
2. The Nordic countries and the EU–NATO relationship

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I. Introduction

The post-cold war era has brought both new options and new challenges for the Nordic region. On the one hand, the scope of cooperation among the Nordic states has widened as the long list of issues for cooperation has been completed with security and defence policy. During the cold war this field was excluded from Nordic cooperation owing to the different security policy solutions adopted by the five Nordic states. After the cold war, cooperation on security and defence policy has increased in a pragmatic manner, which has led to a number of shared Nordic policies and structures in various international security policy contexts.

On the other hand, however, post-cold war security structures have brought a significant challenge to the Nordic region by creating new ideological and institutional divisions that cut through that very region. These divisions are, paradoxically, closely linked with European integration, an issue which during the past decade has had a divisive effect. The European Union does not merely divide the five Nordic countries—Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden—into EU insiders and outsiders; it also divides the three insiders—Denmark, Finland and Sweden—on the basis of their general EU policy, with implications for a number of specific aspects of this policy.

This chapter deals with the relationship between the EU and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The key question is how the division of labour between the EU and NATO has been perceived in the Nordic states and how the Nordic states themselves relate to this issue, which (in broad terms) implies a division of European security policies into a ‘European’ versus an ‘Atlanticist’ orientation.

The chapter starts with a historical introduction designed to clarify the root causes of the differences in the Nordic states’ policies. The issue of the EU–NATO relationship is then approached in the present-day context and, in particular, from the perspective of the challenges raised by the EU’s Constitutional Treaty. The main focus is on the four ‘larger’ Nordic countries, while Iceland remains generally outside the scope of the chapter.¹

¹ On Iceland see also chapter 20 in this volume.

II. Four positions growing out of a common heritage

The different positions adopted by the Nordic states in relation to the EU–NATO relationship can be traced back to differences in their historical identities and general orientations towards European integration. All five Nordic countries share the same state-centric political culture emanating from a Lutheran political tradition. Seen from that cultural perspective, they all lack preparedness for participation in a supranational system of cooperation such as the EU represents. Denmark, Finland and Norway can also be viewed as being united by a ‘small-country’ tradition, which in all three countries has had the effect of giving national sovereignty a prominent position in their political values.

From an apparently similar cultural starting point, the Nordic countries have been driven to quite different positions on the development of post-cold war security systems as a result of decisions made since the end of World War II. Irrespective of the similarities in both their political cultures and historical experiences, Denmark and Finland seem to represent the two extremes of the Nordic positions towards the key structures of European security policy. It is interesting to observe how Denmark—as an EU member—has been driven into a position that, at least until recently, has been more critical of the EU’s security policy role than the position of Norway.

The Danish membership of NATO cannot be described as a love match. On the contrary, Denmark’s decision to join NATO in 1949 has been described as a pragmatic solution in a situation where none of Denmark’s more favoured options could not be realized.² In terms of Danish political identity, NATO membership has been seen to constitute a break in Denmark’s long-standing tradition of isolated neutrality and in belief in the notion that a small country had better ‘lie down’ and conduct a policy of accommodation to the great powers.³

Even if membership of NATO was far from an uncontroversial issue in Danish politics during the cold war, it was seen to bring clear advantages compared with joining the purely European security structures.⁴ Denmark has, consequently, been counted among those European NATO members that were critical of the strengthening of the European Community’s security policy dimension even during the cold war era. This critical attitude survived the end

² Boekle, H., Jóhannesdóttir, A., Nadoll, J. and Stahl, B., ‘Understanding the Atlanticist–Europeanist divide in the CFSP: comparing Denmark, France, Germany and the Netherlands’, *European Foreign Affairs Review*, vol. 9, no. 3 (2004), p. 425.

³ Boekle et al. (note 2), p. 426, refer to this expression used by Peter Munch, the Danish minister of foreign affairs in 1929–40.

⁴ Henrik Larsen refers to the different form of security guarantees in the founding treaty of the Western European Union (WEU)—the 1954 Modified Brussels Treaty—and to the WEU’s policy on nuclear weapons as the main reasons for the Danish decision not to join the WEU. 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), p. 92.

of the cold war and led to a serious split in Danish public opinion over European integration that has persisted since 1990. Danish criticism of the European Security and Defence Policy is linked with Denmark's critical attitude towards political integration in general. Reservations about a European political union containing supranational—or even federal—elements seem to have a solid political base in Denmark, which was occupied by Germany during World War II. From a Danish perspective, the lack of supranational elements helps to make NATO a preferable option to an ESDP that seems to reinforce the EU's development towards a superstate. Following the negative result of Denmark's referendum on the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992, participation in the EU's defence policy forms one of those negotiated exemptions that made possible the continuation of Danish EU membership.⁵ Thus, Denmark does not participate in the elaboration or implementation of Union decisions and actions that have defence implications.

Finland has elements in common with Denmark in its political culture and history but has arrived at a very different solution as far as its political priorities in the EU–NATO relationship are concerned. During the cold war Finland's international position was characterized by its policy of neutrality and by its special relationship with the Soviet Union. However, Finnish neutrality was more instrumental than ideological. The immediate aim was to ease Finland's position as a country between the two blocs and to give Finland more international room for manoeuvre. Neutrality, and the demands made both by Finland itself and from abroad in connection with maintaining this status, led to a cautious Finnish attitude towards Western political and economic cooperation.

The collapse of the cold war system—including the Soviet Union—and the Swedish decision to join the European Union provided impetus for a change in Finnish policy. The reorientation appeared to be comprehensive as Finland renounced its former general policy of neutrality, replacing it with one of firm commitment to the project of integration. This policy was based on a positive attitude towards all dimensions of the latter project, including the deepening of political integration and the Common Foreign and Security Policy as a part of it. What was left of the previous doctrine of neutrality was re-formulated as a policy of 'military non-alignment'. However, military non-alignment neither impeded full Finnish participation in the developing EDSP nor prevented an ever-deepening cooperation with NATO in the framework of the Partnership for Peace.

Taking into account the character of Finnish neutrality as an instrument for satisfying the country's security policy needs, the change in 1994–95 may be less extensive than it was first thought to be. It was more a question of the Finnish security policy instruments being adapted to new political conditions. Since Finland joined the EU, its membership has formed a cornerstone of its security

⁵ The Danish defence policy opt-out leaves it outside the scope of Articles 13 and 17 of the Treaty on European Union. The consolidated text of the treaty is available in *Official Journal of the European Communities*, C 325, 24 Dec. 2002, URL <<http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/en/treaties/index.htm>>.

policy. This has implied not only a Finnish willingness to do whatever is necessary to ensure the efficiency of the CFSP and the ESDP but also a will to maintain a strong Finnish position in all forums for decision making in the EU. This has meant that even participation in the European Monetary Union, including introduction of the euro, was perceived above all as a political issue for Finland.

Finnish pragmatism in security policy has implied a need to avoid taking strong positions on the EU–NATO relationship. At the level of political rhetoric, the Finnish position might be described as a ‘two-track policy’ in the sense that—in order to overcome the division that is implicit in the issue—Finland has emphasized both the need to strengthen the EU’s military capacity and the role of transatlantic security structures. At the level of political action, however, the picture is somewhat different. It is evident that Finland is not among those EU members that have opposed further development of the ESDP on the basis that it would violate NATO’s role in European security structures. Rather, a general Finnish priority has been to guarantee equal possibilities of participation and influence for those EU members that are not members of NATO. Considering the overall Finnish policy of firm commitment to European integration, Finland could be counted among the EU members whose policy has a European rather than an Atlanticist orientation.

In general terms, both Norway and Sweden could be placed somewhere between Denmark and Finland as far as their positions on the EU–NATO relationship is concerned. Neither Norway nor Sweden has opposed the idea of the EU having competences in security and defence policy as strongly as Denmark has done, but the constraints on their participation in the process still seem to be more significant than those felt by Finland. Norway has been a member of NATO since 1949, like Denmark, and its membership of the European Community/Union has been rejected twice in national referendums (in 1972 and 1994). Even if the feared loss of national sovereignty has formed just as important a starting point for the Norwegian anti-EU movement as it has for the Danish, in the case of Norway the argument has related more to economic policy than to political integration. In some sense, this has made the Norwegian attitude towards the EU’s security and defence policy more flexible than the Danish attitude.

The general international orientation of Norway has been described as purely ‘Atlanticist’ in the sense that, in order to achieve a firm position in NATO, Norway has felt a need to demonstrate itself to be a loyal member.⁶ Taking this—as well as the Norwegian people’s rejection of European Community/Union membership in two referendums—into account, it is understandable that the Norwegian reaction to the decision to launch the ESDP was not enthusiastic. Both geography and Norway’s strategic position have, however, affected the formulation of Norwegian policy to an extent that made it impossible for

⁶ Græger, N., ‘Norway and the EU security and defence dimension: a “troops-for-influence” strategy’, Græger, Larsen and Ojanen (note 4), p. 38.

Norway simply to ignore the EU's developing security policy dimension. The more sincere and serious the latter process has become, the more Norwegian willingness to become involved has increased.⁷

In some sense, Norway's willingness to contribute to the ESDP appears to go further than its position as a non-member of the EU allows. The ESDP has—like the Schengen system and the European Economic Area (EEA)⁸—been considered a field where Norway can try to compensate for the loss of leverage consequent to its staying outside the EU.

The Swedish position on the issue of emerging European security systems has characteristics in common with both Denmark and Norway. Sweden is one of the countries that, like Finland, remained neutral during the cold war. In comparison with Finnish neutrality, however, Sweden's form of neutrality appears to be more ideological and deep-rooted in society; and in the period after World War II, Swedish neutrality had a much more solid base in both military and political terms. Politically, the policy had a long—and positive—history, as it was seen to have saved the country from involvement in two world wars. It was also based upon a solid military capacity and, as others struggled to emerge from the ruins of World War II, Sweden could be reckoned as one of the largest military powers in Europe. Mikael af Malmborg points out that Swedish neutrality was (in practice) dependent on the US presence in Europe—a fact which would eventually colour Swedish policy towards the ESDP.⁹

While Finland, with a less positive experience of neutrality, was prepared to renounce this policy relatively soon after the cold war, this was not the case for Sweden. The Swedish application for EU membership was primarily motivated by general economic needs, and Sweden did not share the Finnish aspiration to use EU membership to actuate a change in security policy.

The Swedish reaction to the developing European security and defence policy is reminiscent in some ways of the Norwegian reaction. The strong commitment of Swedish society to the principle of neutrality has put clear limits on Swedish participation in the ESDP, at least in political terms. The transatlantic link implicit in Swedish neutrality is another factor affecting the country's attitudes. Because the ESDP has been too important a project to ignore from the perspective of political power, Sweden has participated actively in military operations.¹⁰ This has been in keeping also with the changing priorities of Sweden's defence forces, which are going through a massive reduction of territorial defence capacity in favour of capabilities for international operations.¹¹ Owing

⁷ According to Nina Græger, Norway has tried to be involved, and to get influence, in the ESDP first through relations with the EU directly, then through NATO and finally through its relations with the Nordic states. Græger (note 6), pp. 44–55.

⁸ On Norway's position in the Schengen system and the EEA see the Introduction in this volume.

⁹ af Malmborg, M., 'Sweden in the EU', eds B. Huld, T. Tiilikainen, T. Vaahtoranta and A. Helkama-Rågård, *Finnish and Swedish Security: Comparing National Policies* (Försvarshögskolan: Stockholm, 2001), p. 44.

¹⁰ Sweden has participated in all 3 EU-led crisis management operations: Concordia, Artemis and Althea.

¹¹ See chapter 7 in this volume.

to its overall orientation in integration policy—and the clearly sceptical attitude towards the deepening of European integration—the Swedish position is not so overtly European as the Finnish stance (see below).

III. From the European Security and Defence Policy to the Common Security and Defence Policy

From the perspective of the EU–NATO relationship since the late 1990s, two important stages in the development of European security and defence policy can be distinguished. The first is the so-called St Malo process,¹² which in 1998 paved the way for a solution of the institutional issues related to European defence and the incorporation of security and defence policy decision-making structures directly under the authority of the EU and its political system. As a part of this process, the functions of the Western European Union (WEU) as an independent international organization were transferred to the EU by 2000. The EU's military capabilities were, however, capabilities offered by the member states. The system that was launched as the Helsinki Headline Goal in December 1999 aimed to make the necessary capabilities available to the EU, including the command and control, intelligence, logistics, and air and naval assets necessary to enable the deployment of 60 000 troops within 60 days and to sustain them for a year.¹³ A more specific European Capability Action Plan was launched in 2001 to assess shortfalls in the fulfilment of the Headline Goal and to propose solutions to them.¹⁴ An essential part of the capability arrangement was formed by cooperation with NATO, which was included in the St Malo process in the form of the 'Berlin Plus' agreements.¹⁵ The agreements were intended on the one hand to allow the EU to attain its planned capacity for crisis management operations sooner than would have been the case without such cooperation; but on the other hand, and from the Atlanticist viewpoint, they were also intended to decrease both the need and the desire for duplication of military instruments in the EU context.

Another important stage in the ESDP's development was opened as part of the process of constitution making in the EU. This process, carried out through

¹² France and the UK formalized their new thinking on the future direction of European defence at their summit meeting at St Malo on 3–4 Dec. 1998. See 'Joint Declaration on European Defence (the St Malo Declaration)', Joint declaration issued at the British–French summit, St Malo, 4 Dec. 1998, URL <<http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029391629&aid=1013618395073>>. See also Rotfeld, A. D., 'Europe: the institutionalized security process' and 'Documents on European security', *SIPRI Yearbook 1999: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1999), pp. 235–66.

¹³ Biscop, S., 'Able and willing?: assessing the EU's capacity for military action', *European Foreign Affairs Review*, vol. 9 (2004), p. 512. See also chapter 6 in this volume.

¹⁴ Council of the European Union, Presidency Conclusions, Laeken European Council, 14–15 Dec. 2001, Annex I, reproduced in Rutten, M., 'From Nice to Laeken: European defence, core documents', Chaillot Paper no. 51, EU Institute of Security Studies, Paris, Apr. 2002, URL <<http://www.iss-eu.org/>>.

¹⁵ 'Berlin Plus' refers to a package of agreements reached in 2000–2003 between the EU and NATO dealing primarily with the EU's access to NATO planning capabilities but also with other assets and capabilities for EU-led crisis management operations.

the Convention on the Future of Europe that met from March 2002 to July 2003, and the Intergovernmental Conference that followed it from October 2003 to June 2004, identified the ESDP as one of those issues which seemed to require relatively large amendments to existing provisions. Many of the amendments that were eventually agreed (see below) confirmed, at least politically, the EU's aspiration for independence as an international actor. Such changes included a clause on security guarantees and a 'solidarity clause' (on terrorism and natural disasters) in the Constitutional Treaty.¹⁶ The constitution aims to contribute also to the development of the EU's defence capabilities by launching a process called 'permanent structured cooperation'. This would enable smaller groups of member states to deepen mutual cooperation intended to contribute to the Union's capabilities. As a condition of, and a first concrete step in, the process, by 2007 member states are supposed to supply combat units targeted for the Union's missions, either at national level or as a component of multinational force groups.

Another provision of the Constitutional Treaty that contributes to capability development, and which has already been executed, deals with the establishment of the European Defence Agency (EDA).¹⁷ The EDA was established by a Joint Action in July 2004 and its activities were launched later the same year.¹⁸ Finally, as an indication of the new level of ambition of the ESDP, the Constitutional Treaty refers to it as the *Common Security and Defence Policy*.

IV. The Nordic states and the St Malo process

The St Malo process and the rapprochement between France and the United Kingdom that it implied appeared to come as a great surprise to all the four Nordic countries. The process that put an end to the WEU's role as an intermediary between the EU and NATO was at first not celebrated in either Denmark or Norway. Danish policy can, however, be said to have been galvanized into action regarding ESDP as a result of the change in British policy.¹⁹ The Danish Government took a firmly Atlanticist position on the St Malo process by regarding it as the emergence of a European pillar of NATO. This was seen to imply close consultation between the two institutions and measures to ensure that the EU's defence dimension would not weaken NATO's command structures. The Danish opt-out from the EU's defence policy has, however, put clear limits on Danish participation in what could be called the concrete consequence

¹⁶ 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.htm> and selected articles are reproduced in the appendix in this volume. The solidarity clause is in Article I-43.

¹⁷ Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe (note 16), Article III-311.

¹⁸ Council of the European Union, 'Council Joint Action 2004/551/CFSP of 12 July 2004 on the establishment of the European Defence Agency', *Official Journal of the European Union*, L 245 (17 July 2004), URL <<http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/oj/>>, pp. 17–28; and European Defence Agency, 'EDA Work Programme 2005', 22 Nov. 2004, URL <<http://www.eda.eu.int/reference.htm>>.

¹⁹ Larsen (note 4), p. 112.

of the St Malo process: the EU's military organization. Based on the official Danish interpretation of the application of this opt-out, Denmark has participated in the formation of EU defence policy structures but has not been able to participate in decision making or in action taking place in the framework of those structures.²⁰ Of the new bodies established for the EU, Denmark participates most freely in the Political and Security Committee (composed of ambassadors from EU countries and dealing also with CFSP), whereas its participation in the EU Military Committee and the EU Military Staff is very limited.

For Norway, the decision to integrate the WEU's operational functions into the EU formed the most fatal element of the St Malo process. Norway thereby lost its formal link to the EU's security and defence policy and its strong national position within the structure which, thus far, had set limits on the EU's autonomous role.²¹ Norway's primary goal regarding the St Malo process was to cushion its impact in the practical field of European security, and this dictated first and foremost that Norway should seek a position of influence in the new bodies created for the EU.²²

Finland and Sweden responded to the St Malo initiative with a common position, which interpreted the initiative very much along those lines that appeared to be most acceptable for both of them domestically. The foreign ministers of the two countries published a joint article in two national daily newspapers immediately after the St Malo meeting.²³ The article can be seen as an effort to convince the domestic audiences about the positive value of the new process, as the key significance of the process was set in the context of the EU's reinforced *crisis management* capacity. It was, however, pointed out that there was no reason to duplicate NATO's structures and that close relations with NATO would be of key importance for the EU's crisis management structures. These were clearly positions that were defined for a wider European audience.

A conclusion that can be drawn in retrospect is that the St Malo process materially changed the Finnish position towards European security and defence policy. Finland's policy formulation and political debate have since then reflected the view that the EU is increasingly significant in military security and defence matters. If the Finnish Government was at first none too eager to specu-

²⁰ Larsen (note 4), pp. 119–20.

²¹ Græger (note 6), p. 43; and Rieker, P., 'Europeanisation of Nordic security: the EU and the changing security identities of the Nordic states', Doctoral thesis, University of Oslo, Department of Political Science, 2004, p. 231.

²² Two additional consultative compositions were established for the EU's Political and Security Committee and Military Committee as well as at the ministerial level. They were a composition consisting of the EU members and the Central European candidates plus Iceland, Norway and Turkey; and a composition consisting of the EU members and the non-EU NATO members. See also chapter 20 in this volume.

²³ Lindh, A. and Halonen, T., 'Artikel av Sverige och Finlands utrikesministrar rörande EU och europeisk krishantering' [Article by Sweden's and Finland's foreign ministers on the EU and European crisis management], *Dagens Nyheter*, 5 Dec. 1998, URL <<http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/4062/a/25998>>; and Lindh, A. and Halonen, T., 'Suomen ja Ruotsin ulkoministerien artikkeli EU:sta ja Eurooppalaisesta kriisinhallinnasta' [Article by Sweden's and Finland's foreign ministers on the EU and European crisis management], *Helsingin Sanomat*, 5 Dec. 1998.

late on the changes that the St Malo process would bring to the EU, it soon had to take a more active role as it became clear that the key structures resulting from the process were to be created during the Finnish Presidency of the EU in 1999. The historical momentum that had emerged for the deepening of European defence dictated a tempo to which a new member state like Finland—in spite of its constructive and open position towards this process—had difficulties in adapting itself. The flexibility of the Finnish position was thus concretely tested when the Cologne European Council in June 1999 invited the incoming Finnish EU Presidency to advance the creation of a military crisis management system under EU leadership.²⁴ The results of the EU Helsinki Summit on 15–16 December 1999—the decisions on the size and details of the EU's crisis management forces and on the new military organization—were more far-reaching than Finland's national goals. They were, however, subsequently accepted by the Finnish Parliament without difficulty.²⁵

Stimulated by the experiences of its presidency, Finland supported the creation of crisis management institutions in the EU but—in order to safeguard the role of non-full members of WEU²⁶—wanted to see them as new institutions rather than as the simple reincarnation of WEU arrangements in an EU setting. So far as the EU's capabilities in crisis management were concerned, Finland wanted to see the construction of this capability placed more firmly on the basis of cooperation with NATO than the final Helsinki decision indicated.²⁷ As a result of the St Malo process, a new type of reasoning emerged in official declarations of Finnish security policy, where the EU's *military* role for Finnish security started to be firmly emphasized. This was stated in the following terms in the 2001 Finnish White Paper on security and defence policy:

The European Union's role has become increasingly important in the realization of Finland's security interests and goals. Finland's participation in the EU's common foreign and security policy complements and serves to further develop of the country's national security policy. By actively seeking to develop the European Union's common foreign and security policy, Finland is able to strengthen its influence in international affairs and to further its own security objectives.

A strong Union based on solidarity will also benefit Finland's security situation and help to prevent the eruption of crises that may affect Finland, as well as improve Fin-

²⁴ Council of the European Union, Presidency Conclusions, Cologne European Council, 3–4 June 1999, URL <http://europa.eu.int/council/off/conclu/june99/june99_en.htm>, paragraphs 55, 56.

²⁵ Raunio, T. and Tiilikainen, T., *Finland in the European Union* (Frank Cass: London, 2003), p. 134.

²⁶ In practice, only states that were members of both the EU and NATO were eligible to become full members of the WEU. Austria, Finland, Ireland and Sweden (and Denmark, a NATO member) had the status of observer in the WEU, which was the third strongest status of 4 possible ones (member, associate member, observer and associate partner).

²⁷ The critical formulation in the Presidency Conclusions of the Helsinki European Council of 10–11 Dec. 1999 is: 'The European Council underlines its determination to develop an autonomous capacity to take decisions and, where NATO as a whole is not engaged, to launch and conduct EU-led military operations in response to international crises. This process will avoid unnecessary duplication and does not imply the creation of a European army.' Council of the European Union, Presidency Conclusions, Helsinki European Council, 10–11 Dec. 1999, URL <http://europa.eu.int/council/off/conclu/dec99/dec99_en.htm>, paragraph 27.

land's ability to deal with such crises. Strengthening the effectiveness of the EU remains a firm basis for Finland's policy on Europe. As an EU member, Finland plays a role in promoting the stable development and security of its neighbouring areas and Europe as a whole.²⁸

At this stage, as the process had been launched successfully, Finland did not formulate any strong demands either concerning the necessity to limit the EU's capacities for military crisis management or concerning cooperation with NATO as the necessary starting point for the EU's capacities. The role that NATO played in European security was still emphasized, but the linkage between the two organizations appeared to have become less close and clear than it had been in Finnish formulations during its 1999 EU Presidency.

Finland and Sweden had adopted a common position towards the launch of the St Malo process and, so far as the first phases of the process are concerned, Sweden's policy was very similar to that of Finland. Af Malmberg has described the Swedish position as follows: 'Sweden keeps an open mind towards the new European initiatives in the field of security and crisis management, but is in no hurry to make such a capacity too independent of the resources of NATO and the USA'.²⁹ In a declaration to parliament in 1999, the Swedish Government emphasized that the process of reinforcing the ESDP did not mean territorial defence.³⁰ Another element in the St Malo process that made the project more acceptable for the domestic Swedish audience was Sweden's success in simultaneously promoting the Union's civilian crisis management capability,³¹ which made the entire project look much more like crisis management than anything else.

When the process advanced, the level of national sensitivity also seemed to decrease in Sweden. As noted above, the dictates of Sweden's full participation in EU operations correspond usefully to the guidelines set for the reconstruction of the national defence system starting in 1999, which moved the focus to participation in international operations.³²

V. The Nordic countries and the European Security and Defence Policy in the Constitutional Treaty

The next challenge to the EU–NATO relationship took place in the process of constitution making in the EU, when the ESDP was brought to the fore as one of those policy fields where large-scale amendments to the status quo (created

²⁸ Finnish Ministry of Defence, *Finnish Security and Defence Policy 2001* (Ministry of Defence: Helsinki, June 2001), URL <http://www.defmin.fi/index.phtml/lang/3/topmenu_id/354/menu_id/356/>.

²⁹ af Malmberg (note 8), p. 52.

³⁰ Statement of Government Policy in the Parliamentary Debate on Foreign Affairs, Riksdag, Stockholm, 10 Feb. 1999, URL <<http://www.regeringen.se/content/1/c6/01/89/85/f4362d03.pdf>>.

³¹ See also chapter 11 in this volume.

³² Swedish Government, 'Det nya försvaret' [The new defence], Regeringens proposition 1999/2000:30, Riksdag, Stockholm, 18 Nov. 1999, URL <<http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/475/a/3241/>>.

by the 2000 Treaty of Nice³³) were demanded. A broad consensus emerged among the member states about the appropriateness of reviewing the instruments of the ESDP in this context. The process was successful also in as much as it was not notably affected by the Iraq crisis, which divided the EU—on security issues above all—in the midst of the constitution debate.

When the review of the ESDP was started in the European Convention's working group on defence (Working Group VIII), it first appeared as if the political configurations that were well known from previous intergovernmental conferences would be repeated. France and Germany were, with the support of a number of other European-oriented member states, demanding more far-reaching amendments to the ESDP that would have included the incorporation of the WEU's security guarantees into the new constitution and a kind of defence policy eurozone based on the example of the monetary union.³⁴ A majority of the working group members were, however, not ready to go that far and sought to guide the process towards less radical reforms like the updating of the Petersberg tasks. The three Nordic governments were able to remain very much in waiting mode on ESDP issues during the Convention, as the process seemed to be advancing in a notably pragmatic direction that was not expected to demand large-scale adjustment of Nordic national positions.³⁵

The Convention's final proposal for an EU constitution went further in its reforms of the ESDP than the working group had done. In addition to the more pragmatic projects like the updating of the Petersberg tasks, the establishment of a defence agency or even the solidarity clause enabling the use of the Union's crisis management instruments in the case of a terrorist attack or natural or man-made disaster, the proposal now included provisions on security guarantees and a new version of the defence policy eurozone called 'permanent structured cooperation'.

Both security guarantees and the structured cooperation formula, which allowed for far-reaching cooperation in the field of the development of military capabilities, were based on the model of 'flexible cooperation'.³⁶ At this stage, critical Nordic reactions were aroused even if the exact direction of criticism seemed to vary in the case of each of the three Nordic EU Members.

³³ The Treaty of Nice Amending the Treaty on European Union, the Treaties Establishing the European Communities and Certain Related Acts was signed on 26 Feb. 2001 and entered into force on 1 Feb. 2003. The text of the treaty is available at URL <<http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/en/treaties/index.htm>>.

³⁴ European Convention, Secretariat, Working Group VIII: Defence, 'Franco-German comments on the preliminary draft final report of Working Group VIII "Defence" (WD 022)', Working document 36, Brussels, 4 Dec. 2002, URL <http://european-convention.eu.int/doc_wg.asp?lang=EN>.

³⁵ The final report of the defence working group was cautious in the sense that it kept the list of recommendations short, adding to it only those proposals which had the working group's clear support. The more controversial proposals were highlighted by specifying whether they were supported by 'some members' or 'many members' of the group. European Convention, Secretariat, 'Final report of Working Group VIII: Defence', CONV 461/02, Brussels, 16 Dec. 2002, URL <http://european-convention.eu.int/doc_wg.asp?lang=EN>.

³⁶ This concept means that the cooperation could be launched by a smaller group of member states, but without the general provisions on enhanced cooperation being applied to the criteria or proceedings of such cooperation.

In Finland, opinion within the governing elites was divided over the general appropriateness of these forms of more far-reaching defence cooperation. What all could agree on was how problematic the definition of ‘defence core’ was: its terms were seen to deviate too much from the general provisions on enhanced cooperation in the draft constitution and, consequently, to risk leaving those member states that were unable to join the cooperation from the start in a worse position.³⁷ Finland therefore opposed the provisions on security guarantees and structured cooperation while specifying that its opposition was above all directed towards the problematic details of procedure.

Sweden also shared the Finnish concerns regarding the details of flexible integration in the ESDP.³⁸ The Swedish opposition to such ‘deepening’ of the ESDP appears, however, to have taken a more principled character than Finland’s, as shown by the statement that ‘NATO and WEU already exist for those states that wish to commit themselves to mutual defence guarantees’.³⁹

Danish policy in the Convention reflected a decision to follow the new British policy line, which involved a more constructive position towards the EU’s defence policy. The Danish Government accepted the proposals for new ESDP provisions subject to certain suggestions for modifications relating to the openness of structured cooperation and its commitment to the EU’s common values and objectives. Regarding the provision on security guarantees, the Danish Government had wanted to make an addition according to which the execution of the closer cooperation on mutual defence would take place ‘in close cooperation with NATO’.⁴⁰

The differences among the three Nordic EU members resurfaced, albeit partly from a new standpoint, when the debate on structured cooperation and security guarantees was continued in the Intergovernmental Conference of 2003–2004. The proposals made for amendments to the Convention’s text by the Italian Presidency in the autumn of 2003 included a more basic change in the formulation of the Union’s security guarantees. Instead of being an element subject to flexible integration, where participation would be based on the free choice of each member state, they were now turned into a general provision of the draft constitution committing every member state in an equal manner.

A common reaction came from the non-aligned member states, Austria, Finland, Ireland and Sweden: they made a common proposal for an amendment designed to take better account of the demands of their military non-alignment. The presidency’s formulation of security guarantees had taken the following

³⁷ Finnish Government, Government report to Parliament on the outcome of the work of the European Convention and on the preparation for the Intergovernmental Conference, Helsinki, 29 Aug. 2003, URL <<http://www.valtioneuvoisto.fi/vn/liston/base.lsp?r=41554&k=en>>.

³⁸ European Convention, ‘Suggestion for amendment of Article I-40 by Lena Hjelm-Wallén and Sven-Olof Petersson, government representatives and Mr Sören Lekberg, national parliament representative’, URL <<http://european-convention.eu.int/amendments.asp?content=30&lang=EN>>.

³⁹ European Convention (note 38), p. 3, footnote 6.

⁴⁰ European Convention, ‘Suggestion for amendment of Article: 30 paragraph 6 and 7, Part I—Title V by Mr Henning Christophersen, Poul Schlüter, Henrik Dam Kristensen and Niels Helveg’, URL <<http://european-convention.eu.int/amendments.asp?content=30&lang=EN>>.

form: 'If a Member State is the victim of armed aggression on its territory, the other Member States shall have towards it an obligation of aid and assistance by all the means in their power, in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.'⁴¹ The proposal of the non-aligned states would have abolished the supposedly automatic character of the common defence by adding a sentence according to which a member state in case of an armed attack 'may request' that the other member states give it aid and assistance.⁴² As a result, it was agreed to add a reference in the text of the draft constitution to the special character of the security and defence policy of certain member states, but without amending the general formulation of the provision.⁴³

Amendments to the draft constitution's provisions on the EU's security and defence policy were one of the key points for actors in Finland's political life and media. The general Finnish attitude was, however, very supportive of the deepening of European defence cooperation, where no noteworthy difficulties of principle were identified. Public debate focused on the relationship between the new provision on security guarantees and the Finnish policy of non-alignment. In this debate, the new forms of the ESDP drew less criticism than the government's attempts to protect Finnish non-alignment, which, it was claimed, risked making Finland's overall position in the EU dysfunctional. This latter concern in part reflected the change of government in Finland in 2003, where the very pro-European, conservative National Coalition Party was left in opposition and the agrarian Centre Party led a new coalition government. The new coalition has since been criticized in several contexts for having challenged the previous Finnish policy of firm commitment to European integration.

The net result of the Finnish tactics seemed to leave a solid political ground in place for further cultivation of the policy towards EU defence issues that had been stimulated by the St Malo process and shaped under the previous government coalition led by Paavo Lipponen of the Social Democrats. In the new security and defence policy White Paper presented to the Finnish Parliament in September 2004, the government stressed Finland's unreserved participation in the ESDP, including all the new dimensions added to it by the Constitutional

⁴¹ European Union, Presidency, Conference of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, CIG 57/03, Brussels, 2 Dec. 2003, URL <http://ue.eu.int/cms3_applications/applications/igc/igcDoSearch.asp>, p. 3.

⁴² Letter from Erkki Tuomioja, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Finland, Brian Cowen, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ireland, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Austria, Laila Freivalds, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sweden to Franco Frattini, President of the Council of the European Union, Brussels, 4 Dec. 2003, CIG 62/03, URL <<http://ue.eu.int/igcpdf/en/03/cg00/cg00062.en03.pdf>>.

⁴³ The final formulation of Article I-41(7) is: 'If a Member State is a victim of armed aggression on its territory, the other Member States shall have towards it an obligation of aid and assistance by all the means in their power, in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. This shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States. Commitments and cooperation in this area shall be consistent with commitments under the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, which, for those States which are members of it, remains the foundation of their collective defence and forum for its implementation.' Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe (note 16), Article I-41.

Treaty.⁴⁴ At this stage, the government's interpretation of the constitution's provision on mutual assistance was that it would strengthen solidarity in the EU and that it was politically binding on all member states.⁴⁵ The government also confirmed its decision that Finland would contribute to the shaping of permanent structured cooperation and, specifically, would participate in the rapid response forces (including EU battle groups) being created in this framework.

The relationship between the EU and NATO no longer features in the Finnish debate as significantly as it did in the late 1990s. The Finnish Government does not raise the issue as a problem in its official statements: it is more or less taken for granted that the EU's security and defence policy can be advanced without violating NATO's primary role in European security policy, which is still firmly emphasized along with the EU. The question of priorities seems to have become more of a pragmatic choice for Finnish governments in a situation where public opinion has remained firmly critical of NATO membership throughout the post-cold war era but where clear support exists for strong Finnish participation and commitment in the EU context.⁴⁶

The Swedish debate on the recent changes in the ESDP has had a clearly different tone from that in Finland. The question of the political appropriateness of the EU's security guarantees has been raised more emphatically in the Swedish debate, and in this context the EU–NATO relationship provided one focal point, at least initially. The protest by the four non-aligned countries against the draft constitution's original formulation on security guarantees was a necessary action in the light of the Swedish political situation, whereas in Finland it fell under heavy criticism.

The process of adjustment to the final version of the Constitutional Treaty had some interesting features that might even be seen as bringing Sweden closer to the Finnish position of strong commitment to the ESDP. In its statement on government policy in the parliamentary debate on foreign policy held in February 2004, the Swedish Government interpreted the new phase in EDSP development almost entirely in the light of strengthened capacity for crisis management.⁴⁷ However, the statement included a confirmation that Swedish non-alignment would remain, irrespective of participation in the ESDP. This was also the spirit of the defence White Paper that was presented to the Swedish

⁴⁴ 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>>.

⁴⁵ Finnish Prime Minister's Office (note 44), p. 56.

⁴⁶ In a survey conducted in Sep.–Oct. 2004, 61% of Finnish respondents supported the continuation of military non-alignment. At the same time, only 14% were of the opinion that Finland should not participate in a common EU defence if one were to be built. Finnish Advisory Board for Defence Information, *Suomalaisten mielipiteitä ulko- ja turvallisuuspolitiikasta, maanpuolustuksesta ja turvallisuudesta* [Finnish views on foreign and security policy, national defence and security], Ministry of Defence, Helsinki, 27 Jan. 2004, URL <http://www.defmin.fi/print_page.phtml?menu_id=175&lang=1&chapter_id=1785>. See also chapter 18 in this volume.

⁴⁷ Statement of Government Policy in the Parliamentary Debate on Foreign Policy, Riksdag, Stockholm, 11 Feb. 2004, URL <<http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/5298/a/39600/>>.

Parliament in September 2004.⁴⁸ In this document, the government softened the significance of the Constitutional Treaty's security guarantees by stating that the situation in the EU was already compatible with security guarantees: it was highly unlikely that any member state would ignore an armed attack against another. The government thus made it look as if no change had taken place in the relationship between Swedish non-alignment and the ESDP. In general, there seems to be less preparedness in Swedish political circles than in Finnish ones to reconsider the meaning and appropriateness of the position of non-alignment in EU conditions.

If the Swedish defence White Paper took a cautious position regarding the interpretation of the EU's security guarantees, in another respect it signalled a 'European' orientation that could be seen as rather novel in the Swedish context. In the White Paper, the government emphasized the role of the USA and NATO in European security but treated a strong and unitary EU as a precondition for a functioning transatlantic relationship. This position clearly relates to the EU's emerging crisis management capacity, to which Sweden is strongly committed for both political and military reasons. The White Paper clearly indicates that the EU is becoming the most important channel for Swedish participation in international operations—a form of military action that has become the key emphasis of Swedish military strategy. The government thus confirmed Sweden's intention to participate in the EU's rapid reaction forces and in the EDA.

The constructive position that Denmark took towards the deepening of the ESDP in the Convention confirmed the change of attitude that had been developing in the country since the launch of the St Malo process. Support for the reinforcement of the ESDP has been increasing in Danish political parties, and the government took a positive attitude towards the new ESDP provisions in the Intergovernmental Conference negotiations of 2003–2004. Governmental statements clearly indicate that the Danish Government no longer sees a contradiction between the growing role of EU security and defence policy and transatlantic cooperation. In this sense, both Denmark and Sweden seem to have gradually adjusted themselves to the change that has taken place in the UK's security policy thinking. For Denmark, however, this does not mean that it is questioning its own Atlanticist position; rather, it indicates the emergence of a strengthened European dimension in parallel with it. Danish Atlanticism has clearly become more flexible, but the limits of this flexibility will not and cannot be tested as long as Danish participation in the ESDP is restricted.

Set against these changes in Danish policy, the opt-out from the EU's defence policy has become a clear constraint for the nation—a point which has regularly been made by the government in connection with recent ESDP developments.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Swedish Government, 'Vårt framtida försvar' [Our future defence], Regeringens proposition 2004/05:5, Riksdag, Stockholm, 23 Sep. 2004 URL <<http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/4416/a/30463/>>. See also chapter 7 in this volume.

⁴⁹ E.g., a Danish government document states that: 'Denmark should actively take part in the work to create the framework for the new enlarged EU. But the dynamism in the EU's development will in the

Denmark has supported the launch of both permanent structured cooperation and the EDA, but as a result of its special position it cannot take part in the functions performed in these frameworks. The removal of the opt-out is already anticipated by the cross-party Danish defence agreement for 2005–2009. This agreement states that Danish defence should be organized in such a way as to ensure that, in the event of a removal of the opt-out, Denmark will immediately be able to contribute to future European defence initiatives.⁵⁰

Norway has been forced to follow the latest treaty changes in the ESDP very much as an outsider, but the policy that it adopted during the St Malo process can be seen to apply also to the reforms made in the Constitutional Treaty. Norway's concern about being left outside the key arenas of decision making in European security and defence policy is reflected in the aspiration for close partnership with the EU in the ESDP. Norway continued its strong contribution to the EU's crisis management capability by offering a group of 150 soldiers to the EU's battle group scheme established in the framework of structured cooperation.⁵¹ Norway has also expressed its strong willingness to participate in the functions of the EDA, to which the EU has given its consent.⁵²

VI. Conclusions

Since the end of the cold war, the Nordic countries have developed different general policies regarding the EU. As relatively small countries, however, they share the common destiny of having been forced to adapt themselves to changes in their political environment rather than being able to affect that environment decisively. It could be argued that a process of adjustment is going on in all the four Nordic countries discussed in this chapter. The direction of the process is the same in all of them, implying that the EU is taking on a stronger—and more concrete—role in their security and defence policies.

However, national conditions for, and constraints on, this development vary from state to state. The process of adaptation appears to have been least problematic in Finland, where the high value accorded to national security has led to pragmatism in foreign policy. Finnish support to and involvement in the ESDP has not been impeded by the label of non-alignment still attached to its

coming years be concentrated around the Danish opt-outs—the common currency, defence, and justice and home affairs. Denmark has nothing to gain from impeding this dynamism—a dynamism which is crucial for Europe's prosperity and security. The opt-outs will therefore in the coming years increasingly restrict Denmark's ability to influence the direction of EU development and to obtain the maximum from EU membership.' Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *A Changing World: The Government's Vision for New Priorities in Denmark's Foreign Policy* (Udenrigsministeriet: Copenhagen, June 2003), URL <<http://www.um.dk/en/servicemenu/Publications/ACHangingWorld.htm>>, pp. 16–17.

⁵⁰ Danish Defence Command, *The Danish Defence Agreement 2005–2009*, 10 June 2004, URL <<http://forsvaret.dk/FKO/eng/Defence+Agreement/>>, Introduction.

⁵¹ The Norwegian contribution was accepted by the EU defence ministers in Nov. 2004. Estonia, Finland, Norway and Sweden will form a Nordic battle group with the support of a British headquarters.

⁵² Norway Mission to the EU, 'The European Security and Defence Policy/ESDP: Norwegian involvement in security and defence co-operation', URL <<http://www.eu-norway.org/policyareas/security/Defence/>>.

security policy. It can, however, be argued that with the Constitutional Treaty the ESDP has reached one critical limit from the Finnish perspective. The provision on security guarantees was not largely opposed in Finnish political circles, but it is likely to lead to further debate about the validity and strength of this provision, given that territorial security still forms a key concern in Finland. The focus of this debate would be on whether Finland—with its given territorial security concerns—can rely on the emerging EU system while retaining its non-alignment or whether the EU development increases the necessity of NATO membership.

In Denmark, Norway and Sweden, popular scepticism towards European integration has constrained commitment to the ESDP. In Denmark it has worked in favour of NATO membership being seen as the most advantageous context for international security policy. In Sweden the value placed on national solutions—embodied in this case in the policy of non-alignment—has impeded a complete political commitment to the deepening European security and defence policy. In both countries, the change of British policy and the subsequent development whereby the ESDP has become one of the most dynamic and visible dimensions of EU policy are powerfully encouraging a change in national attitudes.

For Norway, scepticism towards integration has impeded its EU membership and this creates a very concrete constraint on its full participation in European defence. This scepticism is not, however, directed at elements of political integration as such and this has led to flexibility in the Norwegian position vis-à-vis the ESDP. No full picture can be drawn of either the Danish or the Norwegian policy on ESDP as long as these countries have their structural constraints, consisting for Denmark in the defence policy opt-out and for Norway in its non-membership of the EU. It is probable that if a full picture could be seen, these four Nordic countries would seem to be much closer to each other in their view and treatment of the EU–NATO relationship than many might expect.