elements, rather than attempting to quantify these different aspects. It will for instance be difficult to create a numeric threshold for the pressure that is traced in conjunction with the first condition. However, a qualitative evaluation might provide some compelling answers. Still, this does not imply that the process of operationalization can be disregarded when a qualitative research strategy is applied. In order to avoid arbitrary conclusions, the qualitative requirements for a condition to be met should be considered in advance.

3.2.1 First condition

Although pressure is difficult to quantify, quantity is a relevant factor in the evaluation process of whether this condition is met, in the sense that multiple observations are needed in order to provide a compelling conclusion. In other words, every individual observation does not necessarily represent a convincing piece of evidence on its own, but taken together they

can provide a persuasive conclusion. Considering that the period under analysis is close to three years, it is also important to assess whether this pressure is persistent. In other words, it is not sufficient that pressure is detected in April 2014, but not during the rest of the period. This implies that the potential pressure should be analysed through various sources and at different points in time. Taken together, these individual observations should provide a clear impression of whether or not the period under analysis was characterized by external pressure. Despite the difficulties of evaluating how much pressure is sufficient in order to regard the condition as met, its purpose for the rest of the analysis seems to provide some answers in this regard. The purpose of this condition is that a certain external pressure has to exist for the political alterations in the following conditions to potentially be labelled as adaptive. The pressure is therefore sufficient if it seems reasonable that the regime under pressure might instigate adaptive measures to cope with these external changes.

In conjunction with this first condition, two additional case-specific clarifications are necessary. First of all, do the basic regime values of Finland correspond to the definition of these above? Considering that Finland is a well-established regime, and that general autonomy and territorial control are regarded as universal regime values, this seems probable. Finland's Constitution confirms this assumption, as both aspects are prominent features in the document (Perustuslaki, 731/1999). It therefore seems accurate to consider the two universal values as basic for Finland as well. Second of all, is it accurate to limit the analysis of the potential pressure to Russia? The theory stipulates that the pressure is coming from the salient environment. Although Finland's salient environment consists of other countries as well, it only shares a land border with Norway and Sweden, in addition to Russia. As the security- and defence cooperation with Sweden is very tight (Salonius-Pasternak, 2014a), and the three Nordic countries cooperate closely within the security- and defence framework of NORDEFCO (Nordic Council, 2009), it seems evident that Finland's security concerns should be directed eastward.

3.2.2 Second and third conditions

First of all, the autonomy-requirement that Mouritzen (1988, p. 61) refers to in his definition of the second condition is met, as the present analysis is considering the potential adaptive behaviour of a *state*. Even though individual elements may be regarded as adaptive behaviour, this is not necessarily tantamount to an overall presence of the condition. The question is therefore, how many instances of adaptive behaviour are needed for this condition to be

regarded as met? The only logical numeric value this can have is *one*. Although several instances of adaptive behaviour implies that the regime is using adaptive measures to a larger extent, only one is sufficient to conclude that the regime is adapting to pressure. This becomes evident if the opposite conclusion is applied, i.e. that one element of adaptive behaviour is detected, but the conclusion is that the regime did *not* adapt. This does not make sense. In other words, one adaptive measure is sufficient to declare the condition as met.

When it comes to the specific adaptive means in Mouritzen's third condition, the same quantitative issue arises. How many infringements should be continuously tolerated for this adaptive measure to be regarded as being applied? Although the wording implies a certain quantity, Mouritzen does not specify this in exact numbers. The criterion therefore has to be that the same infringement is repeated, and in turn tolerated, on several different occasions during the period under analysis.

3.2.3 Fourth condition

The same logic applies to this condition as the previous. It is therefore sufficient to detect one adaptive measure with the intention of increasing the chances of preserving core values in order to regard this condition as met. Considering that this is the final condition, it will in turn also be possible to conclude whether or not the regime orientation can be labelled adaptive acquiescence. If one adaptive measure is detected which fits the definition of this final condition, it would thus be erroneous to conclude that Finland did *not* display any acquiescent adaptive behaviour during the period under analysis. However, if the intention of preserving basic values is detected in several elements of adaptive behaviour, the argument of adaptive acquiescence as an accurate label for Finland in the aftermath of Russia's annexation of Crimea is strengthened.

3.3 Literature review

Although several publications on Finland's security policy can be detected during the period under analysis (e.g. Nokkala, 2014; Salomaa, 2015a; Valtasaari, 2015), there are no other studies that conduct a systematic analysis of this policy field within the specified time frame, at least to my knowledge. Considering that the incidents that are discussed in the present analysis have most recently occurred, this is not surprising. However, due to the prominent place of Mouritzen's (1988) theory in this analysis, it is still relevant to consider previous research from a theoretical perspective. The first part of this literature review will thus present

various theoretical approaches to acquiescent adaptive behaviour. Considering that Mouritzen's (1988) theory evolved from other theoretical contributions to this field, it will primarily be based on his own review of relevant literature. In addition, it is interesting to consider different instances where Mouritzen's (1988) theory has been applied during the three decades since it was published. This will therefore be the essence of the second part of the following review of previous research.

3.3.1 Previous theoretical approaches to acquiescent adaptive behaviour

Mouritzen (1988) combines his own conceptualization with a literature review by discussing various elements from previous theoretical approaches to acquiescent adaptive behaviour at length. Not surprisingly, he places his own theory of adaptive acquiescence within the larger research field of *political adaptation* (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 15). This emerged in the late 1960's through an academic discussion between Wolfram F. Hanrieder (1967) and James N. Rosenau (1967). Especially the latter of these two pioneers continued to develop this field in the following decades (e.g. Rosenau, 1970a; Rosenau, 1970b; Rosenau, 1981). Specifically, Mouritzen points out that he shares the same focus as Hanrieder (1967) and Rosenau (1967) on the unit vis-à-vis its environment, but more generally he admits that his theoretical framework has borrowed several aspects from Rosenau's later contributions (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 23). Despite the importance of Rosenau's writings, Nikolaj Petersen's (1977) theory and typology of adaptation is acknowledged as his most direct source of inspiration (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 229). However, Petersen (1977) is also applying Rosenau's early contributions to the field as a basis for his own approach, especially Rosenau's (1970a) adaptation model.

The interesting aspect with these contributions is that they link the acquiescence-term to the concept of political adaptation. In other words, although *political adaptation* may be regarded as the main field of research that these authors intend to develop, they are more specifically contributions to the field of *acquiescent adaptive behaviour*. Rosenau (1970a) established *acquiescent adaptation* as one of four types of adaptation, whereas Petersen's (1977) revised model presented *acquiescence* as one of four patterns of policy behaviour. Petersen is also highly influenced by Peter Hansen (1974), who attempted to reformulate Rosenau's (1970a) model a few years earlier. He used the capability for a state to influence its external environment ("influence capability"), and the degree in which the state is affected by these changes ("stress sensitivity"), to explain why the political adaptation of small states may

be labelled as *acquiescent* (Petersen, 1977, p. 234). These variables were in turn adopted by Petersen and used in his own model, where low influence capability and high stress sensitivity were paired up to indicate a policy of acquiescence (Petersen, 1977, p. 236).

With Mouritzen's theoretical framework in mind, it is not surprising that these contributions were influential for his own theory of adaptive acquiescence. In addition, Steven M. Smith's critical assessment of Rosenau's approach to political adaptation (Smith, 1981), as well as Rosenau's own publication *The Study of Political Adaptation* (Rosenau, 1981), are prominent in Mouritzen's combined conceptualization and literature review. Particularly he seems to be inspired by the chapter "The Adaptation of National Societies" (Rosenau, 1981), where he continues to develop *acquiescent adaptation* as a conceivable variant of adaptation (Rosenau, 1981, p. 62). Mouritzen has thus actively used the works of Rosenau, as well as other researchers inspired by him, to create his own theory, which therefore is a contribution to the field of *political adaptation*, and more specifically the study of *acquiescent adaptive behaviour*.

3.3.2 Used or ignored? The application of the theory 1988-2017

The extent to which Mouritzen's (1988) theory has been applied during the three decades after it was launched is relevant as it may affect how the findings from the present study should be regarded. If the theory has been actively used, the following analysis may serve as an additional contribution to establish the theory as still relevant in political science research. If the application of the theory has been scarce or absent however, its potential applicability to the present analysis may serve as a revival of the theory.

Despite some initial interest in Mouritzen's theoretical framework, in the form of several book reviews (Campbell, 1989; Wiberg, 1989; Everts, 1990; Underdal 1991), and reference to this work (Troebst, 1990, p. 300), it was largely ignored for the rest of the decade. It was not until the turn of the millennium that his publication from 1988 started to reappear in various political research projects. However, these were primarily individual references (Russell & Tokatlian, 2003, p. 21; Lammers, 2006, p. 445; Agius, 2011, p. 374; Pedersen, 2012, p. 333), and thus not applications of the theory. Vasile Rotaru (2012) provided a thorough presentation of Mouritzen's (1988) theory in his article "The Neo-Finlandization - A Theoretical Review". However, he did not apply the theory to test an empirical case, but rather presented it as a possible theoretical approach when asymmetrical relationships are analysed (Rotaru, 2012, p. 196-201).

Only on one occasion has Mouritzen's (1988) theory been directly linked to an empirical case. This was provided by Bruce Gilley (2010), Associate Professor at the Portland State University, in his research article "Not So Dire Straits: How the Finlandization of Taiwan Benefits U.S. Security", where he analysed Taiwan's asymmetric relationship with China as an element of finlandization. Although Gilley (2010) clearly acknowledged Mouritzen's (1988) publication as his theoretical foundation (Gilley, 2010, p. 48-49), he rather entered into a historical comparison of Finland's relationship with the Soviet Union during the Cold War, and the development of Taiwan's relationship with China. In other words, he was more interested in using Finland's specific experience with finlandization as a basis for comparison, rather than using Mouritzen's (1988) theoretical alternative to the somewhat indefinable term. In this way he made the exact mistake that Mouritzen (1988) attempted to avoid by replacing the misused and unsatisfactory label with a better analytical concept. Mouritzen's (1988) theory was thus not properly applied, but rather seems to have served as a theoretical inspiration for Gilley (2010).

Gilley's (2010) article did however create some responses from other political researchers. First of all, Vance Chang (2010) highlighted the incomparability of Taiwan and Finland in his short article "Taipei Is Not Helsinki", and thus completely rejected Gilley's view. This was thus in line with Mouritzen's (1988) negative view on finlandization as an analytical concept. Secondly, Mouritzen (2010) himself provided a response in the brief article "The Difficult Art of Finlandization". Despite presenting a more nuanced view than Chang (2010), he also largely rejected Gilley's analysis. Mainly he criticized Gilley (2010) for his overly positive interpretation of the concept (Mouritzen, 2010, p. 130-131). Mouritzen's (2010) response was consequently a specification of the undesirable and disadvantageous nature of finlandization. This is therefore another indication that the term should not be used for analytical purposes, as it is easily misunderstood and misused.

The sections above indicate that the theory of adaptive acquiescence has not been used as a proper theoretical framework since it was presented in 1988. In fact, the only proper application of the theory was provided in Mouritzen's (1988) own publication, where he used a few empirical cases to illustrate the different elements of his theory. It thus served as a framework for the analysis of how Denmark and Sweden handled the threat from Germany before and during the Second World War (Mouritzen, 1988). It therefore seems evident that a thorough and systematic application of the theory on the manner in which Finland's handled it's security political situation in the aftermath of Russia's annexation of Crimea might potentially serve as a revival of the theory.

3.4 Analytical method

The previous sections provide an indication of how this analysis will proceed, both in terms of the design, method and strategy of the research. This sub-chapter will clarify and justify these choices, and thus attempt to substantiate why they are more suitable than others for this particular analysis. The first part will therefore discuss different possible research designs, and in turn argue for the selection of an in-depth case study. The second part will address the choice of research method, arguing that a theory-testing process tracing is most appropriate. The third part will consider the suitable research strategy, opting for a qualitative approach. In addition, the final section will discuss some important criteria for qualitative research to be regarded as both valid and reliable.

3.4.1 Case study as research design

The presentation of the analysis so far indicates that one particular case has been selected for the present study, and that a detailed analysis of this relatively short period of time is needed in order to provide any compelling conclusions. In other words, *one* particular policy area (security policy), in *one* particular country (Finland), at *one* particular time (2014-2016), makes up the case in question. Considering that the comprehensive, in-depth study of a single case is regarded as the basic case study (Bryman, 2012, p. 66), it is therefore suitable to consider the present analysis as such. Although often referred to as a research *method* (Stake, 2000, p. 19; Yin, 2009, p. 4), it seems more accurate to follow Bryman's (2012, p. 45) example and rather consider it a research *design*. The selection of a case to study does not provide a method for how the analysis will proceed. Still, it enables a set of possible research methods, at the same time as others are excluded. The chosen method is thus a specification of how the selected case will be analysed, which will be further elaborated on below.

Although a case study design clearly has been selected for the present analysis, contrasting it with other potential designs should substantiate this choice. In fact, a comparative design, where two or more cases are compared, seems to have been even more suitable if not limited by the framework of a Master's Thesis. Considering that the intention of the analysis is to discuss how the weaker part in an asymmetrical power relationship potentially adapted its security policy due to changes in its environment, it would have been interesting to compare the findings from Finland with another country in a similar position, namely Sweden. If both countries security political development between 2014 and 2016 could be labelled as *adaptive acquiescence* it would significantly improve the continued

relevance of Mouritzen's (1988) theory. Similarly, if neither Finland nor Sweden matched the theoretical conditions for this term, the relevance of the theory would have been significantly weakened. Although a single case study of Finland will certainly strengthen or weaken the applicability of the theory nearly thirty years later as well, it seems obvious that the arguments would have been strengthened by applying it to more cases than one.

A comparative analysis where only one of them (Finland or Sweden) could be characterized as *adaptive acquiescence*, would also have provided some very interesting answers, as differences between two rather similar countries thus would have been highlighted. Still, the theoretical framework also implies that a comprehensive in-depth analysis is needed in order to provide compelling answers to whether or not the separate conditions are met. It would therefore have been beyond the scope of a Master´s Thesis to conduct a detailed analysis of close to three years of security political development in two separate countries. This is substantiated by the obvious need for some background information about the development of the security policy prior to the period under analysis. In other words, despite obvious advantages it seems evident that a comparative design in this context would have led to an inadequate analysis of two countries, rather than a comprehensive and detailed study of one. A case study design therefore seemed as the most appropriate.

Robert Yin (2009, p. 47) presents five rationales for when a single case is appropriate in a study. What he refers to as a *critical case*, which is being used to test well-formulated theories, seems to correspond with what the case represents in the present analysis. The single case is regarded as critical, as it can confirm or challenge the theory depending on the presence or absence of the theoretical conditions (Yin, 2009, p. 47). With the sections above in mind, it seems as the in-depth analysis of Finland can serve as such a critical case, as the theory is challenged if it does not apply, and significantly strengthened if it does. The next question is how this critical case should be analysed, in terms of the more specific method.

3.4.2 Theory-testing process tracing as research method

Even though several case study methods exist, the theoretical framework provides guidelines for which research method is most suitable. As previously indicated, Mouritzen's (1988) theory has a distinct element of causality, as the conditions are dependent on the presence of the preceding ones. It is for instance difficult to argue that a regime is adapting to pressure if the pressure cannot be detected, or that adaptive behaviour is intended to protect core values if

it did not occur. It thus seems evident that the conditions form a causal process. This aspect must therefore be prominent in the selected research method. The most appropriate method for the present analysis thus seems to be so-called *process tracing*. "Process-tracing seeks to make within-case inferences about the presence/absence of causal mechanisms in single case studies [...]" (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, p. 4). With a single unit of analysis, and a theoretical framework where causally linked conditions may be either present or absent, this description seems to correspond with the purpose of this analysis. For instance, a possible within-case inference in the empirical material below would be that pressure from Finland's salient environment was detected, but this did not lead to adaptive measures. In this way, the inference within the case would have highlighted both where in the process the causality ended, and disconfirmed *adaptive acquiescence* as an appropriate label overall. Similarly, several within-case inferences may together reveal that the entire process was present, and that *adaptive acquiescence* thus is a suitable characterization.

It is in turn possible to distinguish between different versions of process tracing. Beach and Pedersen (2013, p. 9) claim that process tracing is a suitable method in three somewhat different research settings, which in turn creates three variations of the research method. The variant they label *theory-testing process tracing* seems to fit the purpose of this analysis. This can be explained as a three-step approach at two different levels. The first step is to conceptualize the process, which is done at the theoretical level (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, p. 14). In this case, a well-formulated theory is put to the test, which means that Mouritzen (1988) has already conducted the conceptualization. The second step is to operationalize the process, which occurs between the theoretical and empirical level (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, p. 14). This was provided in section 3.2, where the theoretical conditions were considered in terms of sufficient empirical elements to label them as met. The third step is to collect evidence, which is done at the empirical level. This final step is thus the most comprehensive and should therefore be conducted as a stepwise test (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, p. 14). The idea is to collect so-called *observable manifestations*, which together can act as evidence that confirms or disconfirms the presence of a part of the process, before proceeding to the next. The main analysis below will therefore consider the process part by part, and thus attempt to find compelling evidence for their presence or absence.

Considering the important role of the evidence collection, some additional attention should be devoted to this step. An important aspect in this regard, is that the evidence for the various parts of the process can be very different, and are thus not comparable with each other (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, p. 14). The operationalization (3.2) above highlighted this aspect,

as what was considered sufficient for the different conditions to be met varied significantly. For instance, the first condition was dependent on several individual observations over time, which together would form the basis of compelling evidence, whereas only one instance of adaptive behaviour was needed for the subsequent condition to be regarded as met. Despite these differences, it is generally important to avoid "[...] cherry-picking observations that fit a favored hypothesis when we do research." (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, p. 123). Although this might seem to be primarily directed at the discussion of the first condition, it is equally important to avoid subjectively selecting different aspects *within* the potential adaptive behaviour, which in turn can lead to a dubious conclusion. If the few indications of adaptation are emphasized, whereas the many signs of the opposite are disregarded, the quality of the research will decrease. A proper scrutiny of the study would easily detect such a wrongdoing. This is therefore important to keep in mind when attempting to turn various observations into compelling evidence.

Although the theory-testing variant of process tracing seems to be the most suitable research method for the present analysis, this was not an obvious choice. A similar method is *pattern matching*, which is a frequently used approach in conjunction with case study research (Yin, 2009, p. 136). The idea is to compare an empirical pattern with a theoretical one, and in turn evaluate the coherence, or lack of it, between the patterns (Yin, 2009, p. 136). In a sense, Mouritzen's (1988, p. 61-62) theoretical definition of adaptive acquiescence serves as a predicted pattern, which the pattern that emerges from the empirical analysis can be compared with. However, this method is less concerned with the connection *between* the different parts of the pattern. Considering that process tracing contains much of the same, in the sense that an empirical process is traced on the basis of a theoretical one, it seemed more suitable, as it also takes into account the causality between the different elements.

Another related approach is so-called *congruence analysis*, where the extent of congruence between the empirical findings and various theoretical approaches will shed light on the relative strength of each explanatory model (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p. 144). With more space available, it would have been interesting to evaluate the explanatory relevance of several different theoretical approaches to acquiescent adaptive behaviour (e.g. Rosenau, 1970a; Hansen, 1974; Petersen, 1977). However, due to the spatial limitations of a Master's Thesis, and the comprehensiveness of Mouritzen's theoretical framework, the application of several different theories would not have been convenient. For the present analysis it therefore seemed appropriate to apply a *theory-testing process tracing* instead.

3.4.3 A qualitative research strategy

With the overall design and method established for the present analysis, the next consideration has to do with the strategy of the research. Bryman (2012, p. 35-36) distinguishes between a quantitative- and a qualitative research strategy, where the latter is more focused on words than quantification when data are gathered and analysed. The suitable research strategy is thus dependent on previous choices, as these have affected which data are relevant to analyse in what way. This is evident in the present study, where especially the selected theoretical framework provides clear guidelines for the choice of research strategy, considering that the entire empirical analysis is based on the conditions stipulated in the theory. Relevant data are therefore observations that substantiate either the presence or absence of these specific conditions.

Considering that indications of external pressure may be detected in a variety of different sources, there are multiple relevant data to discuss in conjunction with the first condition. It seems evident that any statements and actions from the Russian side that might indicate such pressure should be included in the discussion. However, in the footnote to this first condition Mouritzen (1988, p. 61) notes that the regime representatives' misperceptions of the net pressure might also lead to adaptive acquiescence. It is therefore also relevant to consider how Russia was perceived in official documents and reports in Finland during the period under analysis. Furthermore, opinion polls should be included in the analysis, as well as opinions from experts on Finnish security policy. Although some quantitative elements might be relevant to discuss, as the development of percentage levels in opinion polls, it seems evident that the assessment of the individual observations, as well as the overall condition, should primarily be based on a qualitative discussion.

For the discussion of the second condition, any alterations to Finland's security policy should be analysed as potential adaptive behaviour. Changes within the already established security political relations (NATO, the EU, NORDEFCO, Sweden, the US), as well as potential new ones, between March 2014 and the end of 2016 are therefore relevant to discuss. More specifically, the relevant data material will be potential security political agreements or initiatives, as well as any reactions or references to these. For the potential continuous toleration of infringements, relevant data should be detected in the discussion of the first condition, as such infractions on core values are clear indications of external pressure. The relevant data for the final condition will be the potential elements of adaptation that were detected in the previous conditions, as it considers the intention of the adaptive behaviour. Overall, a qualitative research strategy therefore seems most fruitful for the present analysis.

3.4.4 Trustworthiness of the research

Despite the importance of valid and reliable research, it does not necessarily have to be expressed as validity and reliability. Despite their significance as important criteria for quantitative research, their relevance for qualitative approaches has been contested (Bryman, 2012, p. 389). Without departing completely from the idea of validity and reliability, Lincoln and Guba (1985) proposed an alternative classification, where four research criteria were established under the overarching term *trustworthiness*. Their intention was to find criteria that resembled the already established internal- and external validity, reliability and objectivity, but were more useful for qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290).

The first criterion is *credibility*, i.e. how believable the findings are, which was intended as a substitute for internal validity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 296). The application of dubious and unreliable sources, as well as intentional or unintentional misinterpretations, can thus lead to findings that score low on the credibility-scale. To avoid this, various sources of information should be applied (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 305). This is especially relevant for the discussion of the first condition, where several sources of data (actions, statements, reports etc.) should be combined in order to provide a compelling and credible conclusion. As some of this information will be gathered through news articles, it will also be important to avoid dubious websites. *Russia Today* and *Sputnik International* are therefore deliberately avoided, as they have been associated with spreading propaganda and false information (Groll, 2014; MacFarquhar, 2016). Similarly, articles from *Finnbay* are disregarded, as the credibility of the website has been contested (Halminen, 2014). The majority of the Finnish news articles are therefore from the national broadcasting company *YLE*, or from the main newspapers (e.g. *Helsingin Sanomat* or *Ilta-Sanomat)*, and should thus be regarded as credible. The diversity of the sources will nevertheless act as a buffer against the sole reliance on potentially forged pieces of information.

The second criterion is *transferability*, which was intended as the qualitative replacement for external validity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 297). Although both these criteria assess the applicability of the findings, they vary in terms of how they are met. External validity is often based on a precise assessment by the researcher himself of the generalizability of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316). In order to meet the transferability criterion however, Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 316) claim that the researcher should provide a so-called *thick description* of the research, which in turn will enable potential appliers to evaluate its applicability in other settings. In other words, in qualitative research it is more relevant to *facilitate* potential transferability, than to *evaluate* the exact

generalizability. The transferability of the present research has thus been facilitated through a comprehensive and detailed chapter on the theoretical framework and analytical method.

The third criterion is *dependability*, which resembles reliability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 299). The latter represents the consistency and stability of the measures, which may be evaluated through a replication of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 298). Although the question of unreliable measures is of particular concern in quantitative research (Bryman, 2012, p. 46), it does not imply that the reliability of the research is irrelevant in qualitative approaches. Dependability is thus a criterion that removes the focus on the test of quantitative measures, but maintains the important aspects of consistency and stability. With obvious resemblance to a replication process, they propose *auditing* as a test of the dependability of the qualitative research, where the auditor is reviewing both the process and the product, i.e. how the research has been conducted, as well as the data and findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 318). The auditing approach is thus an external check of whether the research may be regarded as dependable, and will in the present analysis be facilitated through a transparent and unequivocal presentation of the research process.

The fourth criterion is *confirmability*, which functions as a qualitative substitute to objectivity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 300). Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 300) propose that the quantitative focus on the objectivity of the researcher should be shifted to objectivity concerns regarding the data material. Considering the impossibility of a completely neutral and objective researcher, the idea is to rather pay attention to the data that is included, in other words whether the researcher can be regarded to have acted in good faith (Bryman, 2012, p. 392). A good example of the opposite is the previously mentioned cherry picking of fitting observations, as this represents a subjective selection of data material. This may not be detected without a proper scrutiny of the research project, which is why *auditing*, as presented above, is considered the most relevant technique when this criterion is assessed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 318). The auditor can thus confirm or disconfirm the objectivity of the data material, hence the name of the criterion. In the same way as above, this is facilitated through transparency, clarity and openness on how the research has been conducted. In order to increase the transparency of the research, all references that are not in English are translated both continuously in the analysis, as well as in the list of applied literature at the end.

Taken together, the trustworthiness of the present research is thus dependent on the application of multiple reliable sources, as well as a transparent and comprehensive presentation of the research process and how it has been conducted.

4 Present and Persistent Pressure?

The first step in the empirical analysis is to discuss whether the period between 18 March 2014 and 31 December 2016 can be characterized by external pressure from Russia that challenged Finland's basic values. It is consequently an assessment of both the presence and persistence of potential pressure during the period under analysis, and is thus an evaluation of whether or not the first condition in Mouritzen's (1988) theoretical framework is met. The following analysis will be based on a comprehensive chronological discussion of statements and actions from the Russian side, as well as how Russia was perceived and referred to in official documents, reports, research and opinion polls in Finland. By discussing the issue from various angles at different points in time, it should be possible to provide a compelling conclusion to whether or not this condition should be regarded as met at the end of this chapter.

4.1 Elements of external pressure in 2014

As an immediate reaction to Russia's annexation of Crimea, the Finnish Air Force increased the surveillance of Finland's airspace (YLE, 2014a). Combined with increased and unusual military activity south and east of Finland, this form of high alertness was regarded as necessary. Ossi Sivén, Commander of the Karelian Air Command in Rissala, stated "It's clear that we're adjusting our own readiness." (YLE, 2014a). This seems to be an early indication that Russia was regarded as an element of pressure at the time. Still, Sivén clearly emphasized that Russia's actions were not aimed directly at Finland (YLE, 2014a). The increased surveillance may thus be regarded as nothing more than a natural precaution in the tense circumstances that the annexation had created. However, considering that the Finnish Air Force deemed it necessary to become more alert and ready due to Russia's military behaviour, it seems natural to label this as an initial indication of external pressure.

In conjunction with the annexation of Crimea, Russia's President Vladimir Putin gave a speech in the Kremlin justifying this action. As Crimea had belonged to Russia until 1954, when it was transferred to the Ukrainian SSR, he claimed a historical right to the recently annexed peninsula (President of Russia, 2014). Putin's former advisor Andrey Illarionov took this "historical justice"-legitimization one step further, as he in an interview on 29 March with the Swedish newspaper *Svenska Dagbladet* claimed that Crimea was just the beginning of Putin's project of resetting Russia's historical borders (Holmström, 2014). Illarionov referred to Putin's comments on the mistakes made by the Bolsheviks and Communists during the

course of history, and claimed that the manner in which the Finns gained their independence from Russia in 1917, after the Bolsheviks had committed treason, might well be used by Putin to justify similar actions against Finland (Holmström, 2014).

Considering that nearly a century had passed since Finland gained its independence, the allegation above might not seem very plausible. However, 60 years had passed since Russia lost Crimea when the decision was made to reclaim it. This implies that time is not relevant. The credibility of Illarionov's statement is further substantiated by his former role as President Putin's close advisor, and the fact that he had left his position in the Kremlin when the comment was made, and therefore was in a position to speak more freely (Holmström, 2014). However, this might also imply that he was less informed than someone within the administration. Nevertheless, as the article was entitled "Putin vill även återta Finland" [Putin even wants to regain Finland] (Holmström, 2014), it quickly caught the attention of several Finnish news sites (Iltalehti, 2014; MTV Uutiset, 2014; Nyström, 2014; Ovaskainen, 2014; Vaalisto, 2014). Considering the severity of the statement, and its prominence in Finnish media, it may have affected Finns' perception of Russia at the time. Still, it does not indicate pressure in itself, as Illarionov no longer officially represented Russia. However, his allegation gained credibility during the spring, as Finnish airspace was violated by Russian aircrafts on two separate occasions (Rajavartiolaitos, 2014a). Considering the severity of such actions against another sovereign country, they should also be regarded as clear indications of pressure *per se*.

Russia was thus a prominent topic at the annual foreign- and security political discussions at Kultaranta on 8-9 June 2014, as exemplified through the headline for the second day: "Karhu on herännyt, entä Suomi?" [The bear has woken, what about Finland?] (Tasavallan presidentin kanslia, 2014a). A security political debate that certainly was intensified in the aftermath of Russia's annexation of Crimea was the discussion regarding a potential NATO-membership for Finland (Mauno & Lehto, 2014; Nieminen, 2014). Despite being an active NATO-partner prior to the annexation, it did not provide Finland with membership in the alliance, and therefore not a guarantee of military assistance (Salomaa, 2015b, p. 263). The intensified discussion thus seems to be related to an increased sense of insecurity and vulnerability. However, despite a more prominent and intense discussion, it did not necessarily bring Finland closer to a NATO-membership. "Vill ni vara med och starta ett tredje världskrig?" [Do you want to initiate a third World War?] (Laurén, 2014), Putin's personal envoy Sergey Markov responded when asked about a potential NATO-membership for Finland. He continued with an unequivocal statement: "Ryssland avråder Finland från att

gå med i Nato." [Russia discourages Finland from entering NATO.] (Laurén, 2014). These severe statements were made in an interview with the Finnish newspaper *Hufvudstadsbladet* on 8 June, and were thus intended as a clear message to the foreign- and security political discussions at Kultaranta (Laurén, 2014). An aspect that enhanced the significance of these comments was his role as a so-called *doverennoje litso*, which implies that he publicly represented Russia (Laurén, 2014). His warning, which might just as well be regarded as a threat, was thus an attempt to interfere in the internal affairs of another sovereign country. This was consequently a severe infringement, and a clear indication of external pressure from Russia.

Despite Markov's warning, Finland took a huge step towards NATO a few months later. On 4 September 2014, Finland signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with NATO, which authorized the alliance to use the territory of Finland, and obligated Finland to provide support to these military activities (SopS, 82/2014). Considering the contrast between Finland's former role as a NATO-partner and the stipulations in this agreement, it is interesting to consider whether this significant change instigated any reaction from Russia, which in turn may be regarded as pressure. Although the MoU was signed in September, the decision to enter into this agreement was made by President Sauli Niinistö and the Foreign Policy Cabinet on 22 August (Tasavallan presidentin kanslia, 2014b). This was followed by three Russian violations of Finnish airspace within the next five days (Rajavartiolaitos, 2014b; Rajavartiolaitos, 2014c). The timing and intensity of these airspace violations implies that they represented discontent with Finland's decision to approach NATO. In other words, they may be regarded as another attempt to influence Finland's internal affairs. Combined with the severity of airspace violations in general, these should thus be regarded as clear elements of external pressure. This is substantiated by Defence Minister Carl Haglund's statement on 28 August: "Because of this we will have to increase surveillance activities and monitor the situation." (YLE, 2014b). In other words, the incidents were regarded as somewhat threatening.

As several individual elements discussed above seem to indicate that an external pressure can be detected during the first six months after Russia's annexation of Crimea, it is in turn interesting to evaluate whether the same tendency can be seen in opinion polls. On 14 September a national poll was presented where 43% regarded Russia as a threat (Santaharju, 2014). On the one hand, this implied that the majority of Finns still had a more relaxed view on their eastern neighbour. On the other hand, it indicated a substantial increase from a similar poll conducted six months earlier, where only a quarter of the population regarded

Russia as a security threat (Santaharju, 2014). In other words, the Finnish population increasingly regarded Russia as a threat.

The annual survey of Finns' opinions regarding Finland's foreign-, security- and defence policy (MTS-report), which was conducted in September/October, showed similar trends. These opinion polls revealed that 63% deemed Russia's actions as having a negative effect on Finland's own security (Puolustusministeriö, 2014a, p. 6). This implies that the majority of Finns linked Russia's behaviour to their own sense of security. In addition, as much as 75% considered the development in Russia as causing concern for the future, compared to 42% in 2013 (Puolustusministeriö, 2014a, p. 3). In other words, the developments in 2014 increased the sense of insecurity among the Finnish population, and this was specifically linked to Russia. As a result, as much as 56% of the population expressed a desire to increase defence spending, compared to 32% the year before (Puolustusministeriö, 2014a, p. 4). This indicates a massive increase. It was also the highest percentage ever recorded during the 50 years it had been measured (Puolustusministeriö, 2014a, p. 4).

The opinion polls also showed a 9% increase from the year before in favour of NATO-membership. Still, this was only a rise from 21 to 30% (Puolustusministeriö, 2014a, p. 5). In other words, the clear majority of the population did not consider membership in this military alliance as desirable. This can therefore be an indication that NATO-membership was regarded as unnecessary by most Finns, which in turn might serve as a compelling counterargument to the previous impression of external pressure. However, the respondents' justifications for their stance in the NATO-debate contradicts this argument, as the by far most stated reasons *against* membership were linked to insecurity regarding Russia's potential reaction (e.g. "Venäjää ei kannata ärsyttää" [We should not annoy Russia] or "Pietarin läheisyys" [The close proximity of Saint Petersburg]) (Puolustusministeriö, 2014a, p. 5). This is therefore rather an additional argument that pressure was present. This is substantiated by the active use of Russia in the justifications in favour of NATO-membership as well (e.g. "Turvallisuussuoja naapuria vastaan" [Security protection against our neighbour] or "Venäjä ja siellä arveluttava johtaja" [Russia and their dubious leader]) (Puolustusministeriö, 2014a, p. 5). This gives a clear indication that the population perceived Russia as an element of danger for their security regardless of whether Finland was part of the military alliance or not.

Despite the impression created by opinion polls, statements and actions discussed above, it is interesting to consider how political researchers on the field analysed the situation at the time. Charly Salonius-Pasternak, a senior researcher at the Finnish Institute of

International Affairs (FIIA) with Finland's security- and defence policy as his expertise, stated in December that Finland might well be the first target of a military strike (Salonius-Pasternak, 2014b). He claimed that Russia might e.g. seize some of the Finnish Åland islands, and consequently gain control of the airspace over the Baltic Sea (Salonius-Pasternak, 2014b). He thus called for the re-evaluation of the security- and defence political report from 2012, which had stated that the Finnish defence should be developed on the assumption that the most probable scenario where Finland would have to use force is as part of a larger military conflict (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2012, p. 12). Salonius-Pasternak claimed that this was no longer accurate in the new security environment that Russia's recent actions had created, and that scenarios where Finland is the isolated target of a military strike must be anticipated as well (Salonius-Pasternak, 2014b). Combined with the findings above, it therefore seems accurate to argue that Russia was perceived as an element of pressure, at least in 2014. The question is whether this persisted as more time passed since Russia's annexation of Crimea.

4.2 Elements of external pressure in 2015

This year was initiated by Russia's re-opening of a military base in the former Finnish town of Alakurtti, to which the first military forces arrived on 13 January (Viljakainen & Honkamaa, 2015; YLE, 2015a). Although a sovereign country has every right to open new military bases on its own territory, the fact that this was located less than 60 km from the Finnish border caused some concern. Commodore Pertti Inkinen acknowledged that Finland would not officially react to this decision, but at the same time admitted that he was startled by the proximity of this concentration of military forces (Viljakainen & Honkamaa, 2015). More generally, he expressed his concern with Russia's increased focus on the northern areas, both through the localization of forces, and development of suitable military equipment (Viljakainen & Honkamaa, 2015). The sense of insecurity regarding Russia that developed during 2014 was certainly not decreased by this development in early 2015. On the contrary, this seemed to be increasing. A report on values- and attitudes released in March revealed that 50% of the population deemed Russia as a military threat, and as much as 83% regarded Russia as unstable and unpredictable (Apunen, Haavisto, Sipola & Toivonen, 2015, p. 75). It seems likely that these perceptions were only strengthened by the Russian military exercise at the end of the month, where it was later revealed that the invasion of strategic Nordic territories had been practised, including the seizure of the Finnish Åland islands (Blair, 2015; Kerola, 2015; Lucas, 2015, p. 9).

Salonius-Pasternak's prediction from December 2014 of Russia's potential plans thus gained credibility. He continued the same line of thought in an article in the *Journal of International Security Affairs* that spring: "[...] Finnish politicians were forced to acknowledge that Russia's aggressive foreign policy and military behaviour had become the new normal." (Salonius-Pasternak, 2015, p. 1). In other words, something had changed in Finland's salient environment from a security political perspective, and the politicians thus had to handle this new situation. Combined with a seemingly worried population, it was no surprise that security was a prominent theme in conjunction with the parliamentary election that spring. The core issues in 2015 were *work, economy, health* and *security* (Salminen, 2015), compared to *employment* and *immigration*, which had been at the centre of discussion during the election campaign four years earlier (YLE, 2010). In other words, between 2011 and 2015 *security* had become one of the most important political issues in Finland. Although security may be related to several different actors and issues, the final debate between party leaders revealed that Russia was in the spotlight (YLE Areena, 2015).

On 29 May 2015 President Niinistö formally appointed a new government. As security had been prominent in the election campaign, it was also natural to include this aspect in the strategic program for the new government. In a distinction between *strengths, weaknesses*, *possibilities* and *threat*s, the changing security environment and the unfavourable development in Russia were listed as the first threat, which thus may be interpreted as the most prominent (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2015, p. 9). Although Russia's actions were regarded as threatening, Russia was not directly presented as a military threat. Considering the severity of such an accusation against a neighbouring country and the unrest it would have caused among the Finnish population, this is not surprising. By only referring to the development in Russia, the government was able to reassure the Finnish population that the development was being watched closely and taken seriously and at the same time avoid agitating its eastern neighbour. Still, the strategic program clearly stated that as a result of the crisis in Ukraine, the security situation in the Baltic Sea area was weakened, and that Finland's defence forces and security political cooperation therefore would be strengthened (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2015, p. 34). This implies that Russia's actions were regarded as a direct cause to the deteriorated sense of security in Finland's salient environment at the time.

Russia was thus naturally still a prominent theme at this year's security political discussions at Kultaranta in June, which was even attended by Aleksei Kudrin, former Minister of Finance in Russia. He warned about the further expansion of NATO to Ukraine, or any other country bordering Russia, thus implying Finland (Paananen, 2015). He stated that

the current tension would diminish considerably if Russia was rather offered guarantees of the opposite (Paananen, 2015). In this way his comments were considerably more toned down than the previously discussed statements by Sergey Markov, but the underlying message was the same; Finland should not join NATO. President Putin in many ways confirmed this view at a joint news conference with President Niinistö in Moscow on 16 June:

> I think the best guarantee for Finland's security is its neutral status. Because as soon as some sort of threat occurs from any neighbouring state, Russia must react correspondingly and build its defence policy so as to neutralise possible threats in its direction. If somebody threatens any of our territories, that means we will need to aim our Armed Forces, our modern weaponry towards the territories from which that threat originates. How could it be otherwise? NATO is advancing towards our borders; it is not Russia that is moving towards them. (President of Russia, 2015, p. 6).

This was another interference in Finland's internal affairs. Although the statement made it clear that this was due to Russia's own security considerations, it still contained a somewhat concealed threat against Finland. In other words, if Finland had decided to join NATO at this point, a military reaction from Russia would have been likely. This is a very strong indication that a pressure from Russia existed at the time.

Ten days after President Putin's harsh statement another airspace violation occurred, as a Russian aircraft entered Finnish airspace east of Helsinki (Rajavartiolaitos, 2015a). It is therefore interesting to consider how these statements and actions affected Finns' perception of Russia. A survey that was conducted in October asked the question: "Onko Venäjän kehitys mielestänne uhka Suomelle?" [Do you consider the development in Russia as a threat to Finland?] (YLE, 2015b). A majority of the population (51%) responded affirmatively (YLE, 2015b). However, the percentage had been even higher (56%) when the exact same question had been asked in August 2014 (YLE, 2015b). In other words, the seemingly high percentage level of 51% actually represents a 5% decrease from the preceding year (YLE, 2015b). This might indicate that the pressure was decreasing as well. However, the percentage that did *not* regard the development in Russia as threatening to Finland remained stable (38%), which consequently implies a 5% increase of those who could not decide (YLE, 2015b). It is therefore rather a sign of more uncertainty than less pressure.

The annual MTS-report, which was conducted in November and released in January the following year, showed some similar trends, in the sense that figures remained high

despite slight decreases. At this point 57% deemed Russia's actions as negative for Finland's security, compared to 63% in 2014 (Puolustusministeriö, 2016a, p. 15). In other words, despite a 6% decrease, there was still a clear majority who shared this view. The extraordinary high percentage of Finns who wanted to increase defence spending in 2014 (56%) was also reduced to 47% (Puolustusministeriö, 2016a, p. 12). Although this was a 9% decrease, it is worth noting that 47% in 2015 was the third highest percentage since recording was initiated in 1964 (Puolustusministeriö, 2016b, p. 31). With close to 50% still wanting to use more state funds on defence, and close to 60% still regarding Russia's actions as negative for their own security, it seems accurate to conclude that an external pressure was present at the end of 2015 as well. However, the slightly decreasing figures might indicate that the pressure was similarly decreasing. It is therefore interesting to consider whether this tendency continued in 2016, or whether it was reversed.

4.3 Elements of external pressure in 2016

This years survey on Finns' values- and attitudes, which was conducted in January and released in March, did not ask specifically whether Russia was regarded as a threat. However, a more general reverse statement was posed: "Suomella ei ole todellisia sotilaallisia uhkakuvia" [Finland does not have any real military threats] (Apunen, Haavisto, Hopia & Toivonen, 2016, p. 108). Only 7% completely agreed with this statement (Apunen et al., 2016, p. 108). Although an additional 25% could partly agree, it means that less than a third of the population to some extent agreed that a military threat was absent. At the other end of the scale 52% responded that they partially or completely disagreed (Apunen et al., 2016, p. 108). Considering the tendency that respondents agree to statements (Schuman & Presser, 1996, p. 203), it is interesting that a majority of the population actively disagreed with the statement, and thus claimed that some military threat existed at the time. This makes the results even more compelling. Still, it does not imply that 52% regarded *Russia* as a military threat, considering the general wording of the statement. However, with previous opinion polls and Finland's geographical location in mind, it seems plausible that the percentage largely can be linked to Russia. This is substantiated by the Finns' justifications for their NATO-stance at the time, where the threat from Russia was most frequently used both in favour of joining NATO, and against membership in the alliance (Apunen et al., 2016, p. 121).

As both Putin and Markov had attempted to interfere in Finland's decision regarding

NATO, and the population regarded Russia as a threat both inside and outside the NATO-framework, an official NATO-statement was released by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in April (Bergquist, Heisbourg, Nyberg & Tiilikainen, 2016). This did not state whether Finland should join NATO or not, but rather presented the effects and consequences of a potential membership. The report clearly stated that Russia aimed to prevent Finland from joining the alliance, and therefore anticipated that a Finnish membership would lead to harsh political and economic reactions from Russia (Bergquist et al., 2016, p. 7). What specific counter-measures would be applied, and whether or not it would include the use of force, was stated as difficult to predict (Bergquist et al., 2016, p. 7). According to this official report it would thus not be possible for Finland to join NATO at the time without a strong reaction from Russia, which is another indication of external pressure. This was substantiated by Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's statement on 29 April:

> It is the right of every country to determine the forms for its security but you must understand that if military infrastructure draws close to Russian borders we will naturally take the necessary technical-military measures. (Winiarski, 2016).

Although this particular statement was issued as a warning to Sweden against NATO it seems evident that a Finnish membership in the alliance would have drawn NATO's military infrastructure even closer to Russia. A Russian reaction on Finnish membership thus still seemed highly plausible, which therefore limited Finland's security political options.

Whereas Finland's security environment had been described as stable in the security- and defence political report from 2012 (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2012, p. 12), the similar assessment from June 2016 considered the tension in the Baltic Sea as increasing, and linked this directly to Russia's annexation of Crimea and aggressive role in eastern Ukraine (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2016, p. 13). This was in line with a FIIA-analysis that was released a few weeks earlier, which acknowledged that an alteration to the security situation in the area had already occurred and that this was affecting Finland both directly and indirectly (Pynnöniemi & Salonius-Pasternak, 2016, p. 10). In other words, a new and deteriorated security political situation had emerged, and this was linked to Russia's recent behaviour. The foreign- and security political report thus stated that in the current situation the threat or use of military force against Finland could not be ruled out (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2016, p. 13). The security situation was in this way re-evaluated and modified, as Salonius-Pasternak had called for in December 2014. Although Russia was not directly presented as a *threat*, the

formulations above imply that the new situation that emanated from Russia's actions was considered threatening. As a specific measure, the report recommended that Russia would have to be watched closely and evaluated thoroughly, and that a more diverse and deeper knowledge of the eastern neighbour was needed (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2016, p. 24). This indicates that the security political situation in Finland's salient environment was officially regarded as changed, and that Russia was still in the spotlight, even though considerable time had passed since Russia's annexation of Crimea.

The security political discussions at Kultaranta in June were thus focused on how this new security political situation could be handled, with particular focus on how Finland and Sweden could cooperate better in security- and defence related issues (Tasavallan presidentin kanslia, 2016). Although no specific warnings from the Russian side against Finnish NATO-membership were issued to this particular event, President Putin made some similar comments in July during his first state visit to Finland since the annexation of Crimea. "NATO perhaps would gladly fight with Russia until the last Finnish soldier" (Dyomkin & Forsell, 2016), the Russian President stated at a joint press conference. In this way he implied that a Finnish NATO-membership would initiate a military conflict between NATO and Russia, and that Finland would be at the centre of it. This is thus another concealed threat, and therefore an attempt to interfere in the internal affairs of Finland. However, Putin also stated that Russia would respect Finland's decision if it were to join NATO (Moscow Times, 2016). This implies that Russia was *not* attempting to dictate Finland's security political decisions and thus exert external pressure. However, he also stated that Russian military forces in that case would have to be repositioned (Moscow Times, 2016). Similarly, Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov warned Finland about joining the "anti-Russian" military alliance NATO, which in his view would force Russia to react (Moscow Times, 2016). These are thus additional attempts at interfering in Finland's internal affairs, and therefore elements of external pressure.

In light of the new security political situation, an official report was released in August entitled "Venäjän muuttuva rooli Suomen lähialueilla" [Russia's changing role in Finland's neighbourhood] (Martikainen, Pynnöniemi & Saari, 2016). The report stated that due to the unpredictable nature of Russia's policy and the potential for rapid escalation, Finland should pursue a versatile and active preparation for the potential threats in the new security environment (Martikainen et al., 2016, p. 58). Furthermore, it stated that Russia had clearly expressed an aim to limit Finland's security political manoeuvrability and integration into western structures, and that the readiness to use military force in order to reach these goals

had increased (Martikainen et al., 2016, p. 66). Based on the previously discussed statements by Markov and Putin, this seems compelling. Overall, the report was interpreted in the media as a clear indication that Russia had become an even greater threat to Finland than before (Cone, 2016; Manninen, 2016; YLE, 2016).

This indicates that the previously argued pressure from Russia did not decrease as more time passed since the annexation of Crimea, but rather persisted and potentially increased. This was substantiated by two new airspace violations in October, as Russian fighter jets crossed into Finnish airspace east of Helsinki (Rajavartiolaitos, 2016). Considering that these occurred as US Deputy Secretary of Defence Robert Work was in Helsinki to sign a bilateral military agreement with Finland, they seem to represent discontent with Finland's security political decisions, and thus another attempt at interfering with its internal affairs. It is in turn interesting to consider how this turned out in opinion polls towards the end of the period under analysis.

As some key figures showed a slightly decreasing trend at the end of 2015, it is interesting to consider whether this tendency continued. The annual MTS-report, which was conducted in September/October and released in December, indicated that this was not the case. First of all, it revealed that 59% regarded Russia's recent actions as negative for Finland's security (Puolustusministeriö, 2016c, p. 23). The decreasing tendency was thus brought to a halt, and even slightly reversed (63% in 2014, 57% in 2015, 59% in 2016). In other words, these percentages remained high, which indicates that a clear majority of the population considered Russia's behaviour as deteriorating for their own security during the entire period under analysis. Second of all, 47% still wanted to increase defence spending (Puolustusministeriö, 2016c, p. 17). This was thus another decreasing trend that was brought to a halt (56% in 2014, 47% in 2015, 47% in 2016). From a historical perspective the three figures thus represent some of the highest percentages ever recorded in Finland (1st, 3rd and 3rd), which is another indication that this period of time was characterized by external pressure. In addition, arguments involving Russia were still actively used both for and against NATO-membership (Puolustusministeriö, 2016c, p. 11-12). This implies that the Finnish population still regarded Russia as a potential element of danger, regardless of whether or not Finland would decide to get under the wings of NATO. Overall, the MTS-report should therefore be regarded as a clear indication that the population perceived the pressure from Russia as present, even though more than two and a half years had passed since Russia's annexation of Crimea. In other words, the external pressure from Russia persisted at the end of 2016 as well.

4.4 Summary of findings regarding the first condition

The most clear-cut examples of actual pressure from Russia during the period under analysis were the various Russian statements and actions. Vladimir Putin, Sergey Lavrov and Sergey Markov were all official representatives of the Russian government when they made their statements, which consequently made these warnings and threats regarding Finnish NATO-membership attempts at interfering in Finland's internal affairs. Similarly it seems evident that airspace violations were actively used by Russia to express discontent with Finland's security political decisions, both in conjunction with the MoU with NATO and the bilateral security political agreement with the US. They should therefore also be regarded as attempts to interfere in Finland's internal affairs. Considering that airspace violations are direct infringements against the universal regime value of territorial control, they should be regarded as severe incidents, and thus clear elements of external pressure. The fact that they occurred as much as eight times during this relatively short period of time substantiates the impression that pressure existed, and that it characterized the period under analysis.

The analysis above also revealed that this affected how Russia was perceived in Finland. This was most noticeable in the opinion polls, which also indicated that the negative perception of Russia persisted. The same tendency was also seen in official reports and research, which were focused on the potential threats from Russia. Admittedly, not all individual observations serve as compelling evidence of pressure on their own. For instance, one individual statement by a former Russian politician, or one assessment by a Finnish political researcher, do not serve as evidence of pressure *per se*. However, when combined with other indications of pressure, the individual arguments form a coherent pattern. The overall impression is thus that the period between 18 March 2014 and 31 December 2016 can be characterized by a sufficient amount of external pressure from Russia on Finland for potential adaptive measures to have been initiated. In other words, the first condition can be regarded as met.

5 Adapting to Pressure?

Although the discussion above implies that the period under analysis can be characterized by external pressure from Russia, it does not necessarily mean that adaptive measures were taken in order to cope with the situation. The present chapter will therefore analyse whether Finland adapted to this external pressure. The security political changes consequently have to represent attempts to cope with or stimulate external changes in order to be classified as adaptive behaviour. This evaluation will thus simultaneously provide a clear indication of whether a causal link between the cause (pressure) and action (adaptation) can be detected. A useful analytical tool in this regard is to consider the counterfactual question: Would this change have been made, were it not for the increased pressure? Although such counterfactual questions are difficult to confirm or disconfirm, a discussion on the probability of making the decision in different circumstances can provide valuable insight to the assessment. The following will discuss potential alterations to Finland's established security political relations (NATO, EU, NORDEFCO, Sweden, the US), as well as any potential new ones. As Finland signed a so-called *Defence Protocol* with the United Kingdom (UK) during this period (Puolustusministeriö, 2016d), this might serve as a new security political relationship, and will therefore be discussed below. Before a conclusion can be reached, the potential continuous toleration of infringements, as Mouritzen separated into his third condition, will be discussed as well. It is therefore an evaluation of whether or not the second and third conditions in Mouritzen's (1988) theory are met.

5.1 NATO

The background chapter indicated that Finland became an active NATO-partner in the decades prior to Russia's annexation of Crimea, but that this was primarily related to cooperation in external conflicts and not Finland's own security. With the increased sense of pressure from Russia following this incident, an understandable adaptive measure would have been to step up the cooperation with this provider of security. The most clear-cut example of this would have been membership, as this would have represented a distinct change in Finland's security policy and a clear attempt to cope with external changes. Still, such a security political move could have been just as hazardous as staying non-aligned, as previously discussed. As the majority of the population was against NATO-membership during the period under analysis (60% in 2014, 58% in 2015, 61% in 2016), it is not surprising that this was not pursued (Puolustusministeriö, 2014a, p. 5; Puolustusministeriö,

2016a, p. 17; Puolustusministeriö, 2016c, p. 10). However, a significant step in this direction was made in conjunction with the previously mentioned MoU with NATO. As this was the only new agreement between Finland and NATO during the period of analysis, it will be discussed in more detail below as a potential element of adaptive behaviour.

5.1.1 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

On 4 September 2014 general Jarmo Lindberg, Chief of the Finnish Defence Forces, and general Philip M. Breedlove, Supreme Allied Commander Europe, signed an MoU on behalf of the Government of Finland and NATO (SopS, 82/2014). In this agreement, Finland was presented as a *Host Nation* (SopS, 82/2014, § 1.9), which in turn enabled the ambition of:

> [...] deploying NATO forces and coalition forces under NATO command and control to or through the territory of the Republic of Finland during periods of peace, crisis, emergency, and conflict in support of NATO military activities; (SopS, 82/2014).

In other words, Finland agreed to open up its borders for this major military alliance by allowing it to use its territory in a wide range of settings. This was certainly a new element in Finland's security political relationship with NATO. It is worth noting that NATO-forces were allowed both *to* and *through* Finnish territory, which represents two new and different aspects of the cooperation. The latter means that NATO-forces were allowed to use Finnish territory as a passage in military operations, and was therefore more directed at *offensive* cooperation through Finland. The former however, implied that NATO-forces could also be deployed to Finland and stay there, which indicated a more *defensive* aspect of the collaboration. It thus added a completely new dimension to Finland's cooperation with NATO, in the sense that it was more directed at Finland's own security. This is therefore a clear indication that the MoU represented a significant change in Finland's security political relationship with NATO.

Another important element in the MoU was the so-called *Host Nation Support*, which was defined as:

> The civil and military assistance rendered in peace, emergencies, crisis and conflict by a Host Nation to allied forces and organisations, which are located on, operating in or transiting through the Host Nation's territory, territorial waters or airspace. (SopS, 82/2014, § 1.11).

Finland thus became obligated to assist NATO-forces in both settings presented above. Although the scope and content of the *civil and military assistance* was not explicitly specified, the MoU indicated how comprehensive this should be: "The HN [Host Nation] will provide support within its fullest capacity [...]" (SopS, 82/2014, § 3.4). This implies that Finland's contribution to NATO-operations on its territory was expected to be as substantial as possible, which in turn may be interpreted as involving military forces. The *host nation support* thus seems to entail a commitment from Finland to operate alongside NATO-forces, both if they were deployed to Finland, and if they were using the territory as transit to other countries. Despite previous collaboration with NATO-forces in various NATO-led operations, the new element was that this potentially could occur in Finland as well. This substantiates the impression above that the focus of the security political cooperation with NATO shifted towards domestic security, and that it became considerably closer through this agreement.

Although both Finland's new role as *host nation* to NATO and commitment to provide *host nation support* indicate that the MoU represented a major alteration to this security political relationship, it is relevant to consider whether it can be linked to the increased sense of pressure from Russia. This will help establish whether the MoU can be labelled as adaptive behaviour, and also whether a causal connection can be established between the external pressure and this potential element of adaptation. In this regard, the timing is interesting. Talks regarding such an agreement with NATO were initiated already in April 2014, in other words approximately a month after Russia's annexation of Crimea (Hakahuhta, 2014). The close proximity between these two incidents indicates that Finland regarded Russia's actions as negative for its own security, and consequently attempted to deepen its cooperation with NATO.

However, the agreement was not signed until September. If the security situation was regarded as deteriorated in the spring it might seem strange that the MoU was not signed until the autumn. Still, the actual signing took place less than six months after the annexation, and only five months after the discussions were initiated. Considering the content of the agreement, and consequently the change this represented for Finland's security policy, this should be regarded as a short period of time. Both the immediate initiation of the talks, and the subsequent hasty process to finalize the agreement, therefore indicate a connection between Russia's actions, which created instability and pressure, and Finland's reaction, which was intended to make it easier to cope with these external changes.

The impression above may still be put to the counterfactual test: Would the MoU have been signed were it not for the external pressure from Russia? If it seems likely that the

agreement would have been made regardless of the changing security political environment, it is difficult to argue that it represents a decision intended to stimulate or cope with external changes. However, several aspects indicate the opposite. First of all, the timing discussed above is a weighty argument that the agreement was a direct reaction to Russia's actions. Considering that the talks were *initiated* in April, it was not a pre-planned agreement that coincidentally was signed in 2014. Secondly, it seems highly implausible that Finland, with a persistent majority *against* NATO would allow this military alliance access to its territory unless it was regarded as necessary from a security political perspective. Thirdly, Finland chose to stay non-aligned for decades after the Soviet Union was dissolved. As this was a time when Russia was relatively weak, it seems like this was the preferred security political line when no pressure or threat existed in Finland's salient environment. If this had continued, it is difficult to see that Finland would have allowed the strongest military alliance in the world access to its territory for military purposes, and in addition provide substantial support. Although counterfactual questions are difficult to answer in absolute terms, it seems more compelling that the answer to the question above is *no* than *yes*.

The MoU with NATO thus seems to be a way to cope with the external changes, and is consequently directly related to the pressure that emerged after Russia's annexation of Crimea. It therefore seems accurate to label this security political agreement with NATO as adaptive behaviour, and also to establish a causal connection between the pressure detected in conjunction with the discussion of the first condition and this specific element of adaptation.

5.2 The European Union (EU)

On the one hand, the slow and difficult development of the security policy in the EU during the two decades prior to Russia's annexation of Crimea, which was emphasized in the background chapter, decreases the probability that any substantial development was made during the relatively short period under analysis. On the other hand, the fact that this was a rather underdeveloped policy field in March 2014 can also be said to increase the probability that new elements were added to the cooperation during the following years. As one of only six EU-members without an additional NATO-membership (Claes & Førland, 2010, p. 163), it is also plausible that Finland was the initiator for such development. A potential element of adaptive behaviour would thus have been a specific Finnish EU-initiative, intended to increase the security of Finland, which in turn led to a specific decision within the EU.

In April 2015 the *European Agenda on Security* was launched, but as its title reveals

this was an agenda with a list of priorities, rather than specific measures (European Commission, 2015). In addition, these priorities were terrorism, organised crime and cybercrime (European Commission, 2015, p. 2), and are therefore difficult to directly relate to the increased pressure in Finland's salient environment. In November 2016 the *European Defence Action Plan* was initiated, with the idea of a *European Defence Fund* as one of its main components (European Commission, 2016a). Despite specific ideas intended to strengthen EU's security- and defence policy, these were nothing more than plans, which were intended to be discussed further before they potentially could lead to specific measures. As the focus was on the financial aspects of EU's security- and defence policy, this is also difficult to directly relate to the external pressure from Russia. However, a development that seems to be more linked to Russia's actions, was the increased focus on a joint defence against hybrid threats. As Finland was one of the proponents for this development, it will be discussed in more detail below as a potential element of adaptive behaviour

5.2.1 Joint defence against hybrid threats

Russia's warfare in Ukraine was quickly characterized as hybrid. In hybrid warfare, conventional and irregular tactics are combined, and the distinction between war and peace is often blurred (Wijk, 2012, p. 358). Such warfare is thus not always easy to detect and in turn avert. Finland's President Sauli Niinistö therefore suggested a common defence against hybrid warfare as a specific development target at an EU-meeting in Brussels in January 2015 (Tasavallan presidentin kanslia, 2015). More generally, he called for the prioritization of security in the EU (Tasavallan presidentin kanslia, 2015). These comments highlight Finland's willingness to develop this policy area, and that Finland was an initiator to the specific focus on hybrid threats. Niinistö also expressed his concern with Russia's aggressive behaviour, and the deteriorated relationship between Russia and the EU (Tasavallan presidentin kanslia, 2015). This seems to indicate that the specific initiative regarding hybrid warfare was linked to an increased sense of pressure from Russia.

The next step is to consider whether the initiative led to any actual development that can be labelled as an element of adaptation. The first indication that Niinistö's initiative was acted upon came in May 2015, as the *Council conclusions on CSDP* stated that the High Representative and the Commission should prepare a list of proposed actions by the end of the year (Council of the European Union, 2015, p. 3). Although somewhat delayed, a *Joint Framework on countering hybrid threats* was released in April 2016 (European Commission,

2016b). This document proposed several actions, aimed at raising awareness and building resilience against hybrid threats, and also to increase the cooperation with NATO (European Commission, 2016b). Still, these were merely suggestions on how the joint defence against hybrid threats could potentially be developed, and not any actual development. However, these documents at least indicated that the process was in motion. The proposals were in turn dispatched to the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union.

The Council responded in a positive manner to the drafted framework, and in turn invited the European Defence Agency and relevant Council instances to "[...] examine, in a timely and coherent manner, the proposed actions [...]" (Council of the European Union, 2016). It also stated that a new report from the Commission and the High Representative should be provided by July 2017 (Council of the European Union, 2016). In other words, due to the inertia within the EU, Finland's early initiative did not lead to any specific development. For instance, one of the main proposals in the framework was to establish centres specifically intended to increase Member States resistance against hybrid threats (European Commission, 2016b, p. 5). In September 2016 Prime Minister Juha Sipilä stated that Finland was determined to establish such a hybrid expertise centre, but that support from other EU countries was needed for this to become a reality (Nurmi, 2016a). The establishment of such a multinational security- and defence centre in Finland could potentially have been regarded as a specific measure intended to better cope with external changes, and thus possibly be labelled as adaptive behaviour. However, without any joint decision from the EU, such plans were not realized.

The conclusion to this section therefore has to be that no adaptive behaviour can be detected in Finland's security- and defence political relationship with the EU during the period under analysis.

5.3 Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFCO)

The development of NORDEFCO between 2009 and 2014 was considered gradual and cautious within specified areas of cooperation, as presented in the background chapter. The annual reports from the period under analysis highlight that this fundamental structure was continued, and that cooperation within these cooperation areas was developed even further (NORDEFCO, 2015; NORDEFCO, 2016a; NORDEFCO, 2017). All three reports address the changing security political situation, either by directly referring to Russia's actions (NORDEFCO, 2015, p. 10; NORDEFCO, 2016a, p. 32), or indirectly as regional security

challenges in the Baltic Sea area (NORDEFCO, 2017, p. 5). Considering the geographical location of the participating countries in this collaboration, it is not surprising that Russia was in the spotlight during the period under analysis. However, the question is whether any specific decision or agreement can be regarded as something more than natural and gradual progress, and therefore be linked to the perceived pressure from Russia.

The annual achievements should indeed primarily be regarded as a natural and gradual deepening of the cooperation. For instance all three reports emphasized increased security political dialogue as a main achievement in the preceding year (NORDEFCO, 2015, p. 10; NORDEFCO, 2016a, p. 7; NORDEFCO, 2017, p. 8). Although this certainly is an important aspect of security- and defence political cooperation, it is difficult to regard as any significant development or potential adaptive behaviour. However, one joint agreement seems to represent a significant supplement to the cooperation, and also to be closely related to the changing security political environment in the area, namely the *Easy Access Agreement* (Forsvarsministeriet, 2016). Through this agreement, the Nordic countries facilitated use of each other's airspace, territorial waters and land areas for military purposes (Forsvarsministeriet, 2016). This may thus have been a decision intended to better cope with the external pressure from Russia. It will therefore be discussed in more detail below as a potential element of adaptive behaviour.

5.3.1 Easy Access Agreement

The *Easy Access Agreement*, which has also been referred to as an MoU, was signed by the five Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) at a meeting between the Nordic Ministers of Defence in Copenhagen on 9 November 2016 (NORDEFCO, 2016b). The purpose of the agreement was to establish a so-called *easy access framework* for the Nordic countries (Forsvarsministeriet, 2016, p. 3). As presented in a joint statement by the Nordic Ministers of Defence, this was driven by a strong desire to "[...] ensure unprecedented access for the Nordic countries to each other's territories in all domains, be it air, land or maritime." (NORDEFCO, 2016b, p. 1). The idea was thus to make the comprehensive multinational cooperation in NORDEFCO considerably more flexible by facilitating use of each other's airspace, territorial waters and land areas. The annual report thus regarded the signing of this agreement as a key priority in the preceding year (NORDEFCO, 2017, p. 10). With fewer administrative procedures the cooperation would also become more efficient. The annual report consequently highlighted that the *Easy Access Agreement* served as a response

to "[...] the shared need to increase our ability to move and operate effectively and rapidly in our region – and with fewer resources." (NORDEFCO, 2017, p. 3). It was thus intended to increase the mobility, and at the same time reduce the costs of military cooperation between the Nordic countries.

An interesting aspect in the joint statement presented above is that the access was referred to as *unprecedented,* which can be defined as "never having happened or existed in the past" (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.-b). This might seem peculiar considering that the Nordic countries had previously cooperated on each other's territory, as e.g. in conjunction with the *Cold Response*-exercise in northern Norway in 2014 (NORDEFCO, 2015, p. 11). However, it seems to be a major difference between granting access in conjunction with individual pre-planned military exercises, and the type of access that the present agreement provided, which therefore seems accurate to label as *unprecedented*. In other words, the Nordic Ministers of Defence in this way regarded the *Easy Access Agreement* as adding a fundamentally new element to the cooperation. This indicates that the agreement was not just another small step in the gradual and natural deepening of the cooperation, but rather represented a substantial development in the security- and defence political collaboration between the participating countries in NORDEFCO.

Even though the agreement seems to indicate a significant supplement to the cooperation, it is not necessarily related to the increased sense of external pressure from Russia. The counterfactual question should therefore be considered once again. If it seems compelling that the *Easy Access Agreement* would have been signed regardless of the pressure, it may not be classified as a coping mechanism, and thus not as an element of adaptive behaviour. The fact that it was signed more than two and a half years after Russia's annexation of Crimea indicates a weak connection between the two incidents. Unlike the MoU with NATO, it was thus not initiated immediately after the annexation. However, the discussion of the first condition revealed that the pressure persisted, even at the end of the period under analysis. The *Easy Access Agreement* may therefore still be connected to the external pressure in the aftermath of the annexation. The joint statement that was made to announce the agreement seems to indicate that this was the case: "In light of the worsened security situation in our region, increased cooperation within NORDEFCO has become even more important." (NORDEFCO, 2016b, p. 1). The deepening of the cooperation was thus specifically linked to the deteriorated security political situation in the area.

Furthermore, the Nordic Ministers of Defence continued by stating that:

> The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding is a clear example of the value the Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFCO) brings to the Nordic countries in our joint effort to contribute to stability, peace and security in our neighborhood. (NORDEFCO, 2016b, p. 1).

The *Easy Access Agreement*, or MoU as it is referred to above, was thus regarded as a specific measure intended to improve the worsened security situation in the area. This implies that the decision was made as a reaction to external changes, which in turn indicates that it would not have been signed in a less tense situation. With persistent pressure and a deteriorated security situation however, this was regarded as necessary. It therefore seems unlikely that the agreement would have been signed regardless of the pressure from Russia.

The discussion above indicates that the *Easy Access Agreement* added a new dimension to the Nordic cooperation, and that it was intended to make it easier for Finland, as well as the other Nordic countries, to cope with the external changes at the time. It therefore seems accurate to label the agreement as an element of adaptive behaviour. Similarly, a causal connection may be established between the pressure that was detected in conjunction with the discussion of the first condition, and this specific adaptive measure.

5.4 Sweden

The bilateral security relationship with Sweden developed gradually in the two decades prior to Russia's annexation of Crimea, but included few specific bilateral agreements, as concluded earlier. Considering the many similarities between Finland and Sweden, e.g. in terms of geographical location and lack of NATO-membership, this may well be a security political relationship which was deepened and improved in the new security environment which emerged after 18 March 2014. The question for the following is whether this included any specific bilateral decision or agreement, which potentially may be considered an adaptive measure.

On 6 May 2014 an *Action Plan for Deepened Defence Cooperation between Sweden and Finland* was signed (Puolustusministeriö, 2014b). A plan launched less than two months after the annexation, with the ambition of improving the security of the two countries, may well be a response to the increased pressure in the area. However, it was primarily calling for the *exploration of the possibilities* to improve cooperation within different areas of the military, communications, personnel exchange and joint studies (Puolustusministeriö, 2014b,

p. 1-2). In other words, it only called for more information on how the cooperation could be made more comprehensive, and may therefore not be discussed as a potential adaptive measure *per se*. In much the same way as with the EU-discussion above, it is in turn interesting to consider whether early plans and initiatives led to any actual decisions.

Salonius-Pasternak (2014a) analysed this bilateral relationship in a research article in December 2014 where he depicted two diverging paths for the future development of the cooperation. The first is what he called *Momentum-driven limited cooperation* (Salonius-Pasternak, 2014a, p. 6). Despite political support for deeper bilateral cooperation, the lack of a strategic vision would make the cooperation driven by momentum, and hence be limited. The development would thus consist of several small steps within the established framework (Salonius-Pasternak, 2014a, p. 6-7). The second potential path is labelled *Defence Alliance Finland-Sweden*, where the cooperation would become considerably deeper, and in turn develop into a more binding defence alliance (Salonius-Pastenak, 2014a, p. 7). A poll published in March 2014 revealed that the majority of the Finnish population (54%) supported such a bilateral military alliance (Rytkönen, 2014). It is therefore interesting to consider whether the development in the subsequent two years resembled any of these two paths.

Given that the security situation in the area would remain unstable and difficult to predict, the *Momentum-driven limited cooperation*-path was considered the more plausible of the two (Salonius-Pasternak, 2014a, p. 7). Considering that the external pressure and instability in the area seemed to persist through the whole period under analysis, it therefore seems more likely that this path fits the actual development. The so-called *Final reports on deepened defence cooperation between Finland and Sweden* from January 2015 may thus provide some answers on how the future development was intended (Puolustusministeriö, 2015). Although the *Report by the Finnish Defence Forces and the Swedish Armed Forces* presented various opportunities for the deepening of the cooperation (Puolustusministeriö, 2015, p. 2-9), it seems evident that these may be regarded as small steps within the existing framework, and not major leaps towards a defence alliance. This is substantiated by the fact that the latter was not mentioned in the report at all, despite political discussion on the issue, as well as popular support for such an alliance. It is also worth noting that the intention of the report was to "[...] present possibilities for deepened defence cooperation between Finland and Sweden." (Puolustusministeriö, 2015, p. 2). The stipulations in the report were thus only suggestions for how the cooperation might potentially develop, and therefore essentially the results of a study rather than any actual decision or agreement.

At first glance the *Report from the Finnish Ministry of Defence and the Swedish Ministry of Defence* (Puolustusministeriö, 2015, p. 10-11) seemed to present something more than merely suggestions, as it claimed that specific *actions* had been initiated. However, these so-called actions were in fact *aims* to establish secure connections, to revitalize the personnel exchange programme between the Ministries of Defence during 2015, and a desire for closer cooperation on security- and defence related studies (Puolustusministeriö, 2015, p. 9). It therefore seems evident that the report did not present any actual development. It is nevertheless difficult to consider more secure connections, personnel exchange and joint studies as any substantial development. The two reports, which constituted the framework for the future deepening of the defence cooperation with Sweden, thus seem to fit the first of Salonius-Pasternak's (2014a) predicted paths, where development would be based on several small steps. Although the bilateral cooperation between Finland and Sweden was among the main issues at the subsequent security- and defence political discussions at Kultaranta, which was even attended by Sweden's Prime Minister Stefan Löfven in 2016 (Tasavallan presidentin kanslia, 2016), it did not lead to any significant changes to the cooperation.

The security- and defence political report from 2016 however, created some uncertainty on whether the bilateral cooperation was developing into a defence alliance. This stated that the foreign- and security political cooperation with Sweden would be promoted "[...] ilman rajoitteita." [without any limitations.] (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2016, p. 23). Prime Minister Juha Sipilä was confronted with this part of the report, but refuted the idea that this implied a future military alliance with Sweden (Fresnes, 2016). Interestingly, Salonius-Pasternak noted in his future predictions in December 2014 that several small steps along the *momentum-driven limited cooperation*-path may lead to a *de facto* defence alliance in the long run, as it increasingly creates a sense of mutual commitment to defend each other (Salonius-Pasternak, 2014a, p. 7). Although this may well be an underlying aspect of the development of Finland's security political cooperation with Sweden, it cannot be regarded as a specific decision, which in turn could have been discussed as a potential adaptive measure.

As no significant supplement or change to the bilateral security- and defence political relationship between Finland and Sweden can be detected during the period under analysis, the conclusion to this section must be that no adaptive measures were initiated, despite the early initiatives to deepen the cooperation.

5.5 The United Kingdom (UK)

On 9 July 2016, Finland and the UK agreed on a so-called *Defence Protocol*, which was signed by Defence Minister Jussi Niinistö and his British counterpart Michael Fallon in conjunction with NATO's summit in Warsaw (Puolustusministeriö, 2016d). Prior to this decision, the two countries had not cooperated bilaterally on security- and defence related issues, which is substantiated by the absence of any reference to this relationship in either the security- and defence political report from 2012 (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2012), or the equivalent assessment from June 2016 (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2016). In other words, the *Defence Protocol* initiated the bilateral security political relationship between Finland and the UK, which indicates that it represented a significant new element to the cooperation. This will therefore be discussed in more detail below as a potential element of adaptive behaviour.

5.5.1 Defence Protocol

The *Defence Protocol* was intended as a framework for cooperation on security- and defence related issues, with particular focus on crisis management, information sharing, standardization, education, training and exercises (Puolustusministeriö, 2016d). Apart from these general guidelines, which were published in a press release by the Ministry of Defence, very little information about specific stipulations in the agreement has become publicly available. Defence Minister Jussi Niinistö stated that he could not reveal more details about the agreement, as these constituted classified information (Nurmi, 2016b). This secrecy indicates that the agreement contained important elements that had an effect on Finland's security policy. This is substantiated by his remark that Finland and the UK became close partners in terms of defence political cooperation as the *Defence Protocol* was signed (Nurmi, 2016b). Considering that the foreign- and security political report, which was published just a few weeks earlier, did not mention any bilateral defence cooperation with the UK, the close partnership that Niinistö described indicates that the agreement represented a substantial change in Finland's security policy.

Judging by the scarce material that is publicly available, it is somewhat challenging to determine whether the *Defence Protocol* really did create a close collaboration on defence issues between the two countries, or whether this was Defence Minister Niinistö's exaggerated interpretation of the effects of the agreement. Although additional details were not presented, the previously mentioned press release from the Ministry of Defence specified that the focus areas that were listed represented general guidelines that formed the basis for the future

development of the defence cooperation (Puolustusministeriö, 2016d). In other words, this bilateral defence cooperation was intended to be dynamic, and thus become increasingly more comprehensive. In conjunction with Defence Minister Niinistö's comment on classified information, he urged to look at how the equivalent bilateral defence cooperation between Sweden and the UK had evolved, in order to better understand Finland's intentions with the cooperation (Nurmi, 2016b). Sweden landed a similar agreement with the UK in conjunction with the NATO-summit in Wales in September 2014 (Nurmi, 2016b). Their bilateral collaboration has since then developed, which was most recently seen in the cooperation program signed on 11 June 2016, with 50 specific points on increased defence cooperation, including the ability to fight together if needed (Regeringskansliet, 2016). If this was Finland's intention as well, it seems accurate to describe this initial agreement as the beginning of close bilateral defence collaboration.

Even though Defence Minister Niinistö attributed considerable weight to the *Defence Protocol* through his comments discussed above, he also made a statement that was rather contradictory to these. After the agreement was made, Niinistö received heavy criticism by Antti Kaikkonen, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, for failing to inform them prior to it's signing (Laakso, 2016). Niinistö's response was that he did not consider the *Defence Protocol* important enough to inform the Foreign Affairs Committee in advance (Laakso, 2016). This does not seem to be in line with the close defence partnership that the agreement presumably created. However, the response may be more personal, as subjecting to such harsh criticism could have damaged his political career. By toning down the significance of the agreement, the alleged mistake also became smaller. Other comments seem to be more in line with his claim that the agreement was significant, e.g. when he stated that the agreement was intended to increase stability and send a clear message to the region that Finland was increasing its military cooperation with the West (Nurmi, 2016b).

Overall, Niinistö's comments and the available content seem to indicate that the *Defence Protocol* was a significant new element in Finland's security policy, especially as this bilateral security relationship started from scratch in July 2016. Still, it was not necessarily a measure that was instigated due to external pressure from Russia. In line with the counterfactual test, it may be argued that it would have been signed regardless of the increased sense of pressure. If this seems compelling, it should not be characterized as adaptive behaviour. However, several aspects indicate that this agreement was linked to the deteriorated security political situation at the time. With previous Russian attempts at interfering in Finland's internal affairs in mind, it seems like the previously mentioned

comment by Defence Minister Niinistö, that the *Defence Protocol* was intended as a message to the area that Finland was increasing its western cooperation (Nurmi, 2016b), was a direct response to this pressure. Niinistö thus seemed to imply that Finland would not let Russia dictate its security policy, and wanted to show this by signing a bilateral defence agreement with one of the strongest military powers in the West. Considering that this was also intended to increase stability (Nurmi, 2016b), it seems evident that it was intended to improve the deteriorated security situation at the time. The agreement therefore seems to be closely related to Russia's recent actions and behaviour, and the subsequent pressure that emerged.

Although the agreement had been planned since 2015 (Nurmi, 2016b), there are no indications that it was discussed prior to the annexation of Crimea. This substantiates the impression above that the decision was closely connected to the new security situation that emerged in the aftermath of this incident. Still, it might seem peculiar that Finland did not pursue this defence deal with the UK already in 2014. A plausible explanation for this is that Finland relied on the aforementioned *mutual assistance clause* in the EU, and therefore did not consider a separate agreement with the UK as necessary. The Conservative Party in the UK pledged immediately after winning the general election in May 2015 that a referendum on UK's membership in the EU would be held (BBC, 2015a). With the potential of the UK leaving the EU, and consequently its obligations for assistance, it is not surprising that bilateral negotiations on defence cooperation between Finland and the UK were initiated later that year. The referendum was held on 23 June 2016, where a slight majority voted to leave the Union (BBC, 2016b). Finland's Defence Minister Jussi Niinistö stated in an interview the following day that the so called *Brexit* would be a big blow to EU's common security and defence policy, as the organisation in his way would loose one of its strongest military powers (Orjala, 2016). A few weeks later, the bilateral *Defence Protocol* was signed. In other words, it seems as the combination of a deteriorated security situation and the potential for *Brexit* made this a necessary decision to better cope with the increased external pressure.

The new bilateral security political relationship with the UK, which was instigated through this *Defence Protocol*, should thus be regarded as adaptive behaviour. The causal connection between the increased pressure from Russia detected in the first condition, and this element of adaptation should thus also be regarded as present.

5.6 The United States (US)

Unlike the bilateral security- and defence political cooperation with the UK, the equivalent relationship between Finland and the US had progressively developed during the two decades prior to Russia's annexation of Crimea, as presented in chapter two. The foreign- and security political report from June 2016 continued to highlight the importance of this bilateral relationship (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2016, p. 24). It also stated that the bilateral security- and defence political cooperation was intended to become even closer, and thus strengthen Finland's national defence capabilities (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2016, p. 24). This intention was followed up on 7 October 2016, as Defence Minister Jussi Niinistö and Deputy Secretary of Defence Robert Work signed a so-called Statement of Intent (SoI) on bilateral defence cooperation in Helsinki (Puolustusministeriö, 2016e). Considering that the previous cooperation primarily had been related to defence materiel and information sharing, it is interesting to analyse whether this agreement added new elements to this bilateral collaboration. It will therefore be discussed in more detail below as a potential element of adaptive behaviour.

5.6.1 Statement of Intent (SoI)

The explicitly stated aim of the SoI indicates that it was not limited to the further development of already established areas of cooperation. The aim was to make the cooperation more comprehensive "[...] by building on current cooperative activities, and implementing new initiatives to work together effectively and efficiently." (Puolustusministeriö, 2016e, p. 1). This combination is clearly seen in the list of objectives that follows, and the subsequent list of means to achieve these. Although several objectives can be regarded as a continuation of previous collaboration, two objectives seemed to include new elements as well: "Enhancing defense capability, readiness, and interoperability" (Puolustusministeriö, 2016e, p. 2), and "Strengthening our ability to work together through training and exercises" (Puolustusministeriö, 2016e, p. 2). One of the specific means was consequently to "Increase joint training and exercises" (Puolustusministeriö, 2016e, p. 2). At first glance, this might not seem to represent anything new, as *increase* implies a higher frequency of something that had already occurred to some extent. Although the two countries had participated jointly in multinational military exercises before, as e.g. the NATO-exercise BALTOPS 2016 (Merivoimat, n.d.), its inclusion in this bilateral agreement indicated that this would also occur bilaterally. Compared to the previous focus on procurement of defence materiel and

information sharing, the SoI thus seemed to add a more practical dimension to the collaboration, as a focus on *interoperability* and *ability to work together* was included. The agreement thus seemed to add new elements to this bilateral relationship.

Several aspects substantiate the impression that the agreement represented a significant development in Finland's security political relationship with the US. First of all, the previously mentioned Russian airspace violations in conjunction with the signing of this agreement seem to indicate that the agreement was regarded as important. Considering that these were the only airspace violations during 2016, it seems compelling to argue that they represented discontent with Finland's decision to strengthen its bilateral cooperation with the US. If the SoI had been regarded as nothing more than a minor adjustment to the existing cooperation, it seems unlikely that such a harsh reaction from Russia would have followed. The airspace violations are thus indications that the agreement was a substantial deepening of the bilateral relationship. Secondly, several news sites presented this SoI as a defence- or security pact (Bertuca, 2016; Rettman, 2016; Tanner, 2016). These wordings indicate that it was interpreted as something more than just a statement that presented an intention, and also that it represented a new element in the increasingly comprehensive bilateral cooperation.

A third aspect indicating that the agreement was significant was Finland's desire to finalize it rapidly. Defence Minister Jussi Niinistö stated in August that he wanted to finalize the deal before the US administration would change after the election in November, although diplomatically adding his certainty that the cooperation between the two countries would continue with either of the two candidates (Borger, 2016). Any change of administration represents uncertainty to an on-going process, but this may have been increased by the potential for Donald J. Trump as the next American President. Trump had stated a few weeks earlier that he would not guarantee US military assistance to other NATO-countries if they would not contribute more to the alliance (Sanger & Haberman, 2016). Like many of the European NATO-members, Finland's military expenditure was well below the recommended threshold in NATO of 2% of GDP (World Bank, n.d.). It could therefore have been difficult to agree on a bilateral defence agreement between these two countries if stricter requirements to a more equal transatlantic burden sharing would have been initiated. It may therefore have been crucial to get the document signed already on 7 October 2016. This urgency thus indicates that the agreement was of great importance for Finland, which is also substantiated by the arranging of a meeting between Deputy Secretary of Defence Robert Work and President Sauli Niinistö to discuss the implementation of the different stipulations in the agreement (U.S. Embassy in Finland, 2016).

Despite the impression above it is not necessarily a connection between the increased external pressure and this particular agreement. Is it plausible that the SoI would have been signed even without this pressure? Considering that this bilateral relationship had developed for two decades prior to Russia's annexation of Crimea, one could argue that the agreement merely represented a continuation of this progressive collaboration. With this logic it should just be regarded as a natural next step in an already dynamic cooperation, and thus an agreement that would have been signed regardless of the increased sense of pressure. However, several aspects indicate that it was a reaction to the deteriorated security situation following Russia's actions. First of all, the agreement stated that "[...] U.S. presence in and around the Baltic Sea undergirds stability in the region, and creates opportunities to increase defense cooperation between our countries." (Puolustusministeriö, 2016e, p. 1). The presence of American military forces in the area, which was due to the weakened security situation in the aftermath of Russia's annexation of Crimea, was thus presented as a facilitating factor for a more comprehensive bilateral cooperation. Without the external pressure, and in turn the U.S. presence, it therefore seems unlikely that the new more practical aspects of the cooperation would have been included. This implies that the agreement was closely related to the external changes at the time.

Secondly, several news sites linked the agreement to Finland's concern regarding Russia's activities and actions in the region (Borger, 2016; Rettman, 2016; Tanner, 2016). With the discussion of the first condition in mind it seems accurate to argue that such a concern existed at the time, and that deeper cooperation with the strongest military power in the world therefore was desirable. This seems to be in line with the official justification for increased cooperation with the US, which was to increase Finland's capability to defend itself (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2016, p. 24). Thirdly, the two Russian airspace violations indicate that they regarded the SoI as a measure that was directed at Russia. Considering that the bilateral relationship between Finland and the US had developed for decades without such severe attempts at interfering in the development, it seems to indicate that it was regarded as something out of the ordinary, which in turn substantiates the impression that it was related to the tense situation at the time.

The discussion above thus indicates that the SoI was a substantial deepening of the cooperation, which was regarded as necessary to cope with the external changes. It should therefore be labelled adaptive behaviour. The causal connection between the external pressure and this specific element of adaptation can in turn be established.

5.7 Continuous toleration of infringements?

Considering that various elements of pressure from Russia were discussed in conjunction with the first condition, it seems appropriate to use this as a basis to detect potential infringements. For instance, the attempts to interfere in Finland's internal affairs through severe statements may potentially be labelled infringements. These were also seemingly tolerated, as they did not create any official reactions from Finland. However, only a few statements from official Russian representatives could be detected during the period under analysis. It is therefore difficult to argue that they were *continuously* tolerated. However, the airspace violations were severe actions that were more frequently repeated. Considering that territorial control is a universal regime value, it seems accurate to classify them as infringements on Finland's declared values. The severity of such actions was e.g. seen when a Russian fighter jet was immediately shot down when crossing into Turkish airspace on 24 November 2015 (BBC, 2015b). Although this was considered an overreaction, it highlights the seriousness of such incidents. Overall, there were as much as eight separate Russian violations of Finnish airspace during the period under analysis. These were thus continuously recurring severe infringements by Russia, which in turn should be regarded as continuously tolerated by Finland if they did not lead to any specific reactions. It is therefore interesting to analyse how Finland handled these infringements, and what kind of reactions they generated.

The eight airspace violations were rather similar, both in terms of location and duration. All except one occurred south of Porvoo, east of Helsinki, and all violations were rapidly averted. The majority of these airspace violations happened during 2014, as two occurred in May (Rajavartiolaitos, 2014a), as well as three during one week in August (Rajavartiolaitos, 2014b; Rajavartiolaitos, 2014c). This was continued in 2015, with a new incident in June (Rajavartiolaitos, 2015a). In addition, an unidentified helicopter entered Finnish airspace further east in December (Rajavartiolaitos, 2015b). Considering that this was never identified as Russian, it will not be discussed in the present analysis. Still, it seems very likely that this was an additional airspace violation by Russia as the helicopter entered from Russian airspace, and returned the same way (Rajavartiolaitos, 2015b). In 2016, two additional airspace violations occurred in October (Rajavartiolaitos, 2016). The airspace violations were thus recurring infringements, which characterized the period under analysis.

In the same way as the infringements were rather similar, the reactions to them also share several common features. None of the eight Russian aircrafts suffered the same fate when crossing into Finland as the one mentioned above which was shot down in Turkey. More generally, none of the airspace violations were met with violent means. Although

Finnish Hornet fighter jets were activated in conjunction with several of these incidents, their purpose was to identify the aircrafts through photo recognition, and in turn make sure that they changed their course out of Finnish airspace (Huhtanen, 2016). Considering their short duration, and the absence of escalation, this seems to have been a successful way to handle the immediate threat that the individual airspace violations created. If Finland had chosen the same reaction as Turkey, the potential for escalation would have increased. Considering the tense situation in the area, and the asymmetrical power relationship between Russia and Finland, it is not surprising that this option was avoided. It is therefore more interesting to consider what kind of reactions these airspace violations created after they were initially averted. Considering that the infringement was repeated eight times during the relatively short period under analysis, it does not seem as Russia was given any incentives to stop this behaviour, which in turn indicates a limited or non-existent reaction from Finland. The similarity of the recurring infringements indicates that this was regarded as a rather risk free action by Russia, which in turn substantiates the impression of lenient reactions by Finland.

An aspect that further substantiates the impression above is the manner in which President Sauli Niinistö, who also acts as the commander-in-chief of the Finnish Defence Forces, has referred to these infringements after they occurred. On several occasions he has rather attempted to tone down their significance, as in conjunction with the airspace violations on 20 May 2014, which he referred to as insignificant (YLE, 2014c). Following the latest airspace violations on 6 October 2016 he claimed that the incidents should not be considered as threats, and claimed that they rather represented indifference from Russia (Impiö & Taipale, 2016). He also claimed that the airspace violations had nothing to do with the fact that US Deputy Secretary of Defence Robert Work was in Helsinki at the time to sign the bilateral defence agreement between Finland and the US (Impiö & Taipale, 2016). Still, it seems too coincidental that the only airspace violations in 2016 occurred at the same time as the signing of this important military agreement, without any connection between the events. Huhtanen (2016) shares this view, and also claims more generally that Russia is using airspace violations as means of pressure. This is substantiated by the previously argued connection between the decision to sign the MoU with NATO on 22 August 2014, and the three airspace violations that followed within a week. It therefore seems more compelling that these infringements represented harsh reactions to specific events, than indifference as Niinistö claimed.

Although Niinistö's comments were not persuasive, they seem to represent a deliberate tactic of toning down the significance of the airspace violations, in order to get more leeway

in how to respond. In the tense security political environment that existed at the time, a violent or sanction based reaction would probably not have been sensible, as this could have escalated into a military conflict. In other words, it may have been easier to avoid harsh reactions when otherwise serious infringements were to some extent downplayed. Although this tactic potentially increased the probability that the same infringement would be repeated, it made it less likely to escalate into a more severe conflict. Compared to the airspace violation in Turkey, it seems evident that Turkey's way of handling the infringement was more risky regarding the potential escalation, but at the same time more effective in preventing the violation from recurring. In other words, the infringement was not repeated by Russia due to the lack of toleration by Turkey. In Finland however, the airspace violations did not have serious consequences for Russia, and were in turn continuously repeated. It therefore seems accurate to describe this way of handling the infringements as continuous toleration, which thus served as a concession.

One might of course argue that Finland did *not* tolerate these infringements, as the Russian planes were successfully and swiftly chased out of Finnish airspace. Considering that territorial control is a universal regime value, this initial reaction seems obvious. It therefore seems more accurate to evaluate whether they were tolerated based on the subsequent reaction, which in the case of Finland seems to have been absent. Considering the tense security political situation in the area, and the asymmetrical power relationship between the two countries, toleration may have been the best option available. Even so, such continuous toleration of infringements should be regarded as a way to cope with the increased sense of pressure. It therefore seems accurate to conclude that Finland applied the continuous toleration of infringements as a specific means of adaptation during the period under analysis.

5.8 Summary of findings regarding the second and third conditions

The discussion above indicates that Finland adapted its security policy during the period under analysis in order to cope with the external pressure that emerged in the aftermath of Russia's annexation of Crimea. The MoU with NATO, the *Easy Access Agreement* in NORDEFCO, the *Defence Protocol* with the UK and the SoI with the US all represent changes in the security policy. Considering that it did not seem likely that these agreements would have been entered into without the increased external pressure, they can be regarded as attempts to cope with external changes, and should therefore be labelled as elements of adaptive behaviour. Despite some initiatives within the EU and in the bilateral relationship

with Sweden, these did not amount to any specific decisions or agreements during the period under analysis, which could have been discussed as potential adaptive behaviour. However, the discussion of the recurring Russian airspace violations detected a continuous toleration of infringements as a specific means of adaptation. The conclusion to this chapter is therefore that the condition was met, both if Mouritzen's second and third conditions are merged into one condition representing adaptive measures, and if considered separately. In addition, the causal connection from the first condition should be regarded as present, as the various elements of adaptive behaviour are, per definition, linked to the increased external pressure. In other words, they could be labelled adaptive measures *because* they could be linked to the changes in Finland's salient environment. A causal link between cause and action in this potential process can thus also be established.

6 To Preserve and Protect?

The final condition is addressing the effect that the adaptive behaviour is intended to have. The MoU with NATO, the *Easy Access Agreement* in NORDEFCO, the *Defence Protocol* with the UK, the SoI with the US, as well as the continuous toleration of airspace violations, will therefore be discussed further in the present chapter. The purpose of this condition is to evaluate whether these adaptive measures were initiated in order to increase the probability of preserving core values, either by avoiding *negative sanctions* from the perceived threat (Type I), or by receiving *positive sanctions* from potential allies against this threat (Type II). Considering that the pressure from Finland's salient environment has been personified in a single actor (Russia), the two additional variations can be disregarded (Type III and Type IV). Even though both *direct adaptive acquiescence* (Type I) and *indirect adaptive acquiescence* (Type II) indicate the same intention, namely to preserve and protect core values, the means vary greatly. Each section below will thus be initiated with a brief discussion of which type seems most probable, as it will clarify whether the intended effect of the individual adaptive behaviour is to expect positive sanctions or to avoid negative sanctions.

6.1 Memorandum of Understanding with NATO

Considering that NATO is regarded as Russia's military counterpart in the West, and the MoU invited this military alliance to get considerably more involved in Finland, it seems evident that this adaptive behaviour was *not* an element of *direct adaptive acquiescence* (Type I). However, it seems plausible that it may fit the second variation of adaptive acquiescence, as the permission was given to a potential ally (NATO) in order to become more resistant against the presumed threat (Russia). In other words, it was not a concession given *directly* to Russia in order to better cope with the pressure, but potentially a concession which was *indirectly* related to the increased pressure from Russia. Mouritzen (1988, p. 64) exemplified this *indirect adaptive acquiescence* with how Denmark allowed US military presence on Greenland, with the expectation of support against the perceived threat from the Soviet Union. Similarly it seems probable that Finland was expecting a *positive sanction* in return from NATO, as NATO was allowed to use its territory and Finland agreed to assist these military operations. It is therefore interesting to analyse this agreement in more detail in order to reveal if it contained such positive protective sanctions, which in turn increased the probability for Finland to preserve its core values.

The most clear-cut example of a positive sanction in conjunction with this agreement

would have been a guarantee of military assistance. Both in a potential military conflict with Russia, and as an element of deterrence in order to avoid such escalation, it seems as such a guarantee could have increased the probability for Finland of preserving core values. However, considering that this would have been the "last piece of the puzzle" in Finland's cooperation with NATO, and consequently a *de facto* membership in the alliance, it could also have increased the probability of a harsh reaction from Russia. In other words, an explicitly stated guarantee of military assistance could have had the opposite effect, and thus put Finland's core values in more danger than before the initially positive sanction was offered. It is therefore not surprising that the agreement did not state any formal guarantee of military support (SopS, 82/2014). A possible solution to avoid the potential negative aspects of such a guarantee, but still reap its benefits, would have been to offer this positive sanction, but conceal it as classified information. As this is not possible to verify, it is more viable to consider whether the agreement increased the *probability* of military assistance, which would thus also serve as a positive sanction from NATO. Considering that this would have been a protective measure with little risk of aggravating Russia, it seems like the optimal positive sanction Finland could expect to gain from this agreement. The following will therefore discuss whether indications of an increased probability of military assistance can be detected.

First of all, some of the main elements from the previous discussion of the content of this agreement indicate that the probability of military assistance indeed increased. Prior to the signing of the MoU, NATO-forces were not allowed to operate in or through the territory of Finland. It therefore seems evident that the potential for military support from members of this military alliance increased as they were granted access to Finland for military purposes. In addition, the agreement seemed to indicate a sudden shift of focus in the cooperation between Finland and NATO, as the MoU introduced a defensive element in the collaboration, as NATO-forces were allowed *to* Finland. As previously argued, the cooperation consequently became more directed at the security of Finland. NATO's access to its territory and the increased focus on its security are thus two weighty arguments which indicate that the MoU increased Finland's chances of receiving military support from NATO.

An interesting aspect in the agreement is that Finland's role as *host nation*, and appurtenant obligation of *host nation support*, were specified to apply both during peaceful and more turbulent times (SopS, 82/2014, § 1.11). This indicates two very different settings, and in turn two different aspects of the cooperation. In peaceful times, it indicates that Finnish territory may be used e.g. to conduct joint military drills and exercises. Although this aspect of the cooperation is during times when Finland's core values are not directly threatened, it

seems evident that the collaboration is intended to prepare both Finland and NATO for less peaceful times. The stipulations in the agreement added a new element to this preparatory aspect of the cooperation, as it opened for the possibility of joint exercises in Finland as well, of which BALTOPS 2016, the first ever NATO-exercise launched from Finnish soil, was a good example of (Merivoimat, n.d.).

Still, if the role as *host nation* and obligation of *host nation support* had been limited to peacetime, it would have been difficult to argue that the MoU increased the probability of military assistance *per se.* However, the same commitments were specified to apply also in times of emergencies, crisis and conflict (SopS, 82/2014, § 1.11). As NATO in this way was allowed to use Finnish territory and guaranteed civil and military assistance from Finland if the tension in the area would escalate into a military conflict, it seems to imply a close cooperation between Finland and NATO also in more turbulent settings. This does not necessarily mean that NATO would get involved in the event of a conflict, and thus provide military support. However, it does seem like a clear indication that the probability of receiving military assistance from NATO increased. Wojchiech Lorenz, a senior researcher at the Polish Institute of International Affairs, seems to share this impression. He stated that the MoU "[...] opens way for the country to receive military assistance from western partners." (Lorenz, 2014, p. 2). In other words, it seems as the MoU facilitated the involvement of NATO in the event of a military conflict. Access to the strategically located Finnish territory thus seems to have been important for NATO, as the agreement made it considerably easier for the organisation to operate in the area. At the same time, it seems unlikely that Finland would have granted this access and offered to assist in military operations without the expectation of something in return.

Based on this continued discussion of the MoU, it therefore seems accurate to conclude that the permission was granted to a potential ally, from which Finland received a positive sanction in the form of an increased probability of military assistance, which in turn contributed to protect Finland's core values of territorial control and general autonomy against the perceived threat. It is therefore an element of *indirect adaptive acquiescence* (Type II). In this sense, Mouritzen's typology captures this aspect of adaptive acquiescence very well, as the acquiescence is indirectly related to the actor that initiated the adaptive behaviour in the first place. Without this typology, the adaptation would have been regarded as *not* acquiescent, as the concession was not provided to the perceived threat, although the adaptive behaviour clearly contains an element of acquiescence, even when given to a potential ally.

6.2 Easy Access Agreement in NORDEFCO

The *Easy Access Agreement* in NORDEFCO and the MoU with NATO share some interesting similarities. First of all, they both represented permissions to use Finnish territory for military purposes. Second of all, these agreements should both be regarded as concessions that were given to potential allies, as both NATO and NORDEFCO were presented as important for Finland in the last security- and defence political report before Russia's annexation of Crimea (Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2012, p. 10-11). With Mouritzen's typology in mind, it therefore seems more accurate to analyse the *Easy Access Agreement* in NORDEFCO as a potential element of *indirect adaptive acquiescence* (Type II), than as a concession given directly to the perceived threat, which thus would have indicated *direct adaptive acquiescence* (Type I). However, the *Easy Access Agreement* did not trigger a similar reaction from Russia as the MoU with NATO did. In other words, the agreement in NORDEFCO was not followed by severe infringements, e.g. in the form of airspace violations. Nevertheless, it is difficult to argue that it could potentially have been in line with Russia's interests. Considering the substantial difference between Nordic military forces and NATO-forces operating on Finnish soil, especially for Russia, the lack of a reaction to the NORDEFCO-agreement rather seems to indicate indifference. It therefore seems unlikely that the intention with the agreement was to avoid negative sanctions from Russia. It seems more probable that the intention was to receive positive sanctions from the other Nordic countries, which in turn would contribute to the protection of Finland's core values.

As in conjunction with the NATO-memorandum, the most obvious example of a positive sanction would have been a formal guarantee of military assistance between the Nordic countries. However, this was not explicitly stated in the *Easy Access Agreement* either (Forsvarsministeriet, 2016). The following discussion will therefore be another evaluation of whether the probability of receiving military assistance increased. Despite the lack of an explicit guarantee, it seems evident that access to each other's territory is a fundamental aspect of the ability to provide assistance. Considering that this permission was presented as unprecedented, it also implies that it was a largely new feature in the cooperation between the Nordic countries, as previously argued (NORDEFCO, 2016b). The *Easy Access Agreement* therefore seems to have facilitated at least the *possibility* of providing military assistance. Without easy access to each other's territory it seems to have been both more difficult and less probable that such assistance would have been provided. This is therefore an indication that the agreement increased the probability of receiving military assistance, which in turn served as a positive protective sanction in exchange for easier access to Finnish territory.

However, a weighty counterargument to the impression above is that the access was specified to be limited to peacetime (Forsvarsministeriet, 2016, p. 3). In other words, as opposed to the MoU with NATO, the *Easy Access Agreement* in NORDEFCO did not state that the same stipulations also applied during turbulent times. This implies that the easier access was only intended in conjunction with military training and exercises, and not during times when Finland's core values were threatened by conflict, crisis or emergencies. As argued in the continued discussion of the NATO-memorandum above, it would have been difficult to consider the agreement as increasing the probability of military assistance if it had been limited to peaceful periods. Consequently it is difficult to see that this agreement increased the probability of receiving military assistance from the other Nordic countries. Although it might represent a step towards assistance and access during times of crisis and conflict as well, the present agreement did not seem to make military assistance more plausible *per se*.

The continued discussion of the *Easy Access Agreement* in NORDEFCO thus indicated that the agreement did not represent an element of adaptive behaviour that increased the probability for Finland of preserving core values. Although it should be regarded as an adaptive measure that strengthened the Nordic collaboration in NORDEFCO, it did not seem to contain any expectations of positive protective sanctions from the other Nordic countries. It can therefore *not* be labelled as an element of *indirect adaptive acquiescence* (Type II) in line with Mouritzen's (1988, p. 64) typology.

6.3 Defence Protocol with the UK

The UK can be considered among the strongest military powers in NATO (Credit Suisse, 2015, p. 41). As previously argued, this military alliance can be regarded as Russia's military counterpart in the West. It therefore seems evident that a bilateral defence agreement with a major military power in NATO was not a concession given directly to the perceived threat (Russia). However, it is not unthinkable that Russia preferred bilateral *defence* agreements for Finland, as this may have increased Finland's sense of security, and thus made it less tempting to pursue membership in the increasingly *offensive* military alliance NATO. Based on the previously discussed Russian attempts to interfere in this security political decision it seems more important for Russia that Finland would not enter NATO. This is substantiated by the fact that the *Defence Protocol* with the UK did not receive a similar reaction from Russia as the MoU with NATO had done. However, such argumentation would be flawed, considering

that it in that case would have been the absence of NATO-membership, and not the initiation of a new defence partnership with a strong western military power, that potentially could have been regarded as directly in line with Russia's interest. It therefore seems accurate to argue that the *Defence Protocol* with the UK did not represent *direct adaptive acquiescence* (Type I). With the previously discussed comments by Defence Minister Niinistö in mind, where the agreement was presented as creating a close bilateral defence partnership with the UK (Nurmi, 2016b), it may still represent *indirect adaptive acquiescence* (Type II), as the adaptive behaviour was directed at a potential ally in order to better cope with the perceived threat. The question for the following analysis is whether the intention with the agreement was to receive a positive protective sanction from the UK, which in turn would increase the probability of preserving core values.

Although few details about the agreement was made publicly available, the previously mention press release from the Ministry of Defence did present some information about what the *Defence Protocol* did *not* include. In the press release it was emphasized that the agreement was not legally binding, and that it did not contain any obligations for a common defence (Puolustusministeriö, 2016d). A formal guarantee of military assistance as a positive protective sanction from the UK can therefore be ruled out. Considering the gradual and cautious development of the bilateral defence cooperation with both Sweden and the US discussed above, it would have been surprising if legally binding guarantees of military assistance would have been included in this initial defence political agreement with the UK. As with the MoU with NATO and the *Easy Access Agreement* in NORDEFCO, it is rather interesting to consider whether the probability of military assistance increased through the signing of this agreement.

On the one hand, it seems compelling to argue that the *Defence Protocol* increased this probability, as the bilateral defence political relationship was non-existent prior to the signing of this deal. In other words, the evolvement from no bilateral defence cooperation to what Defence Minister Niinistö referred to as close defence political partnership (Nurmi, 2016b), indicates that this security political measure increased the chances of receiving military support in the event of a military conflict. On the other hand, the novelty of the bilateral defence cooperation can also serve as an argument that the probability was *not* increased, as it seems unlikely that the initial introduction of a defence political relationship can serve as a basis for providing military assistance. This is substantiated by the specification in the press release that the agreement presented *guidelines* for the future development of the partnership (Puolustusministeriö, 2016d). As argued in the previous discussion of this *Defence Protocol*

with the UK, it seems more accurate to consider it as the *initiation* of a close defence political partnership, which is intended to become even closer. In time, this bilateral cooperation can thus become increasingly comprehensive, which may well increase the probability of military assistance. Still, it seems unlikely that the *Defence Protocol* contained any positive protective sanctions from the UK *per se*.

Compared to the development of Sweden's bilateral defence cooperation with the UK it seems unlikely that the equivalent agreement from 2014 increased Sweden's chances of receiving military assistance from the UK. However, the 50-point plan from 2016 may have increased this probability, as it contained more specific stipulations, and even included the possibility of fighting together (Regeringskansliet, 2016). As previously mentioned, the equivalent path was intended for the development of Finland's bilateral defence cooperation with the UK, as stated by Defence Minister Niinistö (Nurmi, 2016b). It therefore seems very likely that the *Defence Protocol* may lead to a similar specific follow-up plan for Finland, including an increased probability of receiving military assistance from the UK. The initial agreement however, cannot be argued to contain any positive protective sanctions.

The *Defence Protocol* did represent adaptive behaviour, as the initiation of a dynamic bilateral security political relationship with this major military power was regarded as important in order to cope with the increased external pressure. However, it did not represent *indirect adaptive acquiescence* (Type II), as the initial agreement did not contain any positive sanctions that could have increased the probability of military assistance and thus the preservation of core values.

6.4 Statement of Intent with the US

As both its strongest military power (Credit Suisse, 2015, p. 41), and its main financial contributor (NATO, 2017, p. 8), the US represents the core of NATO, Russia's western counterpart. It is therefore difficult to see that the intention of an agreement that made Finland's bilateral cooperation with the US even more comprehensive could have been to avoid negative sanctions from Russia. The two Russian airspace violations in conjunction with the signing is rather an indication that the probability of negative sanctions from the perceived threat increased. This negative reaction makes it even more difficult to argue that Russia might have preferred bilateral defence relationships for Finland instead of NATO-membership. The SoI with the US is therefore *not* an element of *direct adaptive acquiescence* (Type I). Considering that the bilateral security- and defence political cooperation between

Finland and the US had developed for two decades prior to Russia's annexation of Crimea, this agreement might represent *indirect adaptive acquiescence* (Type II), as the US may be regarded as a potential ally against the perceived threat (Russia). The following discussion will therefore evaluate whether the agreement contained positive protective sanctions, in the form of a guarantee of military assistance, or at least an increased probability of this.

Although the previous discussion of the content indicated that the bilateral security- and defence political relationship between Finland and the US became closer through the signing of this agreement, it did not include any explicitly stated obligation of military assistance (Puolustusministeriö, 2016e). Leo Michel, a visiting senior researcher at the Finnish Institute of International Affairs (FIIA), argued that bilateral mutual defence treaties would undermine the "all for one, one for all"-logic of NATO, and could therefore not be acceptable to the US (Michel, 2016). He claimed that a clearly stated guarantee of assistance to Finland would send a message to other NATO-members that the US did not believe in the collective nature of NATO, which consequently would encourage Russia to intensify what he considered "[...] provocative behaviour aimed at fracturing transatlantic solidarity." (Michel, 2016, p. 1). The absence of an explicitly stated guarantee is therefore not surprising, and will presumably only be presented in conjunction with an eventual Finnish NATO-membership. The focus should therefore again be on the potentially increased probability of military assistance through this agreement.

The SoI between Finland and the US has been presented as similar to the previously discussed *Defence Protocol* with the UK (Borger, 2016; Tanner, 2016). However, based on the discussions above this seems like an erroneous simplification. Beyond the fact that they both represented bilateral defence agreements, they seem to share few commonalities. A decisive argument in the discussion of the *Defence Protocol* with the UK, was that the agreement only represented a *general initiation* of a new bilateral security- and defence political cooperation, and could therefore not be regarded as increasing the probability of military assistance. In other words, the bilateral relationship with the UK was at a too early stage. The SoI with the US however, was rather a *specific continuation* of a bilateral relationship that had developed for decades, and could therefore present several specific objectives and means (Puolustusministeriö, 2016e, p. 2). The same argument can thus not be used in conjunction with this agreement, which in turn speaks in favour of an increased probability of military assistance. However, a further evaluation of the content is needed in order to reach a compelling conclusion.

Even though this bilateral relationship was well established as the agreement was

made, it had primarily been focused on information sharing and procurement of defence materiel, as previously mentioned. If the SoI had been limited to the further development of these areas of cooperation it would have been difficult to argue that the probability of military assistance increased. However, the agreement added a more practical dimension to the cooperation by focusing on the two countries ability to work together. Although this is no guarantee that Finland would get military assistance from the US in the event of a military conflict, it seems to imply that the probability of such support increased, as the focus suddenly shifted towards interoperability, readiness and practical collaboration (Puolustusministeriö, 2016e, p. 2). Combined with further development of the cooperation on armaments and information, it thus seems to be an effort to coordinate the two countries military forces as much as possible. In other words, it seems as the deepening of this bilateral cooperation was intended to facilitate involvement from the US in the event of a military conflict. This is substantiated by the fact that the US already had gained access to Finnish territory in times of crisis and conflict through the MoU with NATO.

The continued discussion therefore indicates that the SoI increased the probability of military assistance from the US, which in turn would serve as a positive sanction from a potential ally against the perceived threat. *Indirect adaptive acquiescence* (Type II) thus seems to be an accurate label for this agreement.

6.5 Continuous toleration of airspace violations

The continuous toleration of airspace violations differs from the agreements discussed above, as it was *not* an adaptive measure that was indirectly related to the perceived threat through a potential ally. In other words, it can be disregarded as an element of *indirect adaptive acquiescence* (Type II). However, as this adaptive measure was directly related to the perceived threat, in the sense that it was *Russian* airspace violations that were tolerated, it may potentially be regarded as an element of *direct adaptive acquiescence* (Type I). The question for the following discussion is therefore whether the manner in which Finland handled these infringements represented an intention of avoiding negative sanctions from Russia, which in turn would contribute to the protection of Finland's core values.

With the previous discussion of how these infringements were handled in mind, it seems like Finland deliberately chose not to react harshly to the Russian airspace violations, in order to decrease the probability of escalation. In other words, the intention was seemingly to avoid potential counter-reactions from Russia if the airspace violations had triggered a

tougher response from Finland. For instance, if one of the Russian aircrafts had been shot down, it seems very likely that Russia would have responded to this in a manner that could have escalated into a military conflict, which in turn would have put Finland's core values at risk. It is also plausible that a sanction-based reaction could have escalated in a similar manner. The continuous toleration of these infringements thus seemed to represent a deliberate tactic from Finland, with the intention of avoiding negative sanctions from Russia, which in turn would increase the probability of preserving core values.

Although the absence of any severe reaction from Finland de-escalated the situation, it did not give Russia any incentives to stop the infringements from recurring. In this sense the toleration of infringements actually increased the probability of additional infringements. Considering that an airspace violation is an infraction on another country's territorial sovereignty, and thus a severe transgression, it may also be referred to as a negative sanction. If the intention was to avoid negative sanctions, it therefore seems more sensible that a reaction, which could have put an end to these infringements, had been applied instead. For instance Turkey effectively stopped Russian airspace violations from recurring by reacting harshly to the initial incident, and thus avoided negative sanctions completely. It may therefore be difficult to argue that the lack of reactions from Finland was intended to decrease the probability of negative sanctions, especially as the infringement was repeated as much as eight times during the relatively short period under analysis.

Despite the argument above it seems compelling that the potential negative sanctions to a tougher reaction from Finland would have been more severe than the negative sanctions that the recurring airspace violations represented. In other words, although additional airspace violations were not preferred, they did not put Finland's core values directly at risk, and were thus regarded as a better option than a potential escalation, which in turn could have endangered both Finland's territorial sovereignty and general autonomy. In this way, the intention of tolerating these infringements seems to have been to avoid more severe negative sanctions from Russia. This adaptive behaviour thus increased the probability of preserving core values at the same time as the probability of more serious negative sanctions decreased. It should therefore be considered as an element of *direct adaptive acquiescence* (Type I).

6.6 Summary of findings regarding the fourth condition

The continued discussion of the different elements of adaptive behaviour from the previous condition revealed some interesting variations. The MoU with NATO and the bilateral SoI

with the US were both labelled *indirect adaptive acquiescence* (Type II), as it seemed compelling that the agreements were made in order to increase the probability of receiving military assistance from these potential allies. In other words, they seemed to contain positive protective sanctions from potential allies against the perceived threat. Although the *Easy Access Agreement* with NORDEFCO and the *Defence Protocol* with the UK were regarded as elements of adaptive behaviour, it did not seem compelling that they increased the probability of military assistance, as the former limited the access to peacetime, whereas the latter only represented the general initiation of a bilateral cooperation. Even though they were discussed as potential elements of *indirect adaptive acquiescence,* this was disproved. The continuous toleration of the Russian airspace violations was regarded as an element of *direct adaptive acquiescence* (Type I), as it seemed compelling that the lack of harsh reactions from Finland was a deliberate tactic to avoid more severe negative sanctions from Russia, which in turn would increase the probability for Finland of preserving its core values. As it would have been sufficient if only one of the adaptive measures were intended to protect core values, either by receiving positive sanctions or avoiding negative sanctions, this final condition should be regarded as met. The causal connection between the three elements of adaptive behaviour and their theoretically predicted intended effect can thus also be established.

7 Conclusions

This Master's Thesis set out to analyse how Finland handled the seemingly difficult security political situation that emerged in the aftermath of Russia's annexation of Crimea. Due to the unequal power relation between Finland and Russia, this was also an assessment of how the weaker part handled such an asymmetrical relationship. Considering that the stream of power and influence, as Mouritzen (1988, p. 10) terms it, is likely to be unfavourable in this position, it is plausible that this is met with acquiescent adaptive behaviour. Mouritzen's (1988) theory on adaptive acquiescence was therefore selected as a theoretical framework for this analysis of the extent and manner in which Finland displayed acquiescent adaptive behaviour in the aftermath of Russia's annexation of Crimea. In line with Mouritzen's (1988) theoretical conditions, it was first of all relevant to consider whether external pressure from Russia could be detected during the period under analysis. Secondly, the analysis turned to the question of whether Finland adapted to this pressure through security political alterations and toleration of infringements. Finally, it was relevant to assess whether potential adaptive measures were intended to increase the probability of preserving core values, either by avoiding negative sanctions from the presumed threat, or by receiving positive sanctions from potential allies against this perceived element of danger. This chapter will first of all summarize the main findings, and thus provide an answer to the research question, before empirical and theoretical implications are assessed.

7.1 Summary of main findings

The empirical analysis in chapter four detected several elements of external pressure from Russia, both in the immediate aftermath of Russia's annexation of Crimea, and as considerable time had passed since this event. This indicated that pressure was both present and persistent during the entire period under analysis. The clearest indications of pressure were the various Russian attempts to interfere in Finland's internal affairs, either through statements or actions. It also became evident that the perception of Russia in Finland changed in the aftermath of the annexation. This was seen in official documents and reports, as well as opinion polls. Overall, the period between 18 March 2014 and 31 December 2016 could consequently be characterized by a sufficient amount of external pressure from Russia on Finland for potential adaptive measures to be initiated. Security political changes within this time frame could therefore be attempts to cope with these external changes and thus potentially be labelled as elements of adaptive behaviour.

The following chapter revealed that Finland to a large extent adapted its security policy during the period under analysis due to this pressure. First of all, Finland's cooperation with NATO was fundamentally altered through the signing of the MoU. Considering that Finland became a *host nation* obligated to provide *host nation support* to this major military alliance, it was a significant alteration from Finland's previous role as a NATO-partner. Secondly, Finland strengthened its cooperation with the other Nordic countries through the *Easy Access Agreement* in NORDEFCO. This was intended to make it considerably easier to access each other's land area, airspace and territorial waters for military purposes. Both these alterations to Finland's security policy were regarded as elements of adaptive behaviour, as several different aspects indicated that they represented attempts to cope with the increased external pressure from Russia.

In addition, two bilateral agreements were signed within the selected time frame. First of all, the *Defence Protocol* with the UK established a new bilateral relationship on security- and defence related issues with one of the strongest military powers in the West. It was therefore regarded as a change in Finland's security policy. Secondly, Finland and the US strengthened their security political cooperation through the SoI. Although this was a continuation of a bilateral relationship that had developed for decades, the new agreement was more focused on readiness and interoperability. Considering that previous cooperation had been largely focused on information-sharing and defence materiel, this agreement was also regarded as a change in Finland's security policy. These bilateral agreements were in turn both labelled as elements of adaptive behaviour as they seemed to be closely linked to the increased external pressure.

No specific adaptive measures were detected in conjunction with Finland's security political relation with the EU, as the plans to develop a joint capability to handle hybrid threats did not develop into any specific decision or agreement. Similarly, the bilateral security- and defence political cooperation with Sweden did not seem to be significantly altered during the period under analysis. Despite plans for deepened cooperation, and even talks of a potential bilateral defence alliance, it did not result in any major changes to the collaboration. However, a means of adaptation that *was* detected was the continuous toleration of infringements. The discussion regarding the first condition detected eight separate Russian violations of Finnish airspace during the relatively short period under analysis. Due to the absence of any significant reaction to these infringements, they were characterized as continuously tolerated. The reluctant acceptance of the recurring airspace violations thus represented a continuous toleration of infringements, which Mouritzen (1988,

p. 61) regarded as a specific means of adaptation.

The various elements of adaptive behaviour were discussed further in the penultimate chapter, which revealed some interesting variations between these adaptive measures. Although the MoU with NATO and the *Easy Access Agreement* in NORDEFCO were similar in the sense that they entailed access to Finnish territory for military purposes, they differed in the sense that only the former included access in the event of crisis, emergencies and conflict in addition to peacetime. Only the MoU was therefore deemed to increase the probability of military assistance, and consequently the probability of preserving core values. In this way, the agreement seemed to contain an expectation of receiving positive protective sanctions from this potential ally against the perceived threat. It could therefore be labelled as an element of *indirect adaptive acquiescence* (Type II).

Similarly, the two bilateral agreements were divided in the sense that only the SoI with the US was deemed to increase the probability of military assistance. Due to the increased focus on the two countries' ability of working together on military issues, and the fact that the US had already gained access to Finland during turbulent times through the MoU with NATO, this seemed like a compelling conclusion. This was therefore another element of *indirect adaptive acquiescence* (Type II), as it increased the probability of positive protective sanctions from a potential ally. The *Defence Protocol* with the UK however, was a general initiation of a new bilateral cooperation. Although this was intended to develop further, the initial agreement could not be regarded as increasing the probability of receiving military assistance *per se*. The continuous toleration of airspace violations was regarded as an element of *direct adaptive acquiescence* (Type I) as it seemed to decrease the probability of more severe negative sanctions from Russia. This kind of lenient reaction would therefore increase the probability of preserving core values.

The preceding analysis is therefore a clear indication that all of Mouritzen's (1988) theoretical conditions were met when applied to this specific empirical case. Finland's regime orientation in the aftermath of Russia's annexation of Crimea can therefore be labelled *adaptive acquiescence* as defined by Mouritzen (1988). Considering that several adaptive measures were initiated to cope with the external pressure, and a majority of these seemed to be closely related to the protection and preservation of core values, the conclusion is that Finland to a large extent displayed acquiescent adaptive behaviour during the period under analysis. This was done through a combination of *direct adaptive acquiescence* (Type I) and *indirect adaptive acquiescence* (Type II). Despite the continuous toleration of infringements directly from the perceived threat, Finland was to a larger extent active in strengthening its

security political situation through potential allies against this possible threat. The latter was indirectly related to Russia, as it seemed highly implausible that the concessions to these conceivable allies would have been initiated without the increased external pressure.

7.2 Empirical implications

The findings in conjunction with this particular case cannot be generalized to other similar cases. In other words, the extent and manner in which Finland displayed acquiescent adaptive behaviour cannot be extrapolated to other small states in similar unequal power relations. However, through a detailed and comprehensive presentation of how the research was conducted the preceding analysis has facilitated what Lincoln and Guba (1985) termed transferability. I would therefore argue that the findings are transferable to other similar settings in the sense that the present analysis can be used as a basis for comparison if the same analytical and theoretical framework is applied to analyse other asymmetrical relationships. As previously mentioned, a comparative approach would have been preferred if the analysis had not been limited by the framework of a Master's Thesis. A suggestion for further research is therefore to conduct a similar process tracing based on Mouritzen's (1988) theory in other small countries which may have displayed acquiescent adaptive behaviour as a response to external pressure from Russia during the same period of time.

Considering the many similarities between Finland and Sweden, it seems as an in-depth analysis of how Sweden handled its security political situation in the aftermath of Russia's annexation of Crimea could present some interesting findings, as previously argued. If compared with the findings from the present analysis, the potential effect of the differences would also have been accentuated. Is a shared border with Russia a necessary factor for acquiescent adaptive behaviour to be displayed? Is Finland's former role as part of the Russian empire a decisive element? A comparative approach would thus shed light on both interesting similarities and differences. The present analysis has in this way facilitated a potential comparative analysis between these two countries. With less clarity regarding the manner in which this research was conducted, it would have been less transferable, which consequently would have limited the applicability of the findings in potential further research.

Although Sweden might be the country that is most comparable to Finland, it seems evident that the findings from the present analysis can be used as a basis for comparison if the regime behaviour of other states are analysed as well. It seems conceivable that other small countries in close proximity to Russia also potentially resorted to acquiescent adaptive

behaviour in order to cope with external changes within the selected time frame. It therefore seems highly relevant to apply the same theoretical and analytical approach to analyse how e.g. Norway, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania handled this situation from a security political point of view. Considering that these countries are NATO-members, the effect of this would be accentuated. To what extent does membership in this major military alliance create a sense of security, which consequently affects the extent and manner in which acquiescent adaptive behaviour is displayed? If Mouritzen's (1988) theory in this way is applied to various cases, the analysis can highlight the sufficient and necessary conditions for adaptive acquiescence to apply. More generally, such an approach can highlight whether adaptive acquiescence is common for the weaker part in an asymmetrical relationship. Considering the need for an in-depth analysis of every case, this was beyond the scope of this Master's Thesis. Consequently the focus was solely on Finland in the present analysis.

7.3 Theoretical implications

The preceding theory-testing process tracing implied that Mouritzen's (1988) presentation of adaptive acquiescence through various conditions proved to be a useful framework for the present analysis, as it highlighted both the extent in which acquiescent adaptive behaviour was displayed, and the manner in which this was done. It was therefore a useful analytical tool for the analysis of how the weaker part handled an asymmetrical relationship in a tense situation. However, some critical remarks are in order.

Primarily, I would argue that his presentation of the theory is unnecessarily complicated. This is especially evident in his definition of the four conditions (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 61-62), where too much information is included in the definitions *per se*. Considering that the conditions are presented as individual aspects that together might indicate adaptive acquiescence, it seems unnecessary to include a sentence on adaptive acquiescence as an appendage to every condition. For instance, that adaptive acquiescence is a regime orientation which is characterized by a certain resignation rather than enthusiasm seems both excessive and misplaced in conjunction with the third condition (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 61), especially as the nature of this regime orientation has been discussed at length earlier in his publication. It also seems superfluous to include an explanation of the rather ordinary term *preservation* in conjunction with the fourth condition (Mouritzen, 1988, p. 62). If anything, this could have been included in a footnote. By including several explanations and specifications regarding the nature of adaptive acquiescence he takes focus away from the essence of the specific

conditions, which is unfortunate considering their important role in his theory. It seems evident that the four conditions could have easily been formulated into four simple sentences, which thus would have served as more clear-cut definitions.

Mouritzen's (1988) theory is also unnecessarily complicated in the sense that he uses four separate conditions to describe a process that seems to consist of three main aspects. As previously argued, his theoretical framework seems to have a clear element of causality between *cause* (external pressure), *action* (adaptation) and *effect* (preservation of core values). His decision to treat a specific means of adaptation as a separate condition therefore seems like a weakness in his theory. In other words, the continuous toleration of infringements represents a breach with the logical connection between the remaining three conditions, which consequently makes the theoretical framework less comprehensible and more complicated.

It is also peculiar that the reluctant acceptance of recurring infringements is treated as a means of *adaptation*, as it rather seems to indicate a means of *acquiescence.* In other words, it seems to represent a passive attempt to maintain *status quo*, rather than an element of active adaptation. I would also argue that he puts too much emphasis on the continuous toleration of infringements. Although it represents an interesting dimension of acquiescent adaptive behaviour, it seems peculiar that a regime orientation could not be labelled adaptive acquiescence without a particular infringement being continuously tolerated. Linked to the present empirical case, it seems evident that Finland displayed acquiescent adaptive behaviour even if the airspace violations had not occurred repeatedly. Adaptive acquiescence should thus not be dependent on this condition.

Despite these potential modifications to the original layout of the theory it seems accurate to acknowledge its continued relevance for analysing how the weaker part handles an asymmetrical relationship. I therefore find Mouritzen's (1988) theoretical framework from the final years of the Cold War to still be a fruitful analytical tool three decades later.

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