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# Introduction

## The European defence challenge for the Nordic region

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*Alyson J. K. Bailes*

### I. The role of this introduction

The European Defence and Security Policy (ESDP), launched by the European Union (EU) in its historic decisions at Helsinki in December 1999,<sup>1</sup> remains the subject of widely varying judgements, views and aspirations throughout Europe and, indeed, among many of Europe's partners. Its initial ambition was modest: to provide an alternative means of carrying out a specific range of military crisis management tasks under the EU's own command. Nonetheless, it has evoked fears, ranging from the risk that it could undermine the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to that of an inevitable slide towards an integrated 'European army'. Conversely, and although the EU member states have tried to goad each other into better defence performance with the help of ESDP targets, the continued shrinkage of most EU defence budgets exposes the seemingly unbridgeable gap between European ambition and performance. The question of the ESDP's *finalité*—where the policy is actually supposed to be leading, ranging along interlinked spectrums from occasional military cooperation to complete guaranteed defence and from pure intergovernmentalism to collective European control of military assets—produces the most widely varying answers, and feelings, of all.<sup>2</sup>

The ESDP is thus a challenge for all European states; but the story of how the five Nordic countries, singly and collectively, have participated in and adapted to it since its birth (and gestation period) is the particular subject of the chapters in parts I–IV of this volume. This introduction aims both to provide the starting point for appreciating the subsequent material and to anticipate an issue to which some of the closing contributions return. For the first purpose, it provides (in section II) a minimum of historical background on the Nordic countries' defence and security roles since 1945 and (in section III) on their involvement in and attitudes to the creation of the ESDP in 1999–2000. The second substantive question it addresses (in section IV) is whether it is possible to see any common strands in the experiences of the five Nordic countries, and hence any

<sup>1</sup> Council of the European Union, 'Presidency Conclusions', Helsinki European Council, 10–11 Dec. 1999, URL <[http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/ACFA4C.htm](http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/ACFA4C.htm)>.

<sup>2</sup> On *finalité* in the EU context see Serfaty, S. (ed.), *The European Finality Debate and its National Dimensions* (Center for Strategic and International Studies: Washington, DC, Apr. 2003).

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Map of the Nordic countries and associated territories

common or parallel features in the challenges they face and could face in future as the EU's security and defence policies continue to evolve. The analysis in these sections is supplemented by tables I.1–I.4, which contain facts about the Nordic countries, their institutional relationships and their armed forces and defence industries.

Features of parallelism and convergence among the Nordic countries can, of course, be both 'positive' and 'negative'. They include a shared concept of 'the North' or 'Norden'<sup>3</sup> and shared values and interests that provide a valuable input to the process of European policy generation and execution. They also include possible shared 'hang-ups', relative weaknesses and problems of adjustment. The emphasis in much of the rest of this introduction is on probing the latter, but it is no part of the author's wish to do less than justice to the former. The interesting question is whether the Nordic countries' way of proceeding in real-life institutional settings—of which the ESDP is now among the most important—has been calculated to best effect for projecting and realizing such common values; exploiting common assets and skills; and thus ensuring that the

<sup>3</sup> The term 'Norden'—literally, 'the North' in Danish, Norwegian and Swedish (the equivalent Finnish and Icelandic terms being 'Pohjoismaat' and 'Norðurland', respectively)—is used as shorthand for the 5 countries Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden (i.e., the members of the Nordic Council).

right Nordic ingredients are baked into the eventual European confection. The last section (section V) of this introduction ventures some remarks on whether the five Nordic countries are more or less likely to concert their efforts to such ends in the near future—a topic to be taken up again by some of the authors in part IV of this volume.

## II. A historical sketch of the Nordic region, 1945–2000

The motto of the European Union is ‘unity in diversity’. For the five nations of Europe’s northern region—some of which have, of course, decided not to join the EU<sup>4</sup>—there is no way to sum up so neatly the complex interplay between national particularity and regional identity. Since the late Middle Ages, no single power of the region has been able to *enforce* a strategic unity on the Nordic region and, although the option has been actively discussed,<sup>5</sup> the local states have never come together voluntarily in anything resembling a collective defence community. Differences of geo-strategic outlook<sup>6</sup> and historical experience<sup>7</sup> among the Nordic nation states themselves have been one obstacle, if not necessarily the most critical, to any solution that would call for complete mutual trust and co-dependence.

Since World War II, the Nordic system has been made up of five independent states—Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden—along with additional territories which come under the sovereignty of one or other of these states but enjoy a special status.<sup>8</sup> Three Nordic countries—Denmark, Iceland and Norway—chose to become founder members of NATO, while Finland and Sweden spent the period of the cold war as neutral and non-allied states, providing exclusively for their own defence. Finland was also obliged to sign the 1948 Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation and Mutual Assistance with the Soviet Union.<sup>9</sup>

On the face of it, these choices by the region’s democratic states created the plainest cleavage yet in their strategic alignment and defence concepts: but the

<sup>4</sup> The Norwegian people voted against joining the EU in 2 national referendums, in 1972 and 1994. Iceland has never applied for EU membership. Denmark, Finland and Sweden are members of the EU.

<sup>5</sup> E.g., in the period immediately after World War II and before Denmark and Norway joined NATO in 1949, Sweden pondered a ‘Nordic defence union’.

<sup>6</sup> Geopolitical distinctions can be made between the ‘west Nordic’ countries with a primarily Atlantic outlook and the ‘east Nordic’ countries on the shores of the Baltic Sea; between the countries with provinces lying north of the Arctic Circle and the mainland of Denmark; between Finland, as a geographical extension of the Russian–Siberian land mass, and the other countries, which have very short or no common frontiers with Russia.

<sup>7</sup> Memories from World War II—Denmark’s and Norway’s experiences of occupation, Sweden’s neutrality, and Finland’s 2 phases of war against Russia—provide examples that are still influential in forming attitudes today.

<sup>8</sup> These territories are the Faroe Islands and Greenland, under Danish sovereignty; Åland, under Finnish sovereignty; and Svalbard and Jan Mayen, under Norwegian sovereignty.

<sup>9</sup> The Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation and Mutual Assistance formally expired in 1992 and was then replaced by a ‘friendship agreement’ which no longer referred to joint defence activity or to consultations on possible threats to security.

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reality was much more complex than the formal divisions would suggest. The positions adopted by the five states were widely interpreted as being designed (consciously or unconsciously) to maintain an overall ‘Nordic balance’, in which Sweden’s remaining outside NATO helped to avoid Soviet actions that could have seriously compromised Finland’s independence.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, contacts developed between Sweden and NATO through various back channels,<sup>11</sup> and the armed forces of the four larger Nordic countries frequently met up in regions outside Europe where they made sterling contributions to United Nations peacekeeping missions.<sup>12</sup> Denmark and Norway played their own part in fine-tuning the regional ‘balance’ by stipulating that their NATO membership should not lead to any stationing of foreign forces or nuclear weapons on their territories in peacetime. Meanwhile, the actual national defence practices of Finland, Norway and Sweden did not diverge as much as might have been expected: all three countries continued to follow practices of universal conscription, with a significant role for reservists, and a basically territorial concept of deployment.

These elements of de facto parallelism in Nordic defence cultures were far more evident, and more openly admitted, in their national social, economic, cultural and educational arrangements. These common features later inspired the creation in 1952 of a five-nation parliamentary body, the Nordic Council, with the aim of promoting ‘Nordic cooperation’ at popular and regional as well as governmental levels.<sup>13</sup> This non-legalistic, resource-efficient mode of cooperation flourished throughout the post-war period and did much to maintain—or even strengthen—the sense of a natural community among all Nordic citizens regardless of their strategic affiliations.<sup>14</sup> The Nordic Council chose to avoid any discussion of defence and other external policies; given the delicacy

<sup>10</sup> E.g., Holst., J. J., *Five Roads to Nordic Security* (Universitetsforlaget: Oslo, 1973).

<sup>11</sup> Swedish Commission on Neutrality Policy, *Had There Been a War . . . : Preparations for the Reception of Military Assistance 1949–1969*, Report of the Commission on Neutrality Policy, Translation of Statens Offentliga Utredningar 1994:11 (Stadsrådsberedningen: Stockholm, 1994).

<sup>12</sup> The 4 countries—Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden—consulted regularly on cooperation in UN peacekeeping from 1964 onwards. Norway, Mission to the UN, ‘The Nordic countries and international peace-keeping operations’, URL <<http://www.norway-un.org/NorwayandtheUN/Nordic+cooperation+on+peace-keeping/>>.

<sup>13</sup> Finland did not join the Nordic Council until 1956. The rules for the Nordic Council’s work are laid down in the 1962 Treaty of Cooperation between Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden (Helsinki Treaty), the text of which is available at URL <<http://www.norden.org/avtal/helsingfors/uk/3-2-2-hfors.asp>>. The region’s economic and trade cooperation was conducted through the European Free Trade Area (EFTA), established in 1960 by the West European non-EU member states Austria, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK. Finland became an associate member of EFTA in 1961 and a full member in 1986. Iceland became a member in 1970. See the website of the EFTA Secretariat at URL <<http://secretariat.efta.int/>>.

<sup>14</sup> One of its strongest manifestations was the Nordic Passport Union, formalized in 1958 agreements between Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden (and joined by Iceland in 1965), which allowed citizens of each of the countries freedom of travel and residence in the others. Upphävande av passkontrollen vid de internordiska gränserna [Waiver of passport control at the intra-Nordic borders], 12 July 1958, URL <<http://www.norden.org/avtal/pass/uk/>>.

of Finland's position, it did not have much choice.<sup>15</sup> It was only towards the end of the 20th century that one set of external issues—those relating to relations with Europe-wide institutions—could openly be placed on the agenda of meetings between Nordic heads of government in the Nordic cooperation framework.<sup>16</sup>

This method of 'working around' divisive or disturbing elements in order to seek common ground with neighbours in other fields has been seen by some Nordic analysts as part of a broader phenomenon of 'de-securitization' in cold war and post-cold war northern Europe.<sup>17</sup> It applied not just between the Nordic countries themselves but also to relations with the Soviet Union, with which trade and some limited cross-border intercourse remained possible even in the cold war, and which was drawn into more explicit sub-regional cooperation frameworks with the Nordic countries after 1990.<sup>18</sup> The strategic facts of life did not go away, but it was possible for governments, the publics and the media to avoid harping on them in their discourse, all the more so because it was not the Nordic countries' own defence efforts that—in the last resort—were keeping the threat from the Soviet side at bay.<sup>19</sup> Nordic countries were, moreover, free from the kind of internal challenges—such as terrorism and regional conflict—that obliged some other European countries to substantially 'securitize' their domestic policies, even when far removed from the East–West line of confrontation. The results in terms of keeping the whole Nordic region safe and calm, at acceptable levels of defence resource application, throughout the cold war and the instabilities of the first post-cold war decade are a matter of record. An outside observer might, however, question whether the concomitant ten-

<sup>15</sup> Without this restraint, Finland would not have been able to join the Nordic Council when it did, 4 years after the Council's establishment. The first occasion when a Nordic Council member broke the taboo in open debate came only in 1974. Stålvant, C.-E., 'The Council of Baltic Sea States', ed. A. Cottey, *Subregional Cooperation in the New Europe: Building Security, Prosperity and Solidarity from the Barents to the Black Sea* (Macmillan: Basingstoke, 1999), pp. 46–68, see especially fn. 12.

<sup>16</sup> Stålvant (note 15), p. 53.

<sup>17</sup> The concept was first developed by Ole Wæver. E.g., Wæver, O., 'Securitization and desecuritization', ed. R. D. Lipschutz, *On Security* (Columbia University Press: New York, 1995), pp. 46–86. It should be stressed that for the Nordic countries themselves 'desecuritization' has no pejorative overtones. Refusal to be driven by what other actors might see as 'realist' and 'objective' security logic, or to make a choice of security 'camps' accordingly, has been presented by many Nordic thinkers as a normatively superior approach as well as having apparently brought the right results for the Nordic region in cold war times. Ørvik, N., 'Defence against help: a strategy for small states?', *Survival*, vol. 15, no. 5 (Sep./Oct. 1973), pp. 228–31.

<sup>18</sup> After the collapse of the Soviet Union, when the Nordic countries had security fears connected as much with the new Russian regime's weakness as its strength—e.g., the risk that hardship in north-western Russia would trigger mass migration to the West or that the security of nuclear assets would be compromised—the 'de-securitization' tradition helped Nordic policy makers frame a solution in terms of networks and programmes including Russia. The inter-governmental sub-regional groupings known as the Council of the Baltic Sea States (established in 1992) and the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (established in 1993) proclaimed no specific security objectives but were designed indirectly to safeguard stability by promoting *inter alia* cooperative border management, the improvement of Russian neighbours' living conditions, and joint Russia–West approaches to the handling of non-military challenges like pollution and maritime safety. ed. Cottey (note 15).

<sup>19</sup> This was the function of NATO's deterrent posture, and in particular the balance between US and Soviet naval and nuclear capacities in the far north.

Table I.1. Basic facts about the Nordic countries

	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Sweden
Independence (if 20th century)	..	1917	1944	1905	..
Territory (km <sup>2</sup> )	43 098 <sup>a</sup>	338 145	102 819	306 253 <sup>b</sup>	449 964
Estimated population (year)	5 397 640 (2004)	5 219 732 (2003)	290 570 (2003)	4 552 252 (2003)	8 940 788
Total gross domestic product, 2002 (US\$ b.)	212.4	160.8	10.5	221.6	300.8
<i>European Union and other European institutions</i>					
Member of European Union	Since 1973	Since 1995	No	No	Since 1995
Member of European Monetary Union	No	Yes	..	..	No
Party to Schengen Agreement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Member of European Economic Area	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Comments	Formal opt-outs from <i>inter alia</i> EMU and the ESDP; the Faroe Islands and Greenland are outside the EU	Åland is outside EU's tax union			
Member of Council of Europe	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Member of Nordic Council and Nordic Council of Ministers	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Member of Council of the Baltic Sea States	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Member of Barents Euro-Arctic Council	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

.. = not applicable; EMU = European Monetary Union; ESDP = European Security and Defence Policy.

<sup>a</sup> In addition, the Faroe Islands have an area of 1399 km<sup>2</sup> and Greenland has an area of 2 166 086 km<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>b</sup> In addition, Svalbard has an area of 61 229 km<sup>2</sup> and Jan Mayen has an area of 377 km<sup>2</sup>.

Source: Turner, B. (ed.), *The Statesman's Yearbook 2006* (Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, 2005).

gency to separate strategic *reality* from *discourse*, and defence *practice* from the objectively prevailing defence *need*, has had something to do with the problems that Nordic policy establishments have experienced in trying to adapt to (or even acknowledge) the profoundly different defence demands of the 21st century.

### **Policy choices 1990–2000: the appeal of ‘integration lite’**

In the honeymoon period after the collapse of the Warsaw Treaty Organization and the Soviet Union, it seemed as if all partial alliance groupings in Europe would dissolve and the strategic divisions of the Nordic region might also crumble again. In fact, NATO proved able not just to survive but to productively reinvent itself, both as an organ of military crisis management in the Balkans and elsewhere and as a promoter of wider ‘cooperative security’ practices in the new Europe through its North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC), established in 1991.

Both NATO and the EU were soon besieged by the newly independent countries of Central Europe seeking membership, including the three Baltic states, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Since the Baltic states’ entry to NATO was opposed particularly fiercely by Russia, some observers (notably in the USA) speculated briefly on whether the Nordic countries might draw them instead into a regional defence grouping that would be clearly ‘Western’ in affiliation but distinct from NATO. It was soon clear, however, that the Nordic countries were as unwilling—and unqualified, given the asymmetry between their purely military capability and Russia’s—to provide defence guarantees for their small new neighbours as the Baltic states themselves were to accept this second choice.<sup>20</sup> The conundrum was, inescapably, one for NATO to solve: and NATO bought time for the solution by offering a more active cooperation framework to the applicant states in the shape of the Partnership for Peace (PFP), established in 1994, and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC),<sup>21</sup> which replaced the NACC in 1997. Membership of the PFP and the EAPC was opened up to other states in the European region, including Russia itself, to avoid any too early identification of those states which would eventually complete the steps to NATO membership.

The EU chose to handle the enlargement challenge somewhat differently, by granting formal applicant status (embodied in individual ‘Europe Agreements’) to countries on a case-by-case basis. The only permanent forum where the Central European countries could address military security issues in a specific-

<sup>20</sup> On the US analysis see, e.g., Asmus, R. D. and Larrabee, S. F., ‘NATO and the have-nots: reassurance after enlargement’, *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 75, no. 6 (Nov./Dec. 1996), pp. 13–20; and Asmus, R. D. and Nurick, R. C., ‘NATO enlargement and the Baltic states’, *Survival*, vol. 38, no. 2 (summer 1996), pp. 121–42.

<sup>21</sup> At the Prague Summit of Nov. 2002, NATO brought the PFP and the EAPC together within a single ‘Euro-Atlantic Partnership’ concept. NATO, ‘Report on the comprehensive review of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and Partnership for Peace’, Prague Summit, 21–22 Nov. 2002, URL <<http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/b021121a.htm>>.

ally European setting together with the integrated Western states was the Western European Union (WEU), which in the mid-1990s accepted 10 Central European countries (including the Baltic states) as ‘associate partners’, and allowed non-NATO EU members and non-EU NATO members to join in its work as ‘observers’ and ‘associate members’, respectively.<sup>22</sup>

In the Nordic region, too, the early 1990s were a time for countries to rethink their institutional choices and strategic affiliations. New room for manoeuvre was offered most obviously to Finland and Sweden, given the demise of the original rationale for a ‘Nordic balance’ and the questions that began to be raised—also in other parts of Europe—about the logic of ‘neutral’ status itself (‘neutral from what?’). Indeed, both these countries took independent decisions in the 1990s to change the official description of their defence policy from ‘neutral’ to ‘militarily non-aligned’ or ‘militarily non-allied’.<sup>23</sup> Sweden applied for membership of the EU in 1991 and Finland in 1992, and both duly acceded in 1995. Finland’s motives clearly included an interest in the EU’s ability to provide a kind of ‘political’ or ‘existential’ security, including the high probability that other EU members would want to help Finland in the event of a direct Russian threat. For Sweden this argument was less explicit and somewhat less relevant, although Swedish Government did see potential in the EU to enhance the value of its own positive contributions to international security. In contrast to their Baltic neighbours, however, Finland and Sweden chose *not* to make parallel applications for membership of NATO. Instead, they joined the PFP, profiling themselves within it as givers rather than takers of aid and guidance, and seeking the added value (and credit) they could gain for their defence aid programmes for the Baltic states by wider coordination with partners.<sup>24</sup> In practice, Finland and Sweden (like Austria) both made extensive use of the Partnership and Review Process within the PFP to get information and advice from NATO on adapting their own forces for maximum interoperability in NATO-led peace operations. They leveraged their observer status in the

<sup>22</sup> The WEU associate partners are Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia (all from 1994) and Slovenia (from 1996). The observers are Austria (from 1995), Denmark (1992; the only NATO observer), Finland (1995), Ireland (1992) and Sweden (1995). The associate members are the Czech Republic (from 1999), Hungary (1999), Iceland (1992), Norway (1992), Poland (1999) and Turkey (1992).

<sup>23</sup> Finland’s 1997 Defence White Paper introduced the current description of the country’s status as ‘military non-alliance’. A new security policy formula agreed between Sweden’s parliamentary parties in Feb. 2002 defined Sweden as ‘militarily non-aligned’ (in Swedish, the last word means literally ‘alliance-free’). Finnish Government, *The European Security Development and Finnish Defence: Report by the Council of State to Parliament on 17 March 1997* (Council of State: Helsinki, 1997); Lindholm, R. H., ‘Har Sverige en säkerhetspolitisk doktrin?’, *Kungliga Krigsvetenskapsakademien Handlingar och Tidskrift—The Royal Swedish Academy of War Sciences Proceedings and Journal*, vol. 207, no. 3 (2003), pp. 105–10; and see Forsberg, T. and Vaahoranta, T., ‘Inside the EU, outside NATO: paradoxes of Finland’s and Sweden’s post-neutrality’, *European Security*, vol. 10, no. 1 (spring 2001), pp. 68–93.

<sup>24</sup> This was material assistance (in cash and kind) for the build-up of Baltic national defence capabilities and for tri-Baltic or regional initiatives such as the Baltic Defence College in Tartu. Karlsson, M. and Knudsen, O. F., ‘Sweden and the Baltic states’ and Visuri, P., ‘Finland and the Baltic states’, eds B. Huldt et al., *Finnish and Swedish Security: Comparing National Policies*, SI Serie R: 1 2001 (Försvarshögskolan: Stockholm, 2001), pp. 180–203, 204–25.



WEU to seek certain improvements in the defence planning services on offer from NATO and the strengthening of their status when contributing voluntarily to NATO activities.<sup>25</sup> In the event, they made substantial force contributions both to NATO's Stabilisation Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina and its Kosovo Force (KFOR).<sup>26</sup>

This Finnish–Swedish policy of maximizing access and participation without formal membership of NATO—and without the formal revolution in national policy that this would have demanded—was eventually to gain its mirror image on the part of the Nordic non-EU NATO members, Iceland and Norway. At first, with Norway's application to join the EU in 1992, it seemed that it would provide a counter-model by opting for full double integration: but the Norwegian national referendum of 1994 produced a 'no' vote, and Norwegian leaders have since then made the best of a 'not-quite-membership' strategy. The main framework was provided by the European Economic Area (EEA), a structure for cooperation between the EU and the European Free Trade Area originally designed in 1992 but in which Iceland and Norway, with Liechtenstein, became the lone non-EU members after 1995.<sup>27</sup> The EEA gave them the equivalent of full EU membership in everything pertaining to the Single Market and the associated 'freedoms', but did not require them to apply the EU's structural policies internally or to adhere to its Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) externally. Provision was made for 'political dialogue' in the EEA on foreign and security matters, and in practice Iceland and Norway often aligned themselves with CFSP statements and initiatives. Another landmark of what might be called the 'integration lite' strategy was the EU's agreement that Iceland and Norway could join its Schengen programme for common frontier and immigration controls, thus allowing them to maintain the freedoms of the Nordic Passport Union even after Finland's and Sweden's entry into the EU.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>25</sup> NATO provided certain collective defence planning support to WEU under the provisions of NATO's Berlin ministerial declaration of July 1996. NATO, 'Final communiqué', Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council, Berlin, 3 June 1996, URL <<http://www.nato.int/docu/basics.htm>>. The detailed NATO–WEU agreements negotiated in 1998–2000 ensured, at the insistence of Austria, Finland and Sweden, that the WEU observers would have equal access to all the related benefits and an equal part in WEU decision-making and command structures as and when the WEU carried out operations of its own using borrowed NATO assets. Finland and Sweden pursued their demands for better treatment in the command structures for NATO-led deployments and for the right to second their officers permanently to NATO headquarters, mainly in the context of NATO's own debates with PFP partners on the 'politico-military framework' for their participation in NATO operations.

<sup>26</sup> In 2003 Finland and Sweden provided 80 and 23 personnel, respectively, to SFOR and 800 and 723 personnel, respectively, to KFOR.

<sup>27</sup> Agreement on the European Economic Area, EFTA Secretariat, Geneva, May 1992, URL <<http://secretariat.efta.int/Web/LegalCorner/>>. The EEA is managed by the secretariat of EFTA, of which Switzerland is also a member, having decided by referendum not to take part in the EEA. The current EEA agreement entered into force on 1 Jan. 2004.

<sup>28</sup> Iceland and Norway were allowed to stay within (formally, to re-join) the Schengen Agreement after it was brought fully inside the EU's single treaty structure from 1 May 1999, with the entry into force of the 1997 Treaty of Amsterdam.

**Table I.2.** Basic facts about the military sectors of the Nordic countries

	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Sweden
Armed forces personnel, 2005	21 180	28 300	0	25 800	27 600
Reserve forces personnel, 2005	129 700	237 000	0	219 000	262 000
Conscription, number of conscripts and period of conscription, 2005	Yes: 5 800, 10 months (to be 4 months)	Yes: 19 300, 6–9–12 months	No	Yes: 15 200, 12 months	Yes: 11 400, 7–15 months
Number of military personnel deployed in international peacekeeping missions, 2004	1 650	910	..	1 300	780
Military expenditure, 2004 (US\$ m.)	3 564	2 273	0	4 587	5 961
Military expenditure as share of GDP, 2004 (%)	1.5	1.2	0.0	1.9	1.7
Estimated sales of military equipment, 2004 (US\$ m.)	180	400	0	450	3 400
Number of employees in defence industry, 2004	~800	~1 600	0	~2 000	~13 800
Exports of major conventional weapons, 2004 (SIPRI trend-indicator values, US\$ m.) <sup>a</sup>	6	19	0	52	261

.. = not applicable; GDP = Gross domestic product.

<sup>a</sup> These figures are SIPRI relative trend-indicator values expressed in US\$ m. at constant 1990 prices; see URL <[http://www.sipri.org/contents/arms/trad/at\\_data.html](http://www.sipri.org/contents/arms/trad/at_data.html)>.

Sources: International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2004–2005* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2004); SIPRI Armed Conflicts and Conflict Management Programme; SIPRI Military Expenditure Database; SIPRI Arms Production Project; and SIPRI Arms Transfers Database.

Denmark also offered an illustration of ‘integration lite’, but of a *sui generis* kind.<sup>29</sup> When a national referendum went against acceptance of the EU’s 1992 Treaty of Maastricht,<sup>30</sup> the Danish authorities negotiated with their partners specific national ‘opt-outs’ (confirmed at the Edinburgh European Council of 12 December 1992) from four of the more controversial dimensions of European integration: the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), European defence cooperation outside NATO,<sup>31</sup> Union citizenship, and EU cooperation on justice and home affairs. The Danish people accepted the resulting compromise in a further referendum. The opt-out from what is now the ESDP has never been lifted, and it produces today a paradoxical situation in which Denmark is the least formally engaged in ESDP of all the Nordic countries despite being the only ‘doubly integrated’ one (in both NATO and the EU) and having defence doctrines and practices that are closer than those of other Nordic countries to what might be called the European ‘mainstream’.<sup>32</sup> It is no secret that the Danish defence elite have found the consequences of this opt-out increasingly frustrating and have felt obliged to seek ways of working round it in specific cases to avoid an unacceptable degree of marginalization.<sup>33</sup> The question of whether and in what context to hold a national referendum seeking repeal of the opt-outs remains a live one in Danish politics.

### III. Nordic midwives at the birth of the European Security and Defence Policy

The EU’s decision, at the Helsinki European Council of December 1999, to take a direct role for the first time in military crisis management and to establish its own military institutions and defence capability goals for the purpose—the policy package now defined as the ESDP—was not without antecedents.<sup>34</sup> Steps had been taken towards it in the 1992 Treaty of Maastricht, which envisaged the EU’s stimulating WEU operations to serve its own policy goals, and the 1997

<sup>29</sup> Larsen, H., ‘Denmark and the EU’s defence dimension: opt-out across the board?’, N. Græger, H. Larsen and H. Ojanen, *The ESDP and the Nordic Countries: Four Variations on a Theme*, Programme on the Northern Dimension of the CFSP no. 16 (Ulkopoliittinen instituutti: Helsinki, 2002), pp. 90–153.

<sup>30</sup> The Treaty on European Union (Treaty of Maastricht) was signed on 29 July 1992 and entered into force on 1 Nov. 1993. The consolidated text of the treaty as amended is available at URL <<http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/en/treaties/index.htm>>.

<sup>31</sup> As well as opting out from the EU policies that would eventually develop into the ESDP, Denmark declined to become a full member of the WEU as it could have done (as a member of both the EU and NATO) and opted for observer status.

<sup>32</sup> E.g., Denmark has moved definitively away from the tradition of national territorial defence with its defence policy statement of June 2004, which defines only 2 tasks for its defence forces: overseas operations and support for new-style ‘homeland security’. Danish Defence Command, ‘The Danish Defence Agreement 2005–2009’, 10 June 2004, URL <<http://forsvaret.dk/FKO/eng/Defence+Agreement/>>. See chapter 1 in this volume.

<sup>33</sup> A notorious example was the occasion when the Danish member of the EU Military Committee gave what turned out to be the casting vote to choose a Finnish general as the first chairman of the committee, when he should strictly speaking not have voted at all. Larsen (note 29).

<sup>34</sup> Council of the European Union (note 1).

Treaty of Amsterdam, which envisaged the EU's taking full political responsibility for such operations and 'availing itself' of the WEU as a tool.<sup>35</sup> Finland and Sweden took an active part in the policy formation that led to these results, throwing their weight decisively behind the choice of formulae that halted the EU's defence ambitions far short of mutually guaranteed 'real' defence.<sup>36</sup> Their view prevailed thanks to a superficially unlikely alliance with the United Kingdom, which (together with Italy and some smaller states) wanted to limit the EU's defence competence in order to avoid competing with or undermining NATO.

During 1999, when the EU members sat down to design their own directly controlled defence operational capability—and in the process to steal all the active substance out of the WEU—the same coalition was reconstituted. From the UK's viewpoint, the Finnish–Swedish position provided a guarantee against the EU's sliding directly into a true 'common defence'; for Finland and Sweden, the UK's approach protected them from being forced into a 'second-class citizen' status by the importation of direct guarantees—which they could not have shared—into the EU's treaty apparatus.<sup>37</sup> Even so, the Nordic neutrals and the UK found themselves on opposite sides, and had some difficulty in arriving at consensus, on issues like the creation of the EU Military Staff and Military Committee and the appointment of former NATO Secretary General Javier Solana to preside over the new machinery.<sup>38</sup> The Nordic countries' concern here was to avoid 'militarization' of the EU's philosophy, mechanisms and image: and they pursued the same cause to greater practical effect by proposing, successfully, that the ESDP should establish capability goals and planning and deployment options for non-military as well as military crisis management tools.<sup>39</sup>

The period of pre-negotiation, adoption and realization of the ESDP was a testing time for Finnish and Swedish diplomacy, from which they emerged,

<sup>35</sup> Treaty on European Union (note 30), Article J4.2; and Article J7 of the Treaty of Amsterdam amending the Treaty on European Union, the Treaties Establishing the European Communities and Certain Related Acts, which was signed on 2 Oct. 1997 and entered into force on 1 May 1999. The text of the later treaty is available at URL <[http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/en/treaties/treaties\\_other.htm](http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/en/treaties/treaties_other.htm)>.

<sup>36</sup> They suggested that the EU's definition of the operations that it might sponsor or undertake should be the same as the WEU's formula for the 'Petersberg Tasks'—a list of four types of crisis management tasks adopted by WEU ministers at a meeting at Petersberg, near Bonn, on 19 June 1992. See chapter 6 in this volume.

<sup>37</sup> France and some other countries contemplated a solution in which the states already sharing guarantees under the WEU Treaty would re-enact these obligations in a protocol to be attached to the EU treaty, thereby forcing the non-guaranteed states (and Denmark) into an explicit opt-out position—very much on the model of European Monetary Union.

<sup>38</sup> Solana's formal title, in consequence of the entry into force of the Treaty of Amsterdam, was 'High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union'. He was also made Secretary-General of the WEU to facilitate the *de facto* transfer of former WEU functions to the ESDP.

<sup>39</sup> In EU parlance the resulting work programme comes under the title of 'civilian' crisis management, but it also covers police capabilities including the possible use of armed police ('gendarmerie' forces) for intervention.

however, with a reasonable degree of comfort and even acclaim.<sup>40</sup> The experience was the opposite for Iceland and Norway. As supporters of modern-style crisis management, to which even Iceland was prepared to contribute with civilian personnel,<sup>41</sup> they were not a priori opposed to what the EU was trying to do: but they did see difficulties in the fact that the EU was doing it. Most obviously, the move of the command role in prospective European operations out of the WEU and into the EU also moved them from the position of WEU associate members—with (in practice) equal decision-making rights—to that of complete outsiders from the EU circle—with no claim to rights beyond what the EU's 15 members, including Finland and Sweden, might offer them. In a logical attempt to circumvent this problem, Iceland and Norway (and Denmark) helped to promote the production of NATO's Washington Declaration of April 1999—which welcomed the prospective EU initiative and even offered it more NATO cooperation than the WEU had enjoyed—*on the assumption that* the non-EU European members of NATO would have full and equal access to the resulting operations.<sup>42</sup>

In the event, the EU did not adopt the NATO formulation, instead offering the non-EU states only a dialogue and consultative relationship, much of which they had to share with the Central European applicant states, plus equal participation in 'micro'-decision making on operations to which they contributed troops. The non-EU NATO members would be systematically invited to join in EU operations that made use of NATO assets, but their access to 'autonomous' EU operations would be decided upon by the EU itself in each case.<sup>43</sup> Iceland and Norway protested to the last about the inadequacy of these arrangements but would, in the final resort, have been ready to live with them. It was Turkey that decided to retaliate more substantially by blocking, from the NATO end, the implementation of the NATO–EU cooperation offered by NATO in April 1999. The Turkish veto was prolonged from the inception of the ESDP in early 2001 to December 2002, and during that period Iceland and Norway had, in effect, to approach the EU direct through the EU's own dialogue mechanisms if they wished to take any part in the first, possibly mould-setting, ESDP operations. (Details of the five Nordic countries' contributions to EU-led operations since 2001 are given in table I.3.) At least, these strains did not lead to any lasting frictions among the Nordic countries themselves: Finland and Sweden settled into a position of trying to facilitate Icelandic and Norwegian access,

<sup>40</sup> Finland held the EU Presidency at the time of adoption of the key decisions on ESDP in Dec. 1999 and was held, both at home and abroad, to have discharged its responsibilities well.

<sup>41</sup> See chapter 20 in this volume.

<sup>42</sup> NATO, 'The Washington Declaration', North Atlantic Council, Washington, DC, 23–24 Apr. 1999, URL <<http://www.nato.int/docu/basics.htm>>. The NATO offer became known as the 'Berlin Plus' arrangement because it improved on what was offered to the WEU at Berlin in 1996; see note 25.

<sup>43</sup> These modalities were set out in detail in decisions made at the June 2001 Santa Maria da Feira European Council. Council of the European Union, 'Presidency conclusions', Santa Maria da Feira, 19 June 2001, URL <[http://www.europarl.eu.int/summits/fei1\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.eu.int/summits/fei1_en.htm)>. See also chapter 20 in this volume.

**Table I.3.** European security institutional relationships of the Nordic countries

	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Sweden
<i>European defence</i>					
Status in the Western European Union	Observer	Observer	Associate member	Associate member	Observer
Volunteered forces for the Dec. 1999 Helsinki European Council Headline Goal for crisis management operations (as of Nov. 2004)	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Contributing to EU battle groups (as of Nov. 2004)	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
<i>Participation in ESDP missions</i>					
EU Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUPM), Jan. 2003–	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
EU Military Operation in the FYROM (EUFOR Concordia), Mar.–Dec. 2003	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
EU Military Operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Operation Artemis), June–Sep. 2003	No	No	No	No	Yes
EU Police Mission in the FYROM (EUPOL Proxima), Dec. 2003–	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
EU Rule of Law Mission to Georgia (EUIJUST Themis), July 2004–	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
EU Military Operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR Althea), Dec. 2004–	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
European Union Police Mission in Kinshasa (EUPOL Kinshasa), Apr. 2005–	No	No	No	No	Yes
EU Integrated Rule of Law Mission for Iraq (EUIJUST Lex), July 2005–	No	No	No	No	No

EU Mission to Provide Advice and Assistance for Security Sector Reform in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (EUSEC DR Congo), July 2005–	No	No	No	No	No
Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM), Sep. 2005–	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

ESDP = European Security and Defence Policy; FYROM = Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Sources: **European defence:** 'Declaration on European Military Capabilities', Military Capability Commitment Conference, Brussels, 22 Nov. 2004, URL <[http://ue.eu.int/cms3\\_fo/showpage.asp?id=437](http://ue.eu.int/cms3_fo/showpage.asp?id=437)>; **Participation in ESDP missions:** SIPRI Peacekeeping Missions Database.

just as Norway sympathized with Finnish and Swedish attempts to extract better treatment from NATO.<sup>44</sup>

#### IV. Future challenges: what are the common elements?

The issues that currently confront Nordic defence and security policy makers, in terms both of deciding what to do and of explaining it to their publics, are not solely or perhaps even primarily driven by developments in collective European policies. Any comprehensive analysis would need also to track the impact of US policies, which, especially for Iceland and the two non-NATO members, constitute a challenge for *bilateral* relations with the USA as well as for collective Europe–USA relations; of changes in Russian behaviour and attitude; of transnational and global issues requiring to be addressed in larger-than-European frameworks; and of challenges arising at the purely national or regional level.<sup>45</sup> The questions raised in this section are deliberately focused on the dynamics of the Nordic–ESDP interaction and make no claim to provide a complete—or even, perhaps, a representative—picture. They are organized around three features of the ESDP that could be problematic for Nordic participants and partners, either per se or in their practical implications: (a) the very fact that it is an EU-based policy, (b) the notion of collective European security interests, and (c) the increasingly ‘integrative’ flavour of the demands that the ESDP is making on all its adherents in practice. A fuller analysis of the existing pattern and trend of Nordic countries’ responses to these issues, with more factual background, appears in parts I and II of this volume.

#### The EU as a defence framework

The most fundamental challenge presented by the ESDP for the Nordic countries lies perhaps in the fact that it is a policy of the European Union. This is self-evidently a problem for Iceland and Norway as non-members and for Denmark with its opt-outs; but Finland and Sweden are also, in terms of pan-European comparisons, nations with a relatively high level of Euro-scepticism where an EU ‘label’ on any given activity risks de-legitimizing as often as popularizing it.<sup>46</sup> Against this background it is noteworthy that the idea of participation in EU-led operations has hitherto drawn high levels of support in

<sup>44</sup> The most recent and strongest illustration of this was Sweden’s decision to invite Norway as well as Finland to join it in forming one of the EU’s new battle groups for rapid deployment, an arrangement approved at an EU ministerial meeting on capabilities on 22 Nov. 2004. See chapter 6 in this volume.

<sup>45</sup> One such broader review of challenges for the Nordic region is provided in Bailes, A. J. K., ‘Euro-peiske bølgeslag mot en nordisk kyst: sikkerhet og integrasjon i nord ved begynnelsen av det 21 århundre’ [European tides on a Nordic shore: security and integration in the north at the beginning of the 21st century], eds S. Holtsmark, H. Pharo and R. Tamnes, *Motstrøms: Olav Riste og norsk internasjonal historieskrivning* [Against the flow: Olav Riste and Norwegian writing on international history] (Cappelen Akademisk Forlag: Oslo, 2003), pp. 426–46.

<sup>46</sup> The judgement in this sentence applies more strongly to Sweden, where a Sep. 2003 referendum on adopting the euro failed, than to Finland.



Nordic opinion polls: but the percentage of supporters drops as soon as respondents are asked to consider an operation that is not formally mandated by the United Nations,<sup>47</sup> implying that the traditional Nordic commitment to peacekeeping has much to do with this finding.<sup>48</sup> As and when the military and operational aspects of the ESDP come to be more closely integrated and identified with ‘full-spectrum’ EU policies towards a given crisis or given region, it will be interesting to observe how this affects Nordic popular attitudes towards them.

One fact that the EU cannot, in any event, avoid is that it is not NATO. As argued above, all the Nordic countries have relied on NATO directly or indirectly for their survival since the 1950s. Open pro-NATO sentiment has been strongest in Iceland and Norway but even in Finland and Sweden there are many in the elite who regard NATO as the ‘serious business’ in defence and as the standard by which to measure their own forces’ professionalism. No more than the UK would Denmark, Finland or Sweden have tolerated the creation of the ESDP in a form that undermined or split NATO or in any way hastened its demise. Finland and Sweden have been among the keenest advocates of respecting and fully using the formulae for EU–NATO cooperation developed in 1999—and not only, as cynics might say, because this offers a convenient ‘back door’ view into NATO proceedings for themselves. Similarly, at the political level, all the Nordic countries tend to have something of a love–hate–love relationship with the USA which leaves them much preferring to live with a continued US strategic presence in Europe than to live without it—the more so as they do not in practice have to carry the main weight either of USA–Europe disputes or of striking USA–Europe bargains.<sup>49</sup>

The trouble for ‘Atlanticists’ in the Nordic countries, as in Europe generally, is that the old NATO and the old USA–Europe relationship of the cold war years simply do not exist and cannot be recreated. The US Administration of President George W. Bush has gone far towards ‘instrumentalizing’ NATO by proclaiming that ‘The mission must determine the coalition, the coalition must not determine the mission’<sup>50</sup> and has driven a rapid transformation of NATO from a primarily static, territorial defence machine in Europe to a quarry for ad hoc force packages to be used in external peace missions, such as the current International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan. The Nordic countries have accepted the new missions and the need for thinning out territorial forces (see below), but they cannot be happy with the overall thinning out and de-prioritization of the strategic cover that NATO (and the USA) can offer for

<sup>47</sup> On public attitudes see chapter 4 in this volume.

<sup>48</sup> In the specific circumstances of 2003–2005, the appeal of operations conducted without the USA might also play a part.

<sup>49</sup> Denmark, with its high-profile participation in the US-led coalition in Iraq since Mar. 2003, has become somewhat of an exception.

<sup>50</sup> US Department of Defense, ‘Secretary Rumsfeld speaks on “21st century” transformation of the US Armed Forces’, Remarks as prepared for Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, National Defense University, Washington, DC, 31 Jan. 2002, URL <<http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/2002/s20020131-secdef2.html>>.

**Table I.4.** Non-EU security institutional relationships of the Nordic countries

	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Sweden
<i>North Atlantic Treaty Organization</i>					
Member of NATO	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Member of PFP and EAPC	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Foreign forces stationed in country	No (peacetime) foreign forces or nuclear assets	No	Yes: US forces of the Iceland Defense Force <sup>a</sup>	No (peacetime) foreign forces or nuclear assets	No
<i>Other security institutions and treaties</i>					
Member of OSCE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Party to CFE treaties <sup>b</sup>	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Party to 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Export control regimes:					
Australia Group	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Missile Technology Control Regime	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nuclear Suppliers Group	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Wassenaar Arrangement	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Zangger Committee	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

CFE = Conventional Armed Forces in Europe; EAPC = Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, NATO = North Atlantic Treaty Organization; OSCE = Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe; PFP = Partnership for Peace.

<sup>a</sup> In addition to c. 1350 US personnel, military from Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands and Norway are stationed at the Naval Air Station Keflavik.

<sup>b</sup> The CFE treaties are the 1990 Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, the 1992 CFE-1A Agreement and the 1999 Agreement on Adaptation of the 1990 CFE Treaty.

Sources: 'Glossary' and 'Arms control and disarmament agreements', *SIPRI Yearbook 2005: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2005), pp. xvii-xxxiv, 771-95.

their soil.<sup>51</sup> In all their elites, a debate is emerging over how far they can and should look to the EU instead for ‘existential’, and perhaps increasingly explicit, assurances of security. Accepting the Union as a potential substitute or de facto successor to NATO is, however, doubly or triply hard for them: (a) because they have difficulty in admitting the real gravity of changes in NATO to start with, (b) because they either are not in the EU or do not want the EU to become a guaranteed defence community, and (c) because their predilection for *military* protection of *territorial* security defines safety in a currency which the EU—however far it evolves—is most unlikely ever to be able to supply.

A third facet of Nordic policy makers’ concerns about the evolution of the EU’s security policy is their strong view that it should not become ‘militarized’ and that it should not develop policies, notably in the field of internal affairs, that oblige its member states to ‘securitize’ their political systems and societies excessively.<sup>52</sup> Finland and Sweden, in particular, have campaigned for the EU to stay faithful to ideals, which the other Nordic countries share, of transparency, legality, legitimacy in the broader sense and the pursuit of ‘peaceful’ consensual solutions wherever possible. Finland and Sweden have been prominent among those insisting that EU policies on terrorism, at home and abroad, should be framed in ways that respect fundamental civil liberties and human rights; that EU policy should in general minimize the resort to force in face of the so-called ‘new threats’; and that more should be done to tackle the causes of those threats through *inter alia* enlightened conflict prevention and sustainable development policies. For the EU to take a tougher and more coercive path would in the Nordic view be not just wrong in principle but also counter-productive, since the Union would risk throwing away the ‘clean’ image it has generally managed to preserve so far and losing its relative acceptability to partners in other continents. It would also become more likely, in practical terms, to be dominated and principally represented by the large European military powers. The Nordic countries have, consequently, been extremely wary of any hint that the multifunctional coordination of European instruments, either on the ground in specific operations or more generally in pursuit of the

<sup>51</sup> Iceland’s case, faced with the withdrawal of the US garrison at Keflavik that has provided the nation’s only defence cover, is particularly acute; see chapter 20 in this volume. For a Norwegian reading of the same general challenge see Værmo, G., ‘NATO i endring: konsekvenser for Norge’ [NATO in a process of change: consequences for Norway], Studieutvalgets skriftserie no. 2/2004, Alumni Association of the Norwegian Defence College, Oslo, 2004. These Nordic anxieties are shared most notably by several of the new members of NATO in Central Europe.

<sup>52</sup> The concerns described in this paragraph are far from being unique to the Nordic region, but the pejorative use of the expressions ‘militarization’ and ‘securitization’ is not generally part of *official* discourse (as distinct from citizens’ and parliamentary concerns) in most other member states. There is widespread opposition in, for instance, the UK to the emergence of a ‘European army’ under *centralized non-national* control, but that is an essentially different point. See also chapters 12 and 18 in this volume and, for an independent discussion of the relevant options in EU policy, Study Group on Europe’s Security Capabilities, ‘A human security doctrine for Europe’, Barcelona Report of the Study Group on Europe’s Security Capabilities, London School of Economics and Political Science, Centre for the Study of Global Governance, London, 15 Sep. 2004, URL <<http://www.lse.ac.uk/Depts/global/Publications/HumanSecurityDoctrine.pdf>>.

2003 European Security Strategy,<sup>53</sup> might mean *subordinating* the Union's non-military policies to a military-strategic rationale. They dislike the idea that future enlargement decisions could be influenced *inter alia* by security considerations, or that the EU should begin to exercise a kind of 'neo-imperial' strategic role in its neighbourhood regions. The dilemma facing the Nordic countries, and the many other European states that hold such views, is that history may already be driving the EU in these directions and that—especially if the current tendency of US policy remains unchanged—some such 'toughening' of the EU's strategic identity may be the condition for its surviving as a united community at all. Nordic capitals would then have to judge very carefully where to draw the line between maintaining a moderating influence and attempting a last-ditch defence against the inevitable—with an accentuated risk of marginalization for themselves.

### Defending European interests

In modern times, Nordic public opinion has accorded legitimacy to defence activities that were either clearly *national* in context and content or were carried out unselfishly for the benefit of the *global* community—notably in the form of peacekeeping missions. Popular support has been high, unusually so by European standards, for a strong defence, and sacrifices have not been stinted: these are not nations with any serious 'body bags' complex. This Nordic defence-mindedness has, however, so far been closely linked with ideals of independence and free choice—most strongly voiced in the view of many Finns that 'we can only rely on ourselves', but also reflected in the distaste that the Finnish and Norwegian publics have for the idea that their soldiers should fight someone else's wars under someone else's command. These attitudes are easily understood in the light of history, including three Nordic countries' relatively recent attainment of formal modern statehood. They must, nonetheless, give rise to questions about how much room there is in Nordic perceptions—not just in the elite, but at the popular level—for a concept of *collective European* interests (i.e., intermediate between the nation and the world); to what extent Nordic societies would recognize such interests as a sufficient and legitimate basis for military action; and how much sense of security community and mutual responsibility they feel with Europeans of other sub-regions, other cultures and other beliefs.

To query these points may seem somewhat counter-intuitive at present because the Nordic states have been more than ready, since 1990, to volunteer for just about every operation set up in a European institutional context. Notably, Sweden provided the commander in July 2003 for the EU Military

<sup>53</sup> Council of the European Union, 'A secure Europe in a better world: European Security Strategy', Brussels, 12 Dec. 2003, URL <[http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/2004/4/29/European\\_Security\\_Strategy.pdf](http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms_data/docs/2004/4/29/European_Security_Strategy.pdf)>. Finland and Sweden were among those seeking changes to an earlier draft of this document during the second half of 2003 to ensure that it offered a more sophisticated analysis of threat and conflict causation and put a greater emphasis on prevention.

Operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Operation Artemis, which had a preponderance of French troops and a distinctly neo-colonial context. So far, however, missions of this sort have offered a path of relatively little resistance for Nordic governments, which have previously sent their forces to many of the same places wearing UN blue helmets and which are able—in domestic political terms—to take and finance such operational decisions with little parliamentary intervention and minimal public debate.<sup>54</sup> It is thus hard to know how far Nordic tolerance would stretch if an EU mission encountered significant bloodshed, where casualties caused might be even harder to swallow than casualties taken; or how strong Nordic opposition might be if and when a majority of other EU members proposed an operation with a less than perfect legal, and less than altruistic moral, base. The fact that Nordic countries were ready to contribute troops to NATO's KFOR, which did not have a classic UN mandate, does not necessarily settle the argument. There could be a significant difference between Nordic countries' providing operational add-ons to a NATO-led operation—from which they could opt out at any time, and which was still essentially 'altruistic' in the sense that EU or NATO territories were not under threat—and taking the full and equal political ownership of a mission that would devolve upon them in the case of an EU-led deployment.

The same scenarios would be testing for other EU members, too, especially those that saw reasons of principle not to support the recent non-mandated military 'coalitions' for the initial military action in Afghanistan in 2002 and in Iraq in 2003. A question more specific to the Nordic region is, however, how the region's governments and publics would feel about endorsing and contributing to an ESDP operation that was designed to meet a threat exclusively confronting the southern members of the EU and arising out of their intrinsically different strategic environment: for example, a major flood of 'boat people' or a threat to navigation in the Aegean or Black seas. The three Nordic EU members did not demur, in March 2004, about adopting the 'solidarity' commitment calling for mutual aid to be furnished between EU members, in military form if necessary, in the event of a terrorist attack.<sup>55</sup> Given their own relatively low level of exposure and sensitivity to terrorist violence and their strong normative view that force is not the answer to it, how ready would they be to make good their pledge in the event of attacks on other EU countries (such as France, Italy or the UK) where their public opinion would not necessarily see the native governments in the light of 'victims'? How far will Nordic governments be prepared to go—and how far will their parliaments let them go—in developing

<sup>54</sup> A common Nordic device is for parliament's formal assent to be sought to a 'ceiling' on the total number of forces deployed on overseas missions, after which decisions on individual deployment are made in more executive fashion, on the understanding that any conscripts engaged will be volunteers. Finland and Sweden have both recently raised their ceilings: the Swedish Green Party decided to vote for the latest increase after stating its understanding that this did not mean 'militarization' of the EU nor the loss of Sweden's militarily non-allied status. Bøe, S., 'Norge med i nordisk EU-styrka' [Norway to join in EU force], *Dagens Nyheter*, 23 Nov. 2004, p. 11.

<sup>55</sup> Council of the European Union, 'Declaration on combating terrorism', Brussels, 25 Mar. 2004, URL <<http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cmsUpload/79635.pdf>>.

pan-European cooperation in preventive measures and contingency planning for emergencies? What stumbling blocks might be thrown up by the reluctance felt in some Nordic quarters, notably in Sweden, about using either their own or anyone else's military forces to deal with challenges to internal order and civil security?<sup>56</sup>

### The integrative virus

NATO's inter-governmental character, and its tolerance of wide variation in members' defence practices and contributions, left plenty of room for Nordic singularities. When work on the ESDP began within the EU, it was also placed well outside the traditional EU treaty structure and the grasp of the European Commission. Decision making proceeded in intergovernmental committees without majority voting; the initial Headline Goal for European capabilities was defined in 1999 in a non-legislative fashion that made national contributions essentially optional;<sup>57</sup> and there was no immediate provision for collective financing.<sup>58</sup> Even in the space of a few years, however, it has become clear that this domain of EU work cannot be shielded indefinitely—any more than any other—from the harmonizing, collectivizing and integrative tendencies inherent in Union governance. To the extent that the Nordic countries have been further removed than other European states from genuinely collective defence practices up to now, they are likely to face particular strains as and when the ESDP increases the pressure for: (a) harmonizing military doctrines so that collective overseas operations become their prime rationale, rather than a secondary option for the use of essentially territorial forces;<sup>59</sup> (b) phasing out con-

<sup>56</sup> Again, Denmark is somewhat of an exception in having merged its defence headquarters with its civil emergency authority and in imposing no clear dividing line between internal and external security tasks. In other Nordic countries there is a clear trend to more open and innovative debate on the limits of military involvement, and non-ESDP-related events such as the tsunami of Dec. 2004 and destructive storms of early 2005 in Skåne have been particularly influential in Sweden's re-think. For more on these issues see chapters 15 and 16 in this volume.

<sup>57</sup> As defined in the Helsinki decisions (note 1), the goal was to have 60 000 EU personnel available for deployment within 60 days. It was left to each country to decide what it could and would offer towards the total, and whether to help in providing certain key supporting equipment and facilities.

<sup>58</sup> It was only in 2002 that the EU reached agreement on collectively financing certain additional and joint costs of a given operation. The major costs of personnel, their pay and equipment will continue to 'lie where they fall' with the providing nations.

<sup>59</sup> The Swedish Government's 2004 defence policy defines the aim of national defence as 'to preserve the country's peace and independence by: helping to manage and prevent crises in the world around us, asserting our territorial integrity, defending Sweden against armed attack, protecting the civilian population and safeguarding the most important societal functions in the event of war'. Government Offices of Sweden, 'Our future defence: the focus of Swedish defence policy 2005–2007', Swedish Ministry of Defence, Stockholm, Oct. 2004, URL <<http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/574/a/32119/>>, p. 10; see also chapter 7 in this volume. Here an important shift has taken place towards a primarily outward-looking mission, and the same policy statement duly prescribes a greater concentration of effort on forces deployable externally. In Norway, however, the armed forces' objectives are still defined in the following order: 'to prevent war and the emergence of threats to our national and collective security'; 'to contribute to peace, stability and to further develop international rule of law'; 'to uphold Norwegian sovereignty'; 'to act in concert with our allies to defend Norway and NATO against assault'; and 'to safeguard Norwegian society against any form of assault'. Norwegian Ministry of Defence, 'Norwegian Defence 2005', Feb.

scription—or at least calling up personnel on such a limited and selective basis, and simultaneously cutting back the manning of territorial units so far, that the social, economic and regional impact becomes indistinguishable from that of a professional force;<sup>60</sup> (c) accepting a degree of functional specialization and, hence, of mutual co-dependence with Nordic neighbours or other European partners; (d) abandoning traditions of autarky and national preference in equipment procurement policy, and accepting the need to integrate Nordic defence producers' niche capacities into broader European defence-industrial coalitions, with the consequence that they will rarely if ever find themselves in a leading role.<sup>61</sup> This set of issues is explored further in the contributions to part II of this volume.

The three Nordic EU members—and Norway, which faces somewhat similar pressures as a result of new policies and capability targets in NATO—have made a whole series of adjustments to their national defence plans in an attempt to cope with these challenges, at different paces and with greater or lesser degrees of practical success.<sup>62</sup> Up to now, they have managed to do so without having to abandon any of the formal elements of national particularism in their policies. The elastic of Finland's and Sweden's non-allied status may have been stretched very far by their acceptance of the anti-terrorist 'solidarity' commitment and of similar language implying mutual *military* commitments in the EU's Constitutional Treaty,<sup>63</sup> but the elastic has not yet broken.

2005, URL <<http://odin.dep.no/fd/english/doc/handbooks/>>, chapter 1, 'Norwegian security and defence policy'. Similarly, the new Finnish defence White Paper of Sep. 2004 states that: 'The most important task of the Defence Forces is to defend Finland and its people. The Defence Forces also participate in international crisis management, which requires better readiness, equipment and special training.' It also states that 'Military defence is based on territorial defence'. Finnish Prime Minister's Office, *Finnish Security and Defence Policy 2004*, Government Report no. 6/2004 (Prime Minister's Office: Helsinki, 2004), URL <<http://www.vnk.fi/vn/liston/vnk.lsp?r=88862&k=en>>, pp. 104, 105.

<sup>60</sup> The pressure to phase out or cut back conscription, in the Nordic context, does not arise primarily from the (high) quality of the volunteer forces deployed in peace missions, but rather from the economic strain a small country faces in trying to properly train and arm such forces while continuing to retrain large numbers of purely territorial troops (and maintain the stocks of equipment seen as necessary for self-defence) every year. It is also not easy, if using conscripts, to meet the stringent requirements regarding the readiness of troops to deploy overseas within days now imposed by the EU and NATO.

<sup>61</sup> Sweden has already gone very far in this direction, as 1 of 6 European countries that are party to the Letter of Intent (LOI) on defence industrial cooperation signed in July 1998: the other 5 are France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the UK. One result was the Framework Agreement signed by the same countries in July 2000 easing licence requirements for trade in military goods and services between them. Framework Agreement between the French Republic, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Italian Republic, the Kingdom of Spain, the Kingdom of Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Concerning Measures to Facilitate the Restructuring and Operation of the European Defence Industry, 27 July 2000, URL <[http://news.mod.uk/news/press/news\\_press\\_notice.asp?newsItem\\_id=391](http://news.mod.uk/news/press/news_press_notice.asp?newsItem_id=391)>. In 2004 Sweden worked hard to get one of its nationals appointed to the European Defence Agency created by an EU decision of Nov. 2003 and designed to pursue similar goals for the EU as a whole. Given that Swedish industry also engages in some highly classified collaboration projects with the USA, it may be argued that Sweden's problem in this sphere is not one of accepting integration but, rather, of the gap in normative logic between its defence industrial behaviour and its defence policy principles.

<sup>62</sup> Hopkinson, G. W., *Sizing and Shaping European Armed Forces: Lessons and Considerations from the Nordic Countries*, SIPRI Policy Paper no. 7 (SIPRI: Stockholm, Mar. 2004), URL <<http://www.sipri.org/>>.

<sup>63</sup> The Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe was signed on 19 Oct. 2004 but has not been ratified. The text of the treaty is available at URL <[http://europa.eu.int/scadplus/constitution/index\\_en](http://europa.eu.int/scadplus/constitution/index_en)>.

The question is whether the dynamics of the ESDP's further evolution may lead to a point where not only are the Nordic EU members' values assaulted and their contributions put in question (as might happen for the more practical and contingent reasons discussed above) but the incompatibility between their declared national defence policies and their European obligations becomes patent. The most obvious way this could happen would be for the EU to start operating in earnest in the mode of 'common defence', with real mutual guarantees and real joint organizational and operational structures to embody them, applicable across the whole range of members' defence work and not just to ad hoc operations. At present, there are several EU members besides the three Nordic countries that have set their faces against this, including one of Europe's *de facto* military leaders—the UK. The blow delivered to European leaders' confidence by two popular 'No' votes in referendums on the Constitutional Treaty will also militate, at least for a while, against the kind of new 'grand gesture' that a united Euro-defence would entail. Given the accelerating pace and gathering momentum of ESDP development thus far, however, it would be imprudent to rule out this contingency forever—or, indeed, others so far unimagined that would shatter the already frail construct of Nordic limited liability. Not only the EU's own plans, but also the further evolution of NATO, the behaviour of the USA, the actions of Europe's enemies and the very forces of nature could all contribute to driving a further European *fuite en avant*.

A 'real' EU defence would not only be a challenge of critical proportions for Finland, Sweden and (as things currently stand) Denmark. It would also make it harder than ever for Iceland and Norway to justify staying outside the Union. It would be a historic revolution in Nordic–Russian relations, in that (a) all the Nordic states for the first time in history would be part of a single defence community with the states of mainland Europe and (b) they would share guarantees with the Baltic states within it; but (c) it would be (at least in all probability) a defence entity defining itself not in opposition to, or in distinction from, but in partnership with Russia. It would eliminate for good any element of choice over whether the Nordic countries helped the south, east and south-east European states to cope with their very different defence problems—and vice versa. It would almost certainly require more money to be set aside in Nordic budgets for security purposes overall, if not necessarily for military defence as such.<sup>64</sup> Perhaps most sensitive of all for the Nordic region, although

htm> and selected articles, including the solidarity clause, article II-43, are reproduced in the appendix in this volume. Finland and Sweden were at pains to add the language reserving the specificities of national defence policies. This allowed them to tell their parliaments that the constitution did not prejudice their non-allied status. The future relevance of the constitution as a whole is now moot following the popular referendums that rejected it in France and the Netherlands in May–June 2005; but it is not to be excluded that governments may make special efforts to 'salvage' some of its provisions applicable in the CFSP and ESDP contexts, just as they 'plucked out' similar elements (like the European Defence Agency and anti-terrorism solidarity commitment) for prior enactment in 2003–2004.

<sup>64</sup> Norwegian and Swedish defence spending as a proportion of gross domestic product (GDP)—1.9% and 1.7%, respectively, in 2004—is close to the average for European NATO members of 2.0%. Denmark spent 1.5% and Finland 1.2% of GDP in 2004, closer to the non-NATO European average (excluding



little discussed precisely because of its sensitivity, an EU with guarantees would have to face the question of whether such guarantees had any credibility at all without the dedication to Europe of—and hence, some assumption of shared European responsibility for—the nuclear forces of France and the UK.

Eighteen other European states that already belong both to NATO and the EU live under precisely the set of strategic, political and doctrinal conditions outlined above, although most of them decline to recognize the budgetary imperative.<sup>65</sup> Several others are only too eager to join them.<sup>66</sup> The naturalness for Nordic countries themselves of the ‘integration lite’ policy, and the skill with which they have developed it on a day-to-day basis, often makes it hard to grasp just how singular a choice it represents by broader European standards. The question still calling for a more probing analysis is whether the objective security conditions in northern Europe are still singular enough today to make such a choice rational, and to render it sustainable.<sup>67</sup>

## V. Concluding remarks: divided we stand, united we change?

Shared challenges do not always translate into common policies. The general picture that emerges from this volume is of five Nordic governments whose defence operational choices, and approaches to defence policy conceptualization and reorganization, are converging across institutional dividing lines; and who share some structures for explicit military coordination (not just the new Swedish-led battle group but also NORDCAPS<sup>68</sup>) that would have been unimaginable in pre-1990 conditions. The creation of the ESDP can confidently be identified as one of the ‘environmental’ changes that have helped to make this possible. However, in defence industrial policy, the management of internal security, and other branches of security policy such as arms control and crisis mediation the same five states are arguably no more convergent—or even less so—than any other group of neighbouring medium-size democratic nations

Russia) of 1.2%. In comparison, Switzerland spent 1.0% and Ireland 0.6% of GDP. SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, Dec. 2005.

<sup>65</sup> There are actually 19 states with double membership but Denmark has not been counted in this particular context because of its ESDP opt-out.

<sup>66</sup> The reference is to the countries (the Western Balkan states, Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey, Georgia, etc.) that are currently pressing for membership of both institutions.

<sup>67</sup> This discussion has been framed in terms of the consequences of a ‘guaranteed’ ESDP because the ESDP is the subject of this volume, but much of the same analysis would—of course—apply to Finland’s and Sweden’s entry into NATO.

<sup>68</sup> NORDCAPS, the Nordic Coordinated Arrangement for Military Peace Support, was established in 1997 with the aim of strengthening existing cooperation in the Nordic Cooperation Group for Military UN Matters (NORDSAMFN) in military peace support operations and expanding it to cover operations mandated or lead by others than the UN. More information is available at URL <<http://www.nordecaps.org/>>. See also Knutsen, B. O., ‘The Nordic dimensions in the evolving European security architecture and the role of Norway’, Western European Union Institute of Security Studies Occasional Papers no. 22, Paris, Nov. 2000, URL <<http://www.iss-eu.org/public/content/occae.html>>. Finland, Norway, Sweden and the UK signed a memorandum at Ålesund, Norway, on 23 Apr. 2002 on a structure for a model joint Nordic brigade, which was to exercise for the first time in Finland in 2003. Denmark declined to be involved in this step and is also absent from the latest battle group agreement.

within the European system.<sup>69</sup> The consequence is a new paradox: the Nordic countries have drawn closer in the military sphere where their formal differences of alignment are greatest, but not on those ‘softer’ policy topics where shared Nordic values might have been expected to come into play.<sup>70</sup> Such contradictions are probably only explainable by the abiding legacy of the *national* tradition within Nordic policies discussed in this introduction, added to more than 50 years of ‘de-securitization’ of both external and internal policy discourse.

The suspicion remains that most Nordic governments have yet to address frankly, either with each other or with their own parliaments and publics, the full scale of the challenges confronting them and the exigencies of policy adaptation. Before any decisive change could become feasible, each nation would need to look again at the choice between autonomy and integration, particularism and European solidarity, and look for some way of getting through this ‘pain barrier’ that keeps its national unity and self-belief reasonably intact.<sup>71</sup> Perhaps only on the far side of these barriers, and only on condition that each nation jumps in the same direction, could anything like a true Nordic security community for the 21st century emerge: not this time as a group apart, but in the embrace of a European family that both lets the Nordic countries act more strongly together when they want to and gives them their best ever choice of alternatives when they do not.

<sup>69</sup> See chapters 9, 13, 15, 16 and 17 in this volume.

<sup>70</sup> This is somewhat overstated since the Nordic countries have made reasonable progress on some non-military security topics in sub-regional forums where they work with Russia and other states of the Baltic region (note 18 above). For more on the application of Nordic values see chapters 12 and 18 in this volume.

<sup>71</sup> This is not to say that mutual influences are absent. It is widely held that neither Finland nor Sweden could move to join NATO without a powerful ‘drag’ effect on the other, and likewise for Iceland and Norway vis-à-vis the EU. If either Finland or Sweden had declared certain recent EU developments (e.g., the new ‘solidarity’ clauses or participation in battle groups) to be incompatible with non-allied status, the other would at the least have been gravely embarrassed.