NATO and Member States' Strategic Culture

The influence of NATO membership on Danish and Norwegian strategic culture.

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Master’s Thesis, 30 ECTS
War Studies
Master’s Programme in Politics, Security and War
Autumn 2022
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Word count: 17982
Abstract

This comparative case study examines alliance memberships’ impact on two states’ strategic culture. It focuses on changes in Danish and Norwegian strategic culture during 2008-2012, examining if and how NATO membership and specifically NATO's 2010 strategic concept impacted potential changes in the states’ strategic culture. The dependent variable, strategic culture, is broken down into three sub-beliefs used to identify relevant content in the analysed material. Using national defence white papers published before and after the strategic concept as material, a qualitative content analysis is then conducted to identify changes to the sub-beliefs before and after the release of the strategic concept. The sub-beliefs are also used to analyse the 2010 strategic concept to identify themes, which are then compared to changes in strategic culture found before and after the release of the concept. The analysis found that after the release of the concept all three of the Norwegian sub-beliefs changed in several ways that were consistent with the main themes identified in the concept, as well as using the concept as justification for changes and prioritisations in policies. Based on this the thesis makes the claim that the strategic concept likely impacted Norwegian strategic culture in several ways. While Danish sub-beliefs did change in some areas that were consistent with themes in the strategic concept, the changes were not conclusive enough to make the claim that the strategic concept had any meaningful impact on Danish strategic culture.

Keywords: Strategic culture, Strategic culture change, NATO, NATO strategic concept, Alliance membership.
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1. **Introduction**

1.1 **Research Problem**

From its very purpose being questioned a few years ago (Moon, 2013), and its role as a guarantee of European security being questioned (Deighton, 2002:722), NATO seems to be returning as a fundamental of European security. The war in Ukraine has led to states reaffirming their commitment to the alliance, and an ongoing widening of NATO in northern Europe through Swedish and Finnish membership applications. Despite nearly all EU member states being members of the NATO alliance, and the increasing importance and relevance of the alliance, little research has been conducted on the impact that NATO has on the strategic culture of member states. Every decade or so NATO also release a strategic concept, which “…defines the security challenges facing the Alliance and outline the political and military tasks that NATO will carry out to address” (NATOa, 2022). Given that the concept has in some cases had large impact on the strategy of members states, such as the US and its Indo-Pacific strategy (Singh, 2022), and its role in defining security challenges, it is interesting to examine how the concept may have affected member states.

Strategic culture is a theoretical concept that draws on aspects such as national history, geography, and political factors to name a few (Neumann & Heikka, 2005:6). The strategic preferences of a state are based on formative experiences that are partly drawn from its “…philosophical, political, cultural, and cognitive characteristics” (Johnston, 1995:34). A key aspect of strategic culture is how it forms the way a state will interact and interpret the international system with regards to security and defence, and as a result how they will form policy and strategy within these areas (Ibid.). Strategic culture literature uses many different variables as explanatory factors to decision making, including military alliance membership (Edström & et. al, 2019), but military alliances have not alone been further examined as an independent variable. Given the formative role strategic culture has in shaping domestic security strategy and policy, and the increased relevance and prominence of NATO within Europe, investigating the alliance's impact on domestic strategic culture is a relevant area of research.

Research around strategic culture has focused on domestic factors that have shaped the strategic culture of states, such as history or geography. Alliance membership and specifically NATO membership has been used as an independent variable in explaining changes to strategic culture,
to explain changes in among others Denmark’s overall defence focus by Edström, Gyllensporre, and Westberg (Edström et. al. 2019). Strategic culture has also been researched within international organisations, such as the EU (Alessia et. al., 2011). The impact of alliance membership on strategic culture has not been adequately addressed in previous research, leaving room for further research. Examining alliance membership as an independent variable causing change may enable a better understanding of how the international setting affects domestic strategic culture and its adaption and shine a light on a less explored independent variable within strategic culture studies.

In summary, while there is much research and literature around NATO in relation to defence strategies and planning, and even strategic culture, there remains a gap when it comes to how alliance membership and processes impact and change the strategic culture of member states. Given the enhanced role and presence of NATO, and its ongoing widening in Europe, understanding its impact on member states is an important aspect to examine. Strategic culture is also what informs political and military leaders of their options in given situations, especially regarding foreign policy (Doeser, 2017:741). As such, this is also an important area to research to understand how alliance membership would impact strategic culture and foreign policy.

1.2 Aim

This thesis seeks to add to the research of strategic culture by examining how a military alliance, NATO, may have impacted the strategic culture of member states, Norway and Denmark. Choosing two states allows for an analysis of aspects of the states’ strategic culture prior to the chosen independent variable, and after it occurred, allowing for an examination of any potential relationship between the independent (alliance membership) and dependent (strategic culture) variables. The thesis also aims to compare NATO’s impact among states and identify potential commonalities that could indicate how NATO membership impacts members. Using NATO’s 2010 strategic concept also adds to research on NATO governance and policy steering among member states, as well as knowledge of the chosen member states' strategic culture. Norway and Denmark are both founding members of NATO and share cultural similarities while residing in a relatively close geographic area, which allows for analysis of potential differences of change in the two states' strategic cultures. The thesis also discusses alliance influence in a wider setting, to gain some understanding of the relationship between alliance membership and strategic culture.
One of the key authors within strategic culture Colin Gray claims that strategic culture studies can at least hope to give:

“-an improved understanding of our own, and other, cultures on their own terms

-an improved ability to discern enduring policy motivations and thereby to predict possible actions;” (Gray, 1981:21)

Based on this, this thesis also hopes to give a detailed portrayal of Danish and Norwegian strategic culture concerning a key aspect of their foreign policy, NATO. Understanding how NATO impacts the strategic culture of member states can allow for some generalisation with regard to how current or future strategic concepts may affect other states.

1.3 Research Question

To address the research gap and the above aim the thesis aims to answer the following research questions:

A: How has NATO’s 2010 strategic concept impacted and changed the strategic culture of Denmark and Norway during 2010-2012, if at all?

B: What similarities and differences are there in potential changes of strategic culture as a result of the strategic concept?

1.4 Disposition

The thesis is structured as follows; The second chapter gives an overview of the existing literature surrounding strategic culture. The theory chapter presents the aspects of strategic culture relevant to this thesis, along with a conceptualisation of the theory into sub-beliefs used for the measurement of change. The research design chapter discusses the chosen cases, the method and how the analysis is conducted, the material that is analysed, and the operationalisation of the sub-beliefs. The analysis contains an analysis of the strategic concept, and of strategic culture in both states before and after the strategic concept, followed by a summary of changes found using the sub-beliefs. The results are then discussed in the summary and discussion, with alternative explanations to changes raised. The thesis ends a discussion on the thesis’ limitations, with several possible areas of future research on the topic of alliances and strategic culture.
2. Previous research

The theoretical core of this thesis is based on strategic culture, with a focus on change within the culture. Strategic culture is a widely researched area, and the ongoing debate will be presented to place this thesis within the wider context of research.

Strategic Culture first emerged as a theoretical concept in the late 70s, with several authors making a clearer connection between the strategic choices and behaviour of states such as foreign policy and use of force (Meyer, 2005:527), and various contextual and cultural variables such as ideas, norms and beliefs (Gray, 1999:51). “National Character Studies” from the 1940s and 1950s bear resemblance to strategic culture studies as they also made a link between a state’s culture and its behaviour, however, this was not limited to the realm of strategy and defence policy (Lantis, 2009:4).

Jack Snyder’s study of the Soviet Union’s strategic culture was one of the first studies to document a state’s strategic culture, and make a connection between it and how the Soviet Union acts internationally (Snyder, 1977:5). This challenged the rationalist assumption that states act in a rational manner in the anarchical international stage. Snyder claimed that decision-makers were socialised into a set of beliefs, ideas, and norms that steer behaviour (Snyder, 1977:38).

Another key figure is Ken Booth, who alludes to strategic culture through “culture-bound thinking” (Booth, 1979:55). Booth highlighted flaws in western, rational actor assuming, strategic thinking by claiming that culture is what truly influences rationality (Booth, 1979:64). Culture shapes behaviour as it informs decision-makers of the options they have available to themselves, what may be seen as a legitimate tactic or strategy in one state may be viewed as unethical in another (Ibid). What is even considered a problem that needs a strategy to be conceived to solve is also contingent on the culture of the specific nation, another state may not consider it enough of a problem to seek to address (Ibid). Strategic culture studies are often divided into four distinct generations, each with a different understanding of the concept (Libel, 2016:138).

An influential first-generation author within strategic culture, Colin Gray claimed that both the culture of states and their behaviour should be included in the concept of strategic culture, as the behaviour of states in turn impacts the variables that create the culture (Gray, 1999:52). This makes strategic culture an immense subject that is difficult to research, as it is hard to practically
study that which is influenced by almost all parts of society (Ibid). Gray divides culture into three categories of values, documentary, and social, and that culture is influenced by patterns of behaviour (Ibid). Gray presents an interpretivist take on strategic culture, claiming that “not only ‘out there,’ also it is within us; we, our institutions, and our behaviour, are the context.” (Gray, 1999:53).

Gray’s main “opponent” within the field of strategic culture studies was third-generation author Alistair Johnston, who contended that the first generation authors such as Gray had not adequately defined strategic culture (Johnston, 1995:37). He goes on to criticize Gray for an oversimplified version of strategic culture, that doesn’t consider the possibility of multiple strategic cultures within one state (Johnston, 1995:37-38). Johnston also raises the difficulty of observing strategic culture, and finding sources for this (Johnston, 1995:38). The critique then moves on to the second generation of strategic culture studies, which Johnston claims, similar to the first generation, hasn’t considered the possibility of states sharing strategic culture traits and similarities (Johnston, 1995:40). The third generation, of which Johnston is a part, decouples strategic culture and behaviour, placing behaviour as a dependant variable rather than one of the independent culture variables (Johnston, 1995:42). Johnston and the third generation sought to build a falsifiable theory, with clear causal mechanism, which differed from Gray and the first generation interpretivist understanding of strategic culture (Haglund, 2014:318).

The Gray-Johnston debate highlights an epistemological issue at the heart of strategic culture, with Gray holding that behaviour cannot be separated from strategic culture or used as a dependent variable influenced by culture. The weakness in this logic is that as, Rasmussen puts it, “Gray embraces the holism of the subject of strategic studies, but he fails to distinguish between the subject and the explanation thereof” (Rasmussen, 2005:71). Gray gives a good explanation to what strategic culture is, but his explanation lacks the ability study it as a phenomena or explanatory factory, as it is not possible to distinguish independent variables. Johnston's critique of Gray is valid but his solution of separating behaviour from culture as an independent variable also causes problems as behaviour is culturally based.

One of the major fourth-generation authors, Alan Bloomfield, stressed the importance of a conceptualization of the term strategic culture (Bloomfield, 2012). Bloomfield claims that strategic culture gives meaning and value to other variables related to strategic decision-making (Bloomfield, 2012:450). He goes on to claim that it is necessary to understand strategic culture
as containing multiple strains, or subcultures, which compete in their influence on strategic decision-making (Bloomfield, 2012:456).

The fourth generation emphasised the importance of change in strategic culture and is where the thesis finds much of its theoretical grounds. While previous generations have differed with regard to their epistemological assumptions, there has been a relative amount of consensus regarding the continuity of strategic culture (Lantis & Charlton, 2011:294). Lantis and Charlton name several authors that have focused on change in strategic culture, which can come about due to changes in demography, political structure, or economy, to name a few (Lantis & Charlton, 2011:293). Strategic culture has been described as path-dependent, with key historic factors shaping the path of states' strategic cultures for years to come (Haglund, 2014:312). Lantis and Charlton claim that change can occur in strategic cultures brought on by external shocks, that is events that are a catalyst for change (Lantis & Charlton, 2011:295). They use several independent variables as explanatory factors for change in the dependent variable strategic culture, such as elite discourse, external shocks, and geopolitical circumstances (Lantis & Charlton, 2011:296).

Similar to Bloomfield, Libel also offers an understanding of strategic culture based on subcultures, with different epistemic communities competing over ideas and strategies, and the “winner” seeing its ideas and strategies influencing policy and being associated with the dominant strategic culture (Libel, 2016:153). Using this framework, change in strategic culture is explained by the internal competition over policy direction that takes place within states.

Edström and Gyllensporre look at the effect that external shocks have on Nordic state's strategies, and how shocks such as the 9/11 war altered the culture in these states (Edström et. al, 2019). By using security policy events as independent variables, and strategic culture as a dependent variable, operationalised into different indicators, the research showed changes in strategic culture following each event. Some of the events caused strategic shocks within the states, that led to sometimes considerable changes in security policy (Edström et. al, 2019:181). One of the key conclusions of the research was that small states do have options when they react to external shocks, as was evident from the different strategic changes that took place in the states (Edström et. al, 2019:194).

To summarise, four different generations of strategic culture researchers have offered explanations as to what strategic culture is, how it should be studied, and what factors constitute culture. Traditionally the main explanatory factors to strategic culture have been history,
geography, and political systems. As such culture has been considered static, but fourth-generation researchers have offered explanations as to why it may change. These have predominately been based on internal processes within a state, with some limited research on external factors that could lead to change. What remains lacking within the research is a further examination of external impacts on strategic culture. Even in Edström’s book which does look at alliance membership as an explanatory factor to strategic culture change, this is only done on a basis of whether or not a state is in an alliance, rather than looking further at how that alliance may be impacting the state.
3. **Theoretical Framework**

3.1 **Theory**

The focus of this thesis differs from much of the existing literature in that it is not examining how strategic culture influences decision-making, but rather how an external factor, alliance membership, impacts states’ strategic culture. The fourth generation of strategic culture literature has an increased focus on change (Lantis & Charlton, 2011:293), which is the central area of examination of this thesis. For that reason, the thesis will base much of its theoretical framework on that generation. The aim of this thesis is to examine the impact of alliance membership on strategic culture. The theoretical framework, therefore, needs to allow for the study of the impact of the independent variable (alliance membership) on the dependent variable (strategic culture).

This thesis understands strategic culture as the setting which informs decision-makers on what decisions to make in certain situations. While some strategic culture researchers have understood culture solely as an independent variable (Johnston, 1995:42), this thesis focuses on strategic culture as a dependent variable, with the understanding that it in turn also shapes the context within which decisions such as policy directions are made. This implies that strategic culture could also be considered an independent variable, but within the context of this thesis and its aims, it is understood as only the dependent variable, as it is the impact of another variable on it that is being examined, rather than strategic culture as an explanatory variable to a certain outcome or decision. Strategic culture is also understood as consisting of multiple sub-beliefs. Using sub-beliefs will allow for analysis of the same areas of strategic culture for both cases and measurement of the impact of the independent variable.

The following sub-beliefs are chosen partly due to their use in previous strategic culture research (developed upon in chapter 3.2), and also due to their relevance to the independent variable. Some of the widely used sub-beliefs within the strategic culture such as historical experiences and geography (Neumann & Heikka, 2005:6) are not applicable to this thesis. This is due to the lack of relevance to the independent variable. Historical experiences within the context of strategic culture refer to hundreds of years of development. Further, for example, the geography of Norway is not likely to change as a result of the strategic concept, nor are its long-term historical experiences. This approach is a limitation of the explanatory power of the results, as the analysis is only conducted on a subset of beliefs of strategic concept and claims.
of changes in the entire strategic culture cannot be made. The aim of the thesis is, however, to examine the impact of alliance membership on strategic culture, and see if changes within it occur, which can be achieved by analysing the sub-beliefs of strategic culture and potential adjustments within them over time.

The thesis will conduct its analysis on long-term defence policies, meaning it takes the theoretical assumption that some aspects of strategic culture can be identified through defence policies. The original pioneer of strategic culture Jack Snyder based his analyses on defence policies and doctrines (Lantis 2002:87). Much research within strategic culture is similarly based on the analysis of defence policies in the aim of identifying strategi culture (Ibid.). Based on this previous research the thesis makes the assumption that aspects of a states strategic culture can be understood through its defence policies.

3.2 Dependant Variable – Strategic Culture Sub-Beliefs

This thesis conceptualises strategic culture into three sub-beliefs, which are Core Tasks and Focus of Military, Justification for Use of Force, and Dominant Threat Perception and Cooperation. This conceptualisation will allow for strategic culture, a large concept encompassing various factors or sub-beliefs, to be understood and studied within the context of this thesis. Given this, potential changes in strategic culture identified in the analysis cannot be taken to mean that the entire strategic culture of a states has changed, rather that the named sub-belief has changes, still representing a change. The theoretical ground and reasoning behind this conceptualisation are discussed below, while the operationalisation from a methodological and material approach takes place in the methods section of the thesis. A description of these sub-beliefs and their relevance to the aim of the thesis and the theory follow below.

Core Tasks and Focus of Military

This sub-belief is partly taken from Doeser’s operationalisation of strategic culture when looking at motivations to take part in international interventions, he describes the belief as:

“What are the core task(s) of the armed forces? Should the armed forces give priority to the task of territorial defense, or should the participation in international
operations be considered equally important to, or even be ranked above, territorial defense?” (Doeser, 2017:744).

This sub-belief is used to gain an understanding of whether the strategic culture of a state leads to a prioritisation domestic or territorial defence as the main task of the military, or if it should focus on expeditionary forces, as well as what are considered the armed forces core tasks. The sub-belief is also used to understand the current and future focus areas within the armed forces, so as to understand how its tasks and capabilities may change in the coming years. Resource allocation and focus on certain areas of the armed forces is a central part of a state's use of force (Edström et. al., 2019:43). To summarise this sub-belief covers what is considered the purpose of the military organisation and its current and future focus areas.

Justification for the use of Force

How do states and NATO justify the use of force? An important element of a state’s strategic culture is how it justifies the engagement of its military organisation (Edström et.al., 2019: 4445). This justification can be based on the defence of sovereignty, or seeking influence within organisations, but especially when justifying operations is based on values. Values have a central position within strategic culture as shapers of perception and influencing what can be considered possible responses to events, in other words, behaviour (Lantis & Charlton, 2011:293) (Lantis, 2002:99). Values can also be considered to be “manifestation or component of culture” according to Bloomfield (Bloomfield, 2012:442). NATO is a value-driven alliance, with much of its identity based on the liberal democratic values most of its members are (Becker & Malesky, 2017:165).

Threat Perception and Cooperation

What actors and developments are conceived as threatening, and what actors are prioritised for cooperation? Going back to the origin of strategic culture studies, Snyder raises the issue of threat perception; an actor may not view an outcome or behaviour as a threat in the same way another actor may (Snyder, 1977:13). A state’s threat perception is central to its strategic culture in that it represents the elite view of what is a threat and is both a component of and a product of strategic culture (Doeser & Eidenfalk, 2019:7). Threat perception can refer to both what a state considers threats, but also what it needs to defend (Ibid.). Given the multi-lateral essence of alliances, this sub-belief also aims to capture a state’s perception of which states are
threatening, and which are friendly through cooperation efforts as this is an area the alliance membership may impact.

Together these sub-beliefs form this thesis conceptualization of strategic culture, chosen due to the focus on impact and change of strategic culture, and their relevance to the independent variable. This thesis does not claim that these sub-beliefs cover all of the components of states strategic culture, rather an aspect of it based on the sub-beliefs’ prominence in other research on strategic culture.

3.3 Independent Variable – Alliance Membership

As previously discussed, domestic factors such as history have received much focus within strategic culture research. Further, while research on military alliances has focused on a number of aspects such as internal and intra-state interactions within alliances, burden sharing, and alliance economics (Weber et. al., 2021) (Thies, 2015) (Rowlands & Kabongi, 2017), there has been little focus on how alliances impact member states. To address this gap the thesis uses alliance membership as an independent variable, examining the potential impact it may have on the dependant variable strategic culture. Specifically, the thesis uses NATO membership as its independent variable, based on reasoning presented in the case selection chapter. NATO membership will be further operationalised in the methods section. The impact that NATO membership might have is based on its policy steering, which bear similarities to grand strategy, and doctrines, given that they both determine challenges and threats, with plans as to how to meet them (Neumann & Heikka, 2005:14). The theoretical relationship between NATO membership and change in member state sub-variables would thus be that NATO releases a new policy for the alliance, which potentially may impact the strategic culture of member states. A summary of the hypothetical relationship between the variables is presented in the table below:

Table 1.
4. Research Design & Method

4.1 Comparative Case Study

Given that this thesis has chosen several sub-beliefs that it seeks to analyse across two cases, comparing the results of these analyses allows for a discussion of the similarities and differences in the findings. Case studies are well suited to answering “how” questions and add value when research aims to develop theory (Rowley, 2002:16). Comparative case studies are also often equated to cross-national comparisons as in this thesis research question (Kaarbo & Beasley, 1999:371). Case studies explanatory depth allow them to make claims about causality (Kaarbo & Beasley, 1999:372). The method is therefore well suited to the research question of this thesis, along with its aim of exploring strategic culture theory by examining an underexplored part of the theory. Qualitative small-N studies vastly outweigh other methodological approaches to research on strategic culture (Becker, 2021:5). While a qualitative approach does reduce the external validity and therefore generalisability of results on other similar cases, it does allow for an in-depth examination of the different variables, and most importantly a discussion of the relations between the variables.

4.2 Case Selection

Denmark and Norway were selected based on a most similar systems design (MSSD). This means choosing two cases with otherwise very similar characteristics, but with different outcomes (Anckar, 2008:389). Denmark and Norway share geographical similarities, similar political systems, joint history and culture in the Kalmar Union, membership in NATO, and similar-sized and performing economies. They deviate when it comes to their strategic culture from 2008 to 2010, with Denmark emphasising a forward defence approach and expeditionary operations (Edström et al., 2019:117-118), and conducting much of its military cooperation within the frame of NATO (Edström et al., 2019:142 Norway, on the other hand, had a focus on sovereign defence, with its defence cooperation centred on its near neighbours in the north (Ibid.).

Another key difference is Norway and border with Russia, an aspect that has heavily shaped their strategic culture (Saxi, 2010:8). The aim of this thesis is not to find out why they differ in this way, but this is the motivation of why they were chosen as cases, given the increased probability of the results of the analysis differing allowing for further comparison.
Conceptualizing the independent variable through NATO is justified by the prominent role the alliance has in current geopolitical affairs, and its relative openness when it comes to articulation of tasks, goals, threats etc. This openness allows for greater understanding of the main themes within its policies that may impact Danish and Norwegian strategic culture. Given that the thesis focuses on alliances on two NATO members, NATO is also the clear alliance to choose.

4.3 Method

The analysis will be conducted using a qualitative content analysis, a method that Alan Bryman describes as “an approach to the analysis of documents and texts, that seek to quantify content in terms of pre-determined categories” (Bryman, 2012:274). One of the key materials related to strategic culture are defence policies, which are almost always presented in written form, for example, white papers. This makes a text analysis-based approach especially relevant. Content analysis is also less rigid in how it can be conducted compared to some other methods, and it has fewer “rules” that must be followed (Bengtsson, 2016:8). While content analysis is considered a mixed quantitative/qualitative method (Leavy, 2020:543), its application within the analysis of this thesis is purely qualitative.

Content analysis can have two distinct aims of analysis (Bengtsson, 2020:10); First, a manifest analysis, which is what this thesis will be following, which focuses on what the texts say, staying on a surface level and describing the obvious within the text without attempting deeper interpretations of the text. The second is latent analysis, which tries to interpret underlying meanings in the text.

A more detailed description of the steps that are taken in the analysis are presented after the operationalisation of both variables.

4.4 Operationalisation

4.4.1 Dependant variable – Strategic culture sub-beliefs

The operationalisation of the thesis is based on a deductive approach, using sub-beliefs that have previously been used in research on strategic culture by Doeser (Doeser, 2017) (Doeser, 2016) and Edström & Gyllensporre (Edström et.al, 2019), with some alteration to adapt to the independent variable alliance membership. These sub-beliefs are broken down into questions
that will be applied to text, these are presented in section 4.4.4. As these questions are also applied to the independent variable NATO membership, they have been phrased to be applicable to both. The purpose of applying these questions to the independent variable is different from the application to the dependant variable and will be developed upon in section 4.4.3.

The operationalisation is further based on defence policy documents in that it is within these policies that aspects of Danish and Norwegian strategic culture can be identified through analysis. One of the key purposes of the field of strategic culture studies is to understand and explain defence and foreign policies. Official defence policies are therefore a clear choice when it comes to identifying sub-beliefs of culture and are used in many strategic culture studies (Bloomfield, 2012:441) (Libel, 2020:363). In summary, operationalising sub-beliefs into questions, these will be applied to defence policies which will enable an understanding of Danish and Norwegian sub-beliefs of strategic culture.

4.4.2 Independent variable – Alliance membership

This thesis operationalises alliance membership using NATO's strategic concept. The concept contains the core tasks and values of the alliance, laying out the alliance's purpose and nature, and setting the key tasks and agenda for it and its alliance members (NATO, 2010). The concept is agreed upon and ratified by the heads of state of all member states, who as such have agreed upon a set of common tasks and challenges to their national security and defence policies.

The concept has some key characteristics and purposes; Firstly, it shapes strategic consensus among member states (Wittmann, 2009:5) (Ringsmose & Rynning, 2009:8), providing the alliance and its members with a strategic direction (Ringsmose & Rynning, 2021:147) and shaping, coordinating, and orchestrating member states national strategies (Becker et. al., 2022:493). Secondly, the concept can “...codify past decisions and practices and thus solidify the Alliance’s foundation. Codification is akin to vacuum-cleaning, as one senior NATO official put it: a new Strategic Concept summarizes and formalizes the string of ministerial communiqués and lesser decisions that have emerged since the last Strategic Concept” (Ringsmose & Rynning, 2009:7). (Ringsmose & Rynning, 2021:147-148). Given this role that the strategic concept has within NATO, it is a fitting independent variable to use given the thesis aim of understanding how NATO impacts member states' strategic culture. Using the 2010 concept is justified by it being the second most recent concept to be released, while the
2022 concept would increase validity through more recent findings, its release is so recent that the impact on strategic culture will not be possible to examine.

4.4.3 Analytical Steps

In the aim of increasing reliability of the thesis, the steps that are taken during the analysis are as follows:

Firstly, the questions used to operationalise the sub-beliefs are applied to the independent variable, the 2010 strategic concept. The goal here is to identify themes in the independent variable through the questions that can be used to compare with the changes identified in the sub-beliefs prior to and after to release of the concept. Given that NATO consists of many states all with different strategic cultures, these themes cannot be claimed represent NATO culture in the way they represent Danish and Norwegian culture.

Secondly, the questions will be applied to Norwegian and Danish defence policies prior to the release of the strategic concept, to identify and summarise sub-beliefs of the state’s strategic culture prior to the concept.

Thirdly, the questions will be applied to Norwegian and Danish defence policies after the release of the strategic concept, to identify and summarise sub-beliefs of the state’s strategic culture following the concept.

Finally, the changes in sub-beliefs for each state before and after the release of the concept will be summarised and compared with themes found in the strategic concept. If changes in sub-beliefs occur that are consistent with themes found in the concept, that could imply that the concept has impacted the sub-belief. Later in the discussion, other explanations to the change in sub-beliefs outside of alliance membership will be raised to examine if other factors could have caused the change.

4.4.4 Examples of Coding

Table 2
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-belief</th>
<th>Operationalisation</th>
<th>Example of code found in text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Core Tasks and Focus of Military** | Should the armed forces focus on sovereign defence or expeditionary missions? What are considered the key tasks of the armed forces? What are the current and future focus areas for NATO/State Armed forces? | “The primary purpose of the Danish Armed Forces is to enforce the sovereignty of the Kingdom of Denmark and to ensure the continued existence and integrity of the country.” (Forsvaret, 2009:1)  
“…the Danish Armed Forces are currently undergoing an extensive transformation from a traditional mobilisation defence to a modern deployable defence force” (Forsvaret, 2009:1) |
| **Justification for the Use of Force** | What values does the state/NATO justify potential use of force to protect? How do NATO/states justify using force?                                                                                                   | “More than ever, we need international consensus on when, and how, force can be used. The experience of the past few years shows that UN anchoring is vital, both to have the legal basis under international law in connection with the implementation of an operation, and to create the necessary legitimacy throughout the duration of the operation” (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:34)  
*Quote translated from original document.* |
| **Threat Perception and Cooperation** | What are considered the main threats to the states/NATO? What geographical area is considered an area of importance? What states or nonstate actors are considered partners or threats? | “Today, the Euro-Atlantic area is at peace and the threat of a conventional attack against NATO territory is low” (NATO, 2010:10).  
“Denmark works for the widest possible development of the missile defence plans in a close and confident cooperation with Russia.” (Forsvaret, 2013:16) |
4.5 Material

Defence Policy White Papers

This thesis uses defence policy white papers from Norway and Denmark for the closest periods prior to and after the 2010 strategic concept, also taking into consideration the period in which the papers were drafted. For Denmark prior to the release of the strategic concept the Danish Defence Agreement 2010-2014 has been chosen as the text to be analysed. Given the years indicated on the document this may seem counterintuitive but as the document was released in June 2009 and was the result of analysis and needs by the armed forces over the years prior, this will give an overview of strategic culture before the strategic concept (Forsvaret, 2009).

The Danish Defence Agreement 2013-2017 was presented in November 2012, two years after the strategic concept, and was drafted and agreed upon following the introduction of the concept (Forsvaret, 2012). For Norway, the defence white paper “Et forsvar til vern om Norges sikkerhet, interesser og verdier” summarises Norwegian defence and political security situation and priorities for the period 2007-2012, and is introduced in 2008 (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008). This document is a little further reaching than its Danish counterpart as it also discusses political security aspects while the Danish document focuses mainly on the armed forces and its priorities. This is not anticipated to be an issue as the questions posed in the operationalisation focus on armed forces and not the wider state. For the post strategic concept period the white paper “Et forsvar for vår tid”, will be used, and is introduced in 2012 (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012)

These documents all have a similar purpose and aim, and cover similar timelines, while not being released to long before or too long after the introduction of the strategic concept. Further, they are drafted by national security professionals and politicians, and are agreed upon by the state’s respective parliaments. The documents were chosen for these reasons, and their articulation of national defence strategy, priorities, and reasoning.
5. The Strategic Culture of Denmark and Norway

The analysis will be divided into four sections, starting with an analysis of the 2010 strategic concept, followed by an analysis of Danish strategic culture prior to and after the strategic concept, then an analysis of Norwegian strategic culture prior to and after the strategic concept, finishing with a summary and cross-national comparison of the results.

5.1 NATO Strategic Concept 2010

5.1.1 Core Tasks and Focus

Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Should the NATO focus on sovereign defence or expeditionary missions?</th>
<th>What are considered the key tasks of NATO?</th>
<th>What are the current and future focus areas for the armed forces?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balanced</strong> expeditionary and collective defence</td>
<td>Collective member states defence and deterrence. <strong>“Crisis management”</strong> &amp; expeditionary operations. <strong>International</strong> cooperation &amp; dialogue on non-proliferation, missile defence etc.</td>
<td><strong>Forward</strong> deployable forces for expeditionary missions. <strong>Training</strong> local non-NATO troops. <strong>Deterring</strong> capabilities to bolster collective defence. <strong>Increased</strong> cooperation and cooperation on non-proliferation, missile defence etc. <strong>Cyber</strong> capabilities &amp; nuclear, biological defence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sovereign or expeditionary?

Defence of member state territory and populations is a core task of the alliance (NATO, 2010:14). Given that NATO is an alliance this defence relates to the collective defence of all member states, and not a specific state's sovereignty. NATO response force troops are also expected to be able to carry out expeditionary missions (NATO, 2010:15). Under one of their core tasks, crises management (which seems to refer to expeditionary missions and interventions such as the Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan (NATO, 2022b), the concept discusses expeditionary missions including counterinsurgency, stabilization, and reconstruction.
(NATO, 2010:21). In addition, it mentions its ability to deploy troops to “manage ongoing hostilities”, and its ability to handle international conflicts (NATO, 2010:19-20).

Core Tasks

The strategic concept lists three core tasks for NATO; Protecting its member state's security and freedom through collective defence, here article 5 is mentioned with reference to responding to aggression, but the concept also refers to protecting against “emerging security challenges” (NATO, 2010:7). A part of member state defence is also building deterrence by ensuring there is an appropriate array of capabilities available (Ibid.). Its second core task is crisis management, which NATO should address before, during and after crises, this refers mainly to conflicts and is tied to these conflicts posing a risk to NATO security (NATO, 2010:7-8).

Given some of the capabilities the concept claims need to develop for effective crisis management (NATO, 2010:21) this task includes counter-insurgency, stabilization, and reconstruction. In the areas it discusses crisis management the concept only seems to include conflict-related crises. Its third task is cooperating with other relevant partners and actors to handle security development beyond member state borders (NATO, 2010:8). Beyond controlling security issues, the alliance also seeks to cooperate on topics such as nonproliferation, disarmament, and arms control (Ibid.).

Focus areas

The concept raises a number of different ways it needs to develop its organisation, forces, and future focus. At the core of these developments is the balance between conventional and nuclear capabilities (NATO, 2010:15). The development of deployable conventional troops is also raised, to ensure expeditionary capabilities (Ibid.) (NATO, 2010:21). NATO’s defensive abilities are also highlighted, with focus on building its ability to defend against chemical, radiological, biological, and nuclear weapons (NATO, 2010:16), as well as improving its capabilities when it comes to cyber defence. Beyond developing its own troops, the concept also emphasises training local troops of partners to combat terrorism (NATO, 2010:16).

The concept also covers energy security, focusing on developing the protection of critical infrastructure, and contingency planning (Ibid.). Beyond physical military capabilities, the concept also raises the development of military doctrine to meet expeditionary operation needs
As an organisation NATO also will build and develop existing partnerships with actors such as the EU and UN (NATO, 2010:26). The alliance will also continue to build out its ability to deter and its collective defence (NATO, 2010:7), as well as the dialogue and cooperation on non-proliferation, missile defence etc. (NATO, 2010:8).

5.1.2 Justification For Use of Force

Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What values does NATO justify potential use of force to protect?</th>
<th>How does NATO justify using force?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual &amp; Democratic liberties</strong></td>
<td>Protecting members states from attacks (collective defence).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Human Rights Rule of Law</strong></td>
<td>Manage crises and conflicts outside borders that threat member security or strategic interests</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Values

The concept invokes a number of values when discussing its purpose and what it as a defensive alliance aims to defend and promote, “... the Alliance remains an unparalleled community of freedom, peace, security and shared values” (NATO, 2010:5). Some of the main values raised are individual and democratic liberties, human rights, and the rule of law (NATO, 2010:6). Democratic and individual liberties are mentioned in relation to membership in the alliance (NATO, 2010:8). The concept mentions the goal of a whole and free Europe, with common values, and shared democratic values are seen as a requirement for membership (NATO, 2010:25). Beyond specific values, the concept mentions “common values” in a number of ways, from talking of the importance of protecting common values within the alliance (NATO, 2010:5), to partnering with other partners in the purpose of “defending the values on which our alliance is based on” (NATO, 2010:26). Further, common values are also mentioned as a reason for closer cooperation with the EU (NATO, 2010:28), and as to why the alliance is a source of hope (NATO, 2010:35). The concept ends by claiming that the values individual liberty, democracy, human rights and the rule of law must be defended through “through unity, solidarity, strength and resolve.” (Ibid.).

Justification of force

The use of force is tied to the defence of member states from attacks (NATO, 2010:4). This theme continues throughout the concept (NATO, 2010:7). Protecting the security of NATO member's territory and populations is the key justification used to justify the existence of the alliance and development of deterring capabilities, and in extent the potential use of force (Ibid.)
The concept states that while the alliance does not point out an adversary if a member is threatened it will respond with resolve (NATO, 2010:14). NATO will also utilize force and engage in conflicts beyond its borders if they pose a direct threat to the alliance’s territory and populations (NATO, 2010:19-20).

5.1.3 Threat Perception

Table 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are considered the main threats to NATO?</th>
<th>What geographical area is considered an area of importance?</th>
<th>What states or non-state actors are considered partners or threats?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Potential</strong> aggression against NATO (low risk).</td>
<td><strong>Euro-Atlantic</strong> incl. Western Balkans and east Europe.</td>
<td>EU and UN partnerships Russia partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Crisis</strong>s and conflicts outside borders posing security risk to members or strategic interests.</td>
<td><strong>Gulf</strong> region.</td>
<td><strong>Terrorist</strong> groups and criminal organisations threatening actors Non-NATO states building military capabilities (nuclear weapons etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cyber-attacks</strong> and risks to critical infrastructure incl. communication lines.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Energy</strong> security.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Build-up</strong> of military capabilities Nuclear and ballistic missiles etc.) in volatile areas.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Terrorism</strong> and criminal activity.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Main Threats

The concept claims the bond between alliance members exists to defend against attacks, and manage conflicts and post-conflict situations (NATO, 2010:4). This would imply that the alliance considers potential aggressor actors, conflicts, and the aftermath of them as threats. NATO’s reliance on nuclear weapons is also contingent upon non-alliance members owning nuclear weapons, meaning that nuclear states are also considered a threat (Ibid.). The concept again highlights aggressive actors as a threat needing collective defence against, along with, where they threaten member state security, crises that could develop into conflicts (NATO, 2010:7-8).
In its threat perception section (NATO, 2010:10), the concept claims the Euro-Atlantic area is at peace, and there is a low risk of a conventional attack against NATO. A threat that is highlighted is non-alliance members building increased military capabilities such as ballistic missiles, although no specific state is pointed out (NATO, 2010:10), this is considered a threat to the Euro-Atlantic area. States acquiring nuclear weapons, especially in volatile regions, is also considered a threat (Ibid.). The concept considers terrorism to be a direct threat to the security of the alliance and its areas of interest, as well as to international stability and prosperity, and terrorist groups' access to modern technology and potential access to nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons is particularly threatening (NATO, 2010:11). Conflict and instability caused by terrorist and criminal groups are also considered a direct threat to the security of NATO (Ibid.).

Cyber-attacks are considered possible to pose a threat to the prosperity of NATO along with its security and stability, states, as well as non-state actors, can be the source of such attacks (Ibid.). However, the level at which they are considered a direct threat is not reached. Attack and disruption against critical infrastructure such as communication, transit, and transportation require effort to ensure resilience against attacks, and NATO states becoming reliant on foreign energy suppliers and supply are mentioned in the threat perception section, but not highlighted as a concern or a threat (NATO, 2010:12).

The concept against states that conflicts and crises beyond NATO borders are a direct threat to the alliance (NATO, 2010:19). To this end the alliance will continuously monitor international crises that could turn into conflicts that would constitute a threat against NATO (NATO, 2010:20).

Given the concept focus on work to reduce the number of nuclear weapons in the world, the proliferation of nuclear weapons is also seen as an area of concern (NATO, 2010:24).

**Geographical areas**

While the concept does mention the threat of crises and conflict beyond NATO borders, it does not specify what region these could be in, beyond them representing a threat to the areas of strategic interest to the alliance (NATO, 2010:11;15-16). The main area of importance to NATO is the Euro-Atlantic area and its populations (Ibid.) (NATO, 2010:14). The concept expresses NATO’s interest of membership enlargement with Europe, in the interest of a “Europe whole and free, and sharing common values” (NATO, 2010:25;28). This also includes
the western Balkans (NATO, 2010:31). Given the focus on cooperation and partnership with Russia, especially on nuclear non-proliferation, Russia is also considered an area of geographic importance (NATO, 2010:24;29-30).

The third area of importance described in the concept is the Gulf region, with a focus on the importance of building peace and stability, meaning this is the region most closely associated with security threats and conflict (NATO, 2010:31).

**Threatening actors and partners**

The two key partners mentioned are the EU and NATO, which NATO cooperates with on many levels (NATO, 2010:4;27-28). Other partners mentioned in a lesser capacity are those within the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, Mediterranean Dialogue, Gulf partners, Georgia, and Ukraine (NATO, 2010:31-32).

The strategic cooperation with Russia is mentioned with reference to partnerships and cooperation on non-proliferation, missile defence and arms control, and the only point of concern regards Russia's nuclear stockpiles, which NATO hopes to reduce through cooperation (NATO, 2010:24;29-30).

The concept claims that NATO does not consider any state its adversary (NATO, 2010:14). The alliance will also continue to have an overview of the existing threats, and see if these change (NATO, 2010:18).

The non-state actors that the concept considers threats are terrorist groups, and criminal organisations dealing in the illicit trade of arms and humans (NATO, 2010:11).

Given how the concept mentions the build-up of military capabilities in volatile regions is mentioned as a concern this would imply that nations building capabilities in these regions could potentially become a threat, although these are unnamed (NATO, 2010:10).
5.2 Denmark before the strategic concept

5.2.1 Sub-Belief Core Tasks and Focus

Table 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Should the armed forces focus on sovereign defence or expeditionary missions?</th>
<th>What are considered the key tasks of the armed forces?</th>
<th>What are the current and future focus areas for armed forces?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Sovereign or Expeditionary

On its first page, the white paper states that the primary purpose of the Danish Armed forces is the protection of Denmark's sovereignty (Forsvaret, 2009:1). Despite this little mention of sovereignty and territorial defence is made after this, beyond when it is mentioned in relation to how NATO’s article 5 secures Danish sovereignty (Ibid.), its being a national task of the armed forces (Forsvaret, 2009:3), and the air forces role in enforcing airspace sovereignty in Danish territory (Forsvaret, 2009:9-12). In the interest of protecting its territory in Greenland and subsequent strategic interest in the arctic region, the white paper also aims to create an arctic centre to coordinate efforts in the area, as well as an Arctic Response Force (Forsvaret, 2009:12).

Danish contributions to international missions and expeditionary operations are discussed in more detail. “… in the light of the absence of a conventional threat to Danish territory, the Danish Armed Forces are currently undergoing an extensive transformation from a traditional mobilisation defence to a modern deployable defence force” (Forsvaret, 2009:1). Based on its stated international tasks (Forsvaret, 2009:3), planned development areas and restructuring of its forces (Forsvaret, 2009:3-4;8), capacity planning (Forsvaret, 2009:11), home guard tasks and activities (Forsvaret, 2009:22), challenges to the armed forces (Forsvaret, 2009:5), there is a strong prioritisation on international operations efforts rather than sovereign defence.
In addition to this many areas of the armed forces related to territorial defence such as missile defence etc. are cut in the budget, to make space in the budget to support international operations (Forsvaret, 2009: 27-30). Under the expectation that their NATO membership will guarantee national security, the Danish Armed Forces focus on international operations.

**Core tasks**

The white paper divides the tasks of the armed forces into two categories, national and international (Forsvaret, 2009:3). On the national level, the armed forces are tasked with “monitoring of the national territory and enforcement of sovereignty” (Ibid.). In addition to this, they are also expected to contribute to several civilian-related operations such as environmental work, search and rescue, and aiding authorities such as the tax agency, policy, and emergency services (Ibid.). The “Search and rescue service” and “Maritime environment protection capability” are the two key civilian responsibilities of the armed forces (Forsvaret, 2009:20). The home guard are predominantly tasked with guarding, but are also tasked with civilian tasks (Forsvaret, 2009:21). The home guard will continue to develop its “emergency and disaster management response system” (Forsvaret, 2009:22). The armed forces are still expected to maintain the ability to conduct warfare against conventional opponents even if the risk of this is considered low (Ibid.). It is not mentioned within its national tasks, but the armed forces are also tasked with building their cyber defence capabilities (Forsvaret, 2009:11).

The armed forces also have a number of tasks focused on the Arctic region which centre around territorial defence and intelligence collection and increased cooperation with other regional states (Forsvaret, 2009:12).

The international tasks of the armed forces are “armed conflict, stabilisation tasks and international policing” (Forsvaret, 2009:3). These missions are expected to entail high intensity combat and poor infrastructure and conditions (Forsvaret, 2009:7-8). The armed forces also have an international task in military capacity building, training local security forces in conflict areas so they can handle conflicts by themselves (Forsvaret, 2009:10). The home guard also receives international tasks such as reconstruction (Forsvaret, 2009:22). The armed forces are also expected to “to provide relief assistance in connection with humanitarian or environmental disasters abroad” (Forsvaret, 2009:30).
Focus areas

The key development the Danish armed forces is going through is from a mobilization defence to a deployable force (Forsvaret, 2009:1). This process was initiated prior to the white paper but was ongoing during the timeline of the paper. The paper calls for increased work on cooperation around expeditionary operations with organisations such as NATO, the UN, and the Nordic states (Forsvaret, 2009:2). The continued move towards the armed forces being expeditionary focused is “absolutely necessary” (Ibid.), especially as these operations are expected to be long term (Forsvaret, 2009:4). Given the armed forces international focus leading to increased exposure to different environments they operate in, new requirements are put on equipment, training, etc. (Forsvaret, 2009:3). The armed forces are also expected to need to increase its ability to build military capacity and train local forces in conflict zones (Forsvaret, 2009:4;10).

The armed forces also faced budget cuts and lots of focus is placed on “streamlining” and reducing personnel in the white paper (Forsvaret, 2009:5-6). The structure and deployment requirements are designed to suit expeditionary operations, these units are also expected to integrate with other states' forces (Forsvaret, 2009:6). All branches of the armed force are expected to sustain long-term deployments across multiple continents. The armed forces are also expected to develop their cyber defence capabilities (Forsvaret, 2009:10). The armed forces' capabilities are to be developed in the Arctic region (Forsvaret, 2009:12). Cuts will affect both the home guard and regular military which will see various capabilities reduced and removed. The savings from this will be used for a fund to be used to support operational developments and developing new threats, as well as cyber defence and stabilisation funding, and increased munition stockpiles (Forsvaret, 2009:26-27). There is a large increase of funds earmarked for international operations taking part within the frameworks of NATO etc. (Forsvaret, 2009:30). A major development of the armed forces is the planned acquisition of new combat aircraft to replace the ageing F-16s (Forsvaret, 2009:33).
5.2.2 Sub-Belief Justification for Use of Force

Table 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What values does Denmark justify potential use of force to protect?</th>
<th>How does Denmark justify using force?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democracy &amp; Freedom.</td>
<td>Defence and integrity of Danish existence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Foreign policy instrument. <strong>Promoting</strong> worldwide democracy and freedom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Defending</strong> interests in Arctic area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Values

The only values mentioned throughout the white paper are human rights, democracy, and freedom (Forsvaret, 2009:1).

Justification

The main motivation for the existence of the armed forces, and in extent potential use of force, is the defence of the integrity and existence of Denmark (Ibid.). The armed forces and their use of force are also considered an arm of Denmark’s foreign policy (Ibid.). Potential use of force is also justified with reference to defending Danish interests in territories in the Arctic (Forsvaret, 2009:9). Denmark's use of force in international conflicts is tied to ensuring democracy and freedom is promoted in the world (Forsvaret, 2009:1).
5.2.3 Sub-Belief Threat Perception

Table 8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are considered the main threats to Denmark?</th>
<th>What geographical area is considered an area of importance?</th>
<th>What states or non-state actors are considered partners or threats?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hostile</strong> environment and high-intense combat threat/high-level threat to expeditionary forces. <strong>Development</strong> of conventional/asymmetric capabilities incl. cyber (no actor mentioned).</td>
<td><strong>Arctic. Afghanistan.</strong></td>
<td><strong>NATO/UN cornerstone partners.</strong> <strong>Nordic states.</strong> <strong>Potentially EU (If opt-in). No threatening state actor. Taliban.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Main Threats**

The white paper does not consider there to be any conventional threats to Danish territory exists (Forsvaret, 2009:1). Increased activity in the Arctic due to melting ice is an area of importance, although not an outright threat (Forsvaret, 2009:2;12). The new challenges placed on expeditionary forces and the climates and high intensity combat they engage in is considered a threat and could evolve to a high-level threat (Forsvaret, 2009:3). It is expected that expeditionary forces will face threats in both asymmetrical and conventional warfare (Ibid.).

The development of weaponry capabilities is also a threat, “technologically advanced instruments of warfare, such as long-range rockets and missiles as well as cyberspace attacks against computer systems, must also be expected to be used against Danish contingents from all three armed services.” (Forsvaret, 2009:3).

The armed forces also consider computer-delivered attacks a threat, with cyberspace being considered a battlespace (Forsvaret, 2009:11).

**Geographical areas**

Protecting the territories of Denmark is the key task of the armed forces, beyond this part of the white paper, the territory of Denmark beyond their Arctic holding is not mentioned at all as an area of geographical significance for the operations of the armed forces (Forsvaret, 2009:1). The Arctic is mentioned consistently throughout the paper (Forsvaret, 2009:2;9;12). Other
regions of importance that are mentioned that the armed forces are conducting operations in are the Horn of Africa, Afghanistan, and Kosovo, although the emphasis is placed on Afghanistan (Forsvaret, 2009:4). In addition to this Denmark is active in Africa, in unspecified state(s), conducting military capacity building and training with other Nordic armed forces (Forsvaret, 2009:2).

*Threatening actors and partners*

NATO is considered the cornerstone of Denmark’s security and defence policy (Forsvaret, 2009:1). Despite this they are mentioned sparingly through the rest of the white paper, beyond discussing international frameworks and aircraft procurement (Forsvaret, 2009:30;33). Through their membership they also participate in NATO’s response force (Forsvaret, 2010:4). The UN is also considered a cornerstone for Denmark, which it considers to be the foundation of international society, and it bases much of its international operations on its frameworks (Forsvaret, 2009:2). Denmark is not a part of the EU’s common security and defence policy, but the armed forces are expected to be prepared to join its international operations if they were to opt-in (Ibid.).

As has been stated, Denmark does not face a conventional threat, and its focus is on international operations. It does not mention any states or groups as threats, although given their counter-insurgency operations in Afghanistan the Taliban would be considered a threat (Forsvaret, 2009:4).
5.3 Denmark after the strategic concept

5.3.1 Sub-Belief Core Tasks and Focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Should the armed forces focus on sovereign defence or expeditionary missions?</th>
<th>What are considered the key tasks of the armed forces?</th>
<th>What are the current and future focus areas?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expeditionary missions (ensures article 5 defence of sovereignty).</td>
<td>Participation in NATO framework operations and collective defence, also UN. Expeditionary high-intensity combat, missions. National surveillance and rescue operations (also in Arctic). Ensure sovereignty in Arctic. Cyber offense and defence.</td>
<td>Capability development based on NATO requirements (Smart defence). Cooperation with other organisations and states (missile-defence etc.). Interoperability within NATO &amp; UN frameworks Climate change awareness. Growth of Arctic capabilities. Cyber defence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sovereign or Expeditionary

Similar to the prior Danish white paper, this one starts by stating that “The primary purpose of the Danish defence is to enforce the sovereignty of the Kingdom of Denmark and to ensure the continued existence, integrity and safety of the nation” (Forsvaret, 2012:1). It does, however, go on to say that threats can exist anywhere in the world. The use of the armed forces is then tied into it contributing to foreign and security policy (Ibid.). Sovereign defence (NATO collective defence) is secured by international military deployments in NATO. The organization of the armed forces is to be designed around international deployment (Ibid.).

Their expeditionary operations include crisis management, humanitarian disaster assistance, evacuations, and the NATO commitment (Ibid.). NATO’s Article 5 is considered a guarantee for the sovereignty of Denmark, and the white paper only mentions territorial defence in relation to the Arctic throughout the rest of the paper (Forsvaret, 2012:2). Denmark will ensure this support by contributing to NATO’s international efforts (Ibid.). The protection of Danish interests is tied to purely international operations (Ibid.). Initiatives such as the Joint Arctic preparedness force (Forsvaret, 2012:14) indicate a focus on conventional defence capabilities for Denmark’s Arctic territory, especially as they focus on the capacity to deploy forces.
Overall, sovereign defence is mentioned very sparsely throughout the paper, with most focus going on expeditionary operations.

_Core tasks_

Similar to the last white paper, the tasks of the armed forces are divided into national and international tasks (Forsvaret, 2012:2-3). The national tasks include surveillance, the assertion of sovereignty and rescue operations (Forsvaret, 2012:2). The armed forces are being organized to be able to participate in a variety of international missions, from combat to peacekeeping and humanitarian operations. The armed force's international tasks consist of combat operations, stabilization, law enforcement, preventive interventions, and evacuations. Alongside these international tasks, there are also national responsibilities such as surveillance and rescue operations (Forsvaret, 2012:3). The tasks of the armed forces are similar to those listed in the white paper, however, this white paper puts more focus on interoperability with NATO, and how contributions towards NATO ensure NATO’s collective defence of Denmark is guaranteed (Forsvaret, 2012:2). The white paper also increases its focus on the tasks of the armed forces around cyber offence and defence (Forsvaret, 2012:4). The armed forces are further tasked with engaging in NATO collective defence if the need arises (Forsvaret, 2012:3).

The white paper also lists the tasks in the Arctic, including the assertion of sovereignty and supporting other authorities in carrying out their tasks (Forsvaret, 2012:15). The armed forces are also responsible for coordinating operations in the region and may deploy an Arctic preparedness force if necessary (Ibid.).

_Focus areas_

The main areas of development of the armed forces are its continued focus on NATO, active engagement in the UN, and an increased focus on the Arctic. The Danish armed forces will continue to contribute to NATO and UN operations and maintain the ability to quickly react to international deployments. Planning of capability development will be partly based on NATO requirements (Forsvaret, 2012:4). All three branches of the armed forces are being structured so as to be able to operate within the NATO and UN framework, and their development is focused on interoperability and high readiness within the international force structure (Forsvaret, 2012:8;9;11).
The main development areas in the Arctic region include the establishment of an Arctic Command in Greenland and the creation of an Arctic preparedness force. This force will be trained and equipped to handle operations in the Arctic region and will be able to assist with preparedness efforts in Greenland. Additionally, surveillance tests and analyses of future tasks in the Arctic will be carried (Forsvaret, 2012:15).

The armed forces are strengthening cyber security and defence, including the establishment of a Centre for Cyber Security and additional funding for military computer network operations (Ibid.). The armed forces are also expected to increase cooperation with other states (Forsvaret, 2012:25). This includes improving existing and establishing new cooperation’s in areas such as procurement and operation and maintenance. The armed forces will work on NATO's Smart Defence initiative to increase interoperability and efficiency in among other areas, procurement (Forsvaret, 2012:18). As a result of the developments in NATO's missile defence capabilities, Denmark is working to develop missile defence plans together with NATO in cooperation with Russia (Forsvaret, 2012:16). The armed forces are also expected to work in a way that combats climate change (Forsvaret, 2012:18-19).

### 5.3.2 Sub-Belief Justification For Use of Force

#### Table 10.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What values does Denmark justify potential use of force to protect?</th>
<th>How does Denmark justify using force?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Democracy</strong>, freedom, and human rights</td>
<td><strong>Defence</strong> and integrity of Danish territory. <strong>Foreign</strong> policy instrument, international use of force ensures article 5 guarantee. <strong>Defending</strong> Danish international interests &amp; humanitarian defence (R2P).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Values**

The white paper again mentions the importance of promoting democracy, freedom, and human rights (Forsvaret, 2012:1). It also mentions international rule of law, in particular international humanitarian law (Forsvaret, 2012:2).
Justification

The existence of the armed forces and in extent, of their use of violence, is tied to the need to protect the sovereignty, integrity, and safety of Denmark (Forsvaret, 2012:1). However, the use of force in relation to international engagements is much more widely discussed in comparison to the last white paper. International military engagement is justified as a foreign policy tool (Ibid.). The use of force and troop deployment in an international setting is also justified as ensuring the protection of Danish national security through increased “recognition”, with Danish international deployments ensuring protection from NATO (Forsvaret, 2012:1-2). Its international focus is therefore justified by the national security guarantees through recognition it secures (Forsvaret, 2012:1). The white paper also mentions “responsibility to protect” (R2P) (Forsvaret, 2012:2), meaning that it justifies the use of force with humanitarian/values based reasoning.

5.3.3 Sub-Belief Threat Perception

Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are considered the main threats to Denmark?</th>
<th>What geographical area is considered an area of importance?</th>
<th>What states or non-state actors are considered partners or threats?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complex and unpredictable international conflicts. Environment <strong>Proliferation</strong> of nuclear weapons and long-range missiles, along with the threat of cyber-attacks. <strong>Arctic</strong> resource extraction and commercial activity.</td>
<td><strong>Afghanistan</strong> <strong>Arctic.</strong></td>
<td>NATO/UN cornerstone partners, increased NATO focus. <strong>Nordic</strong> states <strong>Russian</strong> missile defence cooperation <strong>Cooperation</strong> with Arctic states. <strong>No</strong> threatening state actor. <strong>State</strong> and non-state cyberthreats groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.3 Threats

At the beginning of the white paper, it is stated that threats against Denmark can occur anywhere in the world and that they are complex and unpredictable (Forsvaret, 2012:1). There is also a
focus on R2P and intervening in conflicts, meaning that Denmark considers some conflicts beyond their borders threatening enough to engage their armed forces in an intervention (Forsvaret, 2012:2). The white paper also considers the proliferation of nuclear weapons and long-range missiles, along with the threat of cyber-attacks, a security risk (Ibid.).

Given its ramping up of capabilities in the Arctic, Denmark also sees emerging threats in the region (Forsvaret, 2012:15). The presence of newly accessible natural resources and trade routes has raised a need to ensure sovereignty in the region (Ibid.). This implies that the increased activity entails a threat to Danish sovereignty. Climate change is another challenging threat area that is raised and receives more attention in comparison to the former white paper's lack of coverage (Forsvaret, 2012:19).

*Geography*

The Arctic is a region that the armed forces will be expected to focus on and invest capabilities in, and is the geographic area discussed the most throughout the white paper (Forsvaret, 2012:2;12;15;43). Afghanistan is still an area of interest given the Danish expeditionary presence there, but as previously mentioned its contributions will be reduced during the years of the paper (Forsvaret, 2012:6).

*Threatening actors and partners*

NATO remains the core partner of Denmark, and the guarantee of its sovereignty (Forsvaret, 2012:1;7), in comparison to the last white paper the armed force's different areas of cooperation with the alliance is set to increase. The UN is also a key partner for Denmark, but to a lesser degree than NATO which shapes much of its capability planning and expeditionary operations (Forsvaret, 2012:2). Russia is mentioned with regards to missile defence cooperation (Forsvaret, 2012:16), which will be conducted together with NATO. The paper states that Denmark will collaborate with NATO and Nordic states through “*bilateral and multinational cooperative relations, clearer priorities and specializations*” (Forsvaret, 2012:18). The armed forces are also expected to cooperate with other Arctic states to build from their experiences of operating in the region (Forsvaret, 2012:43).

While no states are considered to pose a threat to Denmark, states proliferating weapons of mass destruction and long-range missiles, as well as cyber-attack capabilities, are considered a risk
to Denmark (Forsvaret, 2012:2). The paper mentions the need to increase sovereign defence in the Arctic but does not designate any Arctic states as threatening (Forsvaret, 2012:15).

5.4 Norway Before the Concept

5.4.1 Sub-Belief Core Tasks and Focus

Table 12.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Should the armed forces focus on sovereign defence or expeditionary missions?</th>
<th>What are considered the key tasks of the armed forces?</th>
<th>What are the current and future focus areas for the armed forces?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Sovereign or Expeditionary

The Norwegian white paper states that it is the duty of the Norwegian armed forces to defend Norwegian sovereignty and territorial integrity (together with Norway's allies) (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:9). The armed forces shall further handle and prevent security crises and threats in Norway and in its vicinity, which is its central role (Ibid.). These crises and threats can occur both in Norway and abroad, with a focus on the region around Norway. The armed forces are expected to contribute to multinational task forces and collective defence (presumably referring to Article 5 defence) (Ibid.).

The white paper considers an “innsatsforsvar”, or expeditionary force, an important part of its foreign policy, and leverages Norwegian influence within international organisations (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:10). When it comes to the modernisation of the armed forces, extra weight is placed on the defence of Norwegian sovereignty and protection of the region around Norway which is considered its most important geo-strategic priority (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:12).
The geographical placement of Norway and its interests in the resources in the Nordic area differentiate it from other NATO members who have more freedom to wholly dedicate their armed forces to an expeditionary focus (Ibid.). National defence and article 5 commitments are the main focus of the development of the armed forces (Ibid.). The paper does however go on to claim that Norway does not aim to or have the ability to defend itself against “extensive” threats to its security, and it is only through its international engagement with NATO and the UN that it could confront such threats in the event of a changed security landscape (Ibid.). Of the nine security policy and defence policy goals laid out in the white paper, seven concern national defence and article 5 collective defence, with the remaining two concern expeditionary peace support operations (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:17).

Core tasks

The white paper divides the tasks of the armed forces into three areas; national tasks (to be conducted without alliances' help), tasks to be conducted with allies and other partners, and other tasks (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:18). Its national tasks comprise of surveillance and intelligence collection, defence of Norwegian sovereignty and sovereign rights including protection of land-based, air-based, and sea-based protection and defence of the Russian Norwegian border (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:55-56), to ensure the ability of the Norwegian authorities to conduct their duties and to prevent and manage security political crises within Norway and its vicinity (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:19).

Its cooperative tasks are contributing to the collective defence of NATO and multinational crisis management outside Norway, including peace support operations (Ibid.). Preventive stabilisation missions, peace enforcement missions, and peacekeeping missions are included in this (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:57).

In its other tasks, the armed forces are expected to cooperate with international partners on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, disarmament, arms control, and security sector reform (Ibid.), as well as the safeguarding of collective societal security.

Focus areas

During the years prior to the white paper, the Norwegian armed forces developed its expeditionary capabilities (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:132). The Norwegian government wants a modern defence which it calls “innsatsforsvar”, requiring modernisation to meet the
new security and threat landscape that Norway faces (Forvsarsdepartement, 2008:13). The armed forces are to continue this development and build out reactive and deployable military capacities, with high availability and endurance. Conscription is a fundamental part of this development as is effective cooperation with allies (Ibid.). The key focus for the development of the armed forces is its capabilities and capability to carry out operations in the Nordic region (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:133).

The armed forces should also be increasingly able to take part in international operations and ensure strong civil and military defence and preparedness (Ibid.). Interoperability with international partners such as NATO is also a key in the development of the armed forces, and the white paper calls for the need for units and forces that can quickly be deployed where necessary (Forvsarsdepartement, 2008:71). While its international operations are centred around various peace missions, the armed forces are expected to be able to conduct high intensity combat operations (Forvsarsdepartement, 2008:72).

The structure and organisation of the armed forces are expected to follow NATO frameworks, and the armed forces are expected to be a network-based force (Ibid.). In addition to these structure development areas, the armed forces are also tasked with the procurement of new fighter jets (Forvsarsdepartement, 2008:80). The white paper also lists a number of capacity related areas the armed forces can cooperate with NATO, the UN, and Sweden, for example, NATO Airborne Early Warning and Control Force (Forvsarsdepartement, 2008:87-90).
5.4.2 Sub-Belief Justification For Use of Force

Table 13.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What values does Norway justify potential use of force to protect?</th>
<th>How does Norway justify using force?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Rule** of law, democratic rights, human rights | **Protection** Norwegian sovereignty (sea, land, air, resources)  
**Ensuring** authorities can carry out duties.  
**Domestic** and international crisis prevention.  
**Influence** and credibility within UN & NATO  
**Responsibility** to protect (R2P)  
**International** law crucial justification. |

Values

The title of the 2008 white paper translates to a defence to protect Norway's security, interests and values (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:1). As such values are presumably an important part of the white paper. One of the core purposes of the Norwegian armed forces is to defend Norwegian values, which are rule of law, democratic rights, and human rights (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:11). Of these values human rights are mentioned the most throughout the paper (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:24;34), with the other values only mentioned at the beginning of the paper. Values are also mentioned when the white paper discusses including women in the armed forces conscription, on the basis of its fundamental value of equal rights (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:124).

Justification

Based on the title of the white paper, the armed forces and their use of force exist to defend Norway's security, interests, and values (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:1). The use of conflict is justified only in three circumstances, ensuring authorities can carry out duties, protecting Norwegian sovereignty, and crisis prevention both domestically and internationally (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:12;39). The armed forces use of force internationally within (among other) UN and NATO frameworks are also partially justified by buying credibility and influence within these international organisations and ensure support from other states if threats were to arise against Norway (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:10). Norway's use of force in an international setting is justified by it protecting Norwegian values and safeguarding Norwegian interests (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:11).
The focus on capabilities to employ the use of force domestically and within its near Nordic area is justified by Norway finding itself in a different geographical situation than its fellow NATO allies and needing to focus on defence of its borders and defence of its resource extraction sector (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:12). Protecting its fishing and resource industry justify the armed forces Nordic focus, as do the increasing international importance of the Arctic region (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:15). Insecurity and threats to sovereignty caused by developments in Russia also justify the focus and build-up of capabilities in the Nordic region (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:16).

Use of force is further justified against terrorist group to protect Norwegian territory against terror attacks, and to protect overseas Norwegian troops (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:32). The white paper also raises responsibility to protect, highlighting the importance of interventions to counter ethnic conflicts, violations of human rights, international terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:34). It also discusses the ramifications of interventions, and the need for UN level guidelines defining when the use of force is justified (Ibid.), and further that to use force, it must be anchored to UN decision making and international law. The white paper considers the rule of law to be the major deciding factor as to whether Norway should employ force (Ibid.). This is ensured either through the consent of relevant parties, through the right to individual or collective self-defence in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter, or through a UN Security Council mandate (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:39).
5.4.3 Sub-Belief Threat Perception

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are considered the main threats to Norway?</th>
<th>What geographical area is considered an area of importance?</th>
<th>What states or non-state actors are considered partners or threats?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Asymmetrical</strong> terrorism. <strong>Climate</strong> change. <strong>Weapons</strong> of mass destruction, ballistic missiles, advanced weapon systems, and information warfare. <strong>Growing</strong> potential state-to-state conflict. <strong>Russian</strong> and global interest in Arctic and Norwegian resources. <strong>Resource</strong> scarcity and energy security.</td>
<td><strong>Nordics/Arctic. Baltics</strong></td>
<td><strong>NATO/UN</strong> cornerstone partners. <strong>EU</strong> partnership. <strong>Partnership</strong> with Nordic/Baltic states, USA, UK, Germany. <strong>Potential</strong> threat from Russia (current good relations and cooperation). <strong>Terrorist</strong> groups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Main threats

One of the main threats mentioned in the paper against both Norway and the international community is terrorism (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:24). Furthermore, the paper raises weapons of mass destruction, ballistic missiles, advanced weapon systems, and information warfare as other relevant threats (Forsvarsdepartement 2008:25). All of these threats are often asymmetrical, coming from actors with inferior capabilities such as terrorist groups, and are transboundary (Ibid.). Terrorism poses a threat to Norway both through attack on troops stationed overseas but also through potential attacks on Norwegian territory (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:32). The threat of state-to-state conflict is considered to be a growing pattern, with an increasingly multipolar world order (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:32). The paper also sees potential threats to Norwegian sovereignty and resource sector from Russia given Russia's interests in the Arctic and Nordic region (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:30). While they are not specified, new threats are also considered to be leading to an increased focus on territorial defence from NATO (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:28). Other threats to Norwegian
security are resource scarcity and energy security, which have the potential to lead to state conflict as well as non-state group conflict and are a major motor driving increased states rivalry (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:33). The white paper sees a number of threats in the Arctic and Nordic regions, stemming from increased international interest and presence in the Arctic, control of resources, and territorial disputes, with the potential to pose threats to Norwegian national security (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:37).

The white paper lists climate change as a threat, with the potential to cause security consequences “the likes the world has never seen” (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:33). Climate change could further drive resource scarcity and subsequent rivalry and conflict between states (Ibis.).

Geography

The most important region stated in the paper is the Nordic and Arctic region (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:12). This region is considered the most strategically important region for Norway in the years to come after the white paper. This includes the Norwegian border to Russia (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:16;37;25). Through their force contribution to the EU Nordic Battle Group and NATO Reaction Forces in the Baltics Norway also has interests in the Baltic region (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:30).

Threatening actors and partners

Terrorist groups are pointed out as threat actors in a number of areas of the white paper, and their ability to attack Norway and its territory (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:25;32). Besides NATO and the UN, Russia is the most mentioned international actors in the white paper, with some focus on cooperation and the relatively good relationship Norway and Russia share (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:28;30). The white paper does, however, consider Russia potentially threatening in a number of areas, especially due to its interests in the Arctic and renewed great power status (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:29-30).

The white paper mentioned four other major organisations that Norway cooperates with, NATO, the UN, the EU, and Nordic/Baltic states (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:27-30). Cooperation with the United States, Germany, and the United Kingdom is also mentioned (Forsvarsdepartement, 2008:31).
5.5 Norway After the Strategic Concept

5.5.1 Sub-Belief Core Tasks and Focus

Table 15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Should the armed forces focus on sovereign defence or expeditionary missions?</th>
<th>What are considered the key tasks of the armed forces?</th>
<th>What are the current and future focus areas for the armed forces?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sovereign defence</strong></td>
<td><strong>Defence</strong> of Norwegian territory and sovereignty through deterrence. <strong>Collective</strong> NATO defence. <strong>Handle</strong> and prevent security crises and threats in Norway and vicinity (also through NATO). <strong>Ensuring</strong> Norwegian control of natural resources, fishing, trade within borders. <strong>Cyber</strong> operations.</td>
<td><strong>Deterrent</strong> force with increased domestic task capability. <strong>Development</strong> based on 2010 strategic concept as much as possible. <strong>Increased</strong> international cooperation and dialogue. <strong>Integration</strong> with new NATO command structure and NATO smart defence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reduced</strong> non-NATO international operations</td>
<td><strong>Build</strong> capability to defend critical infrastructure and communication lines. <strong>Nordic/Arctic</strong> region capabilities incl. arctic reaction force. <strong>Missile</strong> and cyber defence through NATO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sovereign or expeditionary

While the new white paper does maintain the importance of international operations and missions, it focuses on the need to prioritise the defence of its territory and near area over overseas operations (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:33). The white paper now focuses on the armed force’s ability to deter against potential aggression and attacks, by increasing the cost of attacking Norway to high level through national defence initiatives (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:12). The paper does still maintain the importance of participating in UN mandated crisis management operations, but with planned reduction of military presence in Afghanistan, and NATO member defence budgets reduced, along with the United States shifted focus to east
Asia, the white paper increases its focus on Norway’s ability to defend its own borders (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:27). This reflects a trend in most NATO member states who look to move their armed forces focus from expeditionary missions to their territory and close regions (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:28). The white paper also states that due to NATO expeditionary focus and Norway’s international operations, and that moving forward the priority for Norway is strengthening of national defence, in close coordination with NATO (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:32). Territorial/sovereign defence is therefore prioritised over expeditionary operations (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:33).

Core tasks

The core tasks of the armed forces are similar to those in the 2008 white paper, but with an increased focus on national defence and international defence cooperation (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:47). The centrality of a deterrent focus of the armed forces is also an addition (Ibid.). In addition to these tasks the white paper also introduces offensive and defensive cyber operations as a task and partial responsibility of the armed forces. The role of international crisis management/expeditionary operations has been decreased, with only one of the armed forces tasks focusing on this (Ibid.). There is also an increased focus on NATO and its principle of collective defence, with tasks that previously were considered solvable by the armed forces to now also include NATO (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:47-52). This increased focus is justified by the 2010 strategic concept and its reiteration of the importance of collective defence (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:26). Given developments in the Arctic the white paper also puts an increased emphasis on ensuring the exercising of authority both with regards to oil and gas extraction in the North Sea and fishing, as well as securing the Norwegian-Russian border (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:51). Another addition to this white paper is the task of offensive and defensive cyber operations (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:11;58).

Focus areas

Given the reduced focus on expeditionary capabilities, the armed forces are tasked with developing a robust deterrent defence, with high quality and reaction time, and an increased level of ambition for the completion of national tasks (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:8;32). The white paper refers to the 2010 strategic concept in a number of areas when presenting the areas of development for the armed forces, such as focus on collective defence, and increased international cooperation and dialogues on topics such as non-proliferation, with among other actors such as Russia (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:26). The white paper tasks the armed forces
with following an adapting development to the strategic concept as much as possible (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:16;32). The armed forces are expected to develop their ability to conduct offensive and defensive cyber operations (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:24).

The paper also places focus on developing the ability of the armed forces to adapt to new NATO command structures and enhancing NATO’s ability to be active in the northern and arctic region (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:26), as well as continuing troop contributions to NATO reaction force. The armed forces are also expected to contribute to and take part in NATO’s smart defence initiative (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:28). The armed forces are also to contribute to the development of NATO’s missile defence and cyber defence, as are included in the latest strategic concept (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:32). The white paper continues to focus on network based defence (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:41).

Lastly, the white paper continues to call for the build out of capabilities in the north and arctic area, as well as the establishment of an Arctic reaction force (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:49).

5.5.2 Sub-Belief Justification For Use of Force

Table 16.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What values does Norway justify potential use of force to protect?</th>
<th>How does Norway justify using force?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rule</strong> of law, democratic rights, human rights (reduced focus).</td>
<td><strong>Protection</strong> Norwegian sovereignty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protecting</strong> commercial interests (natural resources, fishing, trade).</td>
<td><strong>NATO</strong> credibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UN</strong> mandate needed for international use of force.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Values*

The white paper focuses less on values compared to the paper. It mentions democracy, international law, and human rights as values it wishes to defend, with an emphasis on human rights (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:12;21-22).
Justification

The limited participation in expeditionary operations such as peacekeeping is justified by ensuring world peace, stability, and contributing to NATO’s credibility (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:11). The use of force in an international setting requires a UN mandate (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:13). The use of force in a domestic setting is justified by the need to uphold Norwegian sovereignty over its territories (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:50), as well as ensuring it maintains jurisdiction over its natural resources and fishing areas, as well as trade routes (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:12).

5.5.3 Sub-Belief Threat
Perception

Table 17.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are considered the main threats to Norway?</th>
<th>What geographical area is considered an area of importance?</th>
<th>What states or non-state actors are considered partners or threats?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weapons</strong> of mass destruction, ballistic missiles.</td>
<td><strong>Nordics/Arctic</strong> (incl. Kola peninsula). <strong>Baltics.</strong> <strong>NATO</strong> member territory.</td>
<td>NATO key international partner, increased focus. UN fundamental but decreased focus. <strong>EU</strong> partnership (Lisbon treaty). <strong>Partnership with</strong> Nordic/Baltic states, USA, UK, Germany etc. <strong>Cooperation with</strong> Russia on non-proliferation &amp; missile defence, reduced threatening description. <strong>Terrorist groups.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Great</strong> power tension.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cyber</strong> threats &amp; climate change.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vulnerability</strong> of critical infrastructure and communications lines.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Global</strong> interest in Arctic and Norwegian resources.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resource</strong> scarcity and energy security.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reduction</strong> of NATO member military spending and US troop contribution decrease.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Main threats

The white paper continues to hold that Norway is not facing a direct military threat, although there is the potential for the security situation to deteriorate, if conflicts of interest between great powers increase tensions (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:31). The continued melting ice in the arctic make the region an area of global strategic importance, and the situation in the arctic
has the potential to create a threat against state security (Ibid.). The white paper states that one of the most rapidly building threats are cyber threats, justifying increased cyber security capabilities (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:12), and also aligned with threats raised in the 2010 strategic concept (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:32). Missile attacks are another threat that Norway, referring to the strategic concept, aims to build out defences against (Ibid.). The bad financial situation in many NATO member states combined with the reduction of US troops stationed in Norway and Europe are considered a challenge (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:25-26).

The spread of weapons of mass destruction is still considered a threat and this white paper goes into more detail describing the threat, and how NATO’s strategic concept tasked member states to pursue a world within nuclear weapons (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:23). Terrorism continues to be considered a threat, especially after the 2011 terrorist attacks in Norway (Ibid.).

Energy and maritime security, as well as security of infrastructure and communications lines are areas of challenge, and the importance of energy security is also confirmed in the strategic concept (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:22-23)

Lastly, climate change continues to be a risk to Norwegian society, through melting ice in the Arctic reshaping the strategic environment (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:30), to increased competition over fossil fuel sources (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:25).

Geography

The area of strategic importance for the armed forces is increasingly Norway’s territory and the region in its vicinity, the arctic (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:30). Norwegian territorial, trade, natural resource, and fishing related interests contribute to this prioritisation, as does the worsening security climate in the area due to its global strategic importance (Ibid.). The Kola area of the arctic region is also of importance due to the location of Russia’s strategic nuclear forces there (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:31). Given their renewed emphasis on collective defence within NATO and their contribution to NATO’s reaction forces, the territory of NATO states can also be considered a strategically important area (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:26). The Baltic region is mentioned in particular (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:28).
**Threatening actors and partners**

The emphasis that the white paper puts on NATO has increased, as the armed forces are tasked with adopting the new NATO command structure (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:26), participating in the smart defence initiative (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:27), etc. The white paper mentions the importance of contributing to NATO’s legitimacy, and while it reduces its expeditionary focus with NATO it increases the focus on collective defence. The white paper also justifies many of its major threat perceptions and areas of focus with the 2010 strategic concept (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:25-27) (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:32-33).

The UN is considered to be the international framework of the world order that Norway operates within (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:12). The bilateral relationship with the USA is also considered a fundamental in Norwegian defence policy (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:28). The white paper also mentions regional partnership with actors such as the Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFCO), and the Arctic Council (Ibid.). The United Kingdom, Canada, Germany, and Netherlands are also mentioned. Russia is also mentioned, and the threatening description of Russia in decreased, with focus on cooperation in the Arctic and on missile defence as laid out in the strategic concept (Forsvarsdepartement, 2012:29-30).

### 5.6 Results and comparison

#### 5.6.1 Results

The three key themes identified in the strategic concept were collective defence, international cooperation and dialogue on topics such as missile defence and non-proliferation with actors such as Russia, and international crisis handling in non-NATO territory (peace support missions etc.). The focus areas for the alliance centred around these tasks as did the justifications for potential use of force, in addition to protecting common values. The concept also emphasized developing cyber defence capabilities. Some of the threats raised in the concept were cyber threats, terrorism, energy security, build-up of nuclear arms and missiles, vulnerability of critical infrastructure and communication lines, and climate change. Russia was considered a strategic partner of NATO, along with its UN and EU partnerships.
When the changes found in Norwegian and Danish sub-beliefs of strategic culture prior to and after the strategic concept was released are compared to the themes found in the concept, the following similarities are found between the two variables:

Table 18.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change in Danish Sub-Beliefs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Climate</strong> change focus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Increased</strong> international cooperation and missiles defence cooperation with Russia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Increased</strong> focus on NATO (Smart defence, NATO based capability development, collective defence guarantee, collective defence commitment).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following the strategic concept, climate change was raised for the first time, both in terms of the threat it poses to Denmark and the armed forces, and the way the armed forces should work to reduce it. The scope of discussion on international cooperation also increased, along with the actors the armed forces will cooperate with, in particular with regards to missile defence cooperation with Russia and cooperation with Arctic states. There was also an increased focus on cooperation with NATO, in areas such as capability development and procurement cooperation initiatives like Smart Defence. Danish participation in expeditionary operations was also partly justified by it securing the guarantee of article 5 protection through increased influence within the alliance. Danish commitment to collective defence within NATO was also emphasised more than before the strategic concept. Based on this there was some change in the sub-beliefs *core tasks and focus* and *threat perception and cooperation* after the release of the strategic concept which was consistent in themes found in the strategic concept.
Table 19.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change in Norwegian Sub-Beliefs</th>
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<td>Deterrence focus.</td>
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<td>Cyber threat &amp; capabilities.</td>
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<td>Increased international cooperation &amp; dialogue (non-proliferation &amp; missile defence).</td>
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<td>Increase of national ambitions tied to ensuring NATO defence</td>
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<td>Increased focus on NATO and its credibility.</td>
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<td>Threat perception of Russia reduced.</td>
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Following its release, Norway made multiple references to the concept in its defence policy, using it to justify their strategic interest in ensuring energy security, focus on non-proliferation and missile defence cooperation, and reaffirming the three core NATO tasks stated in the strategic concept. The concept is also referred to when explaining the role Norway will take in NATO cyber defence and missile defence initiatives laid out in the concept. The priorities in the concept also steer Norwegian training and troop development.

Beyond directly referring to the strategic concept, there are clear changes to the sub-beliefs including the introduction of, and increased/decreased focus on tasks, developments, threat perceptions etc. that are also identified in the strategic concept. These are: the deterrence strategy Norway adopts, development of cyber capabilities, the importance of protecting critical infrastructure such as communication lines, a commitment to NATO collective defence, an increase in the priority of national tasks to ensure NATO support, an increased focus on NATO (smart defence etc.) and credibility building of NATO, increased international cooperation and dialogue on non-proliferation and missile-defence, capability development based on strategic concept, and a reduction in the threat perception of Russia and increased cooperation with the state. Based on this, all three of Norway’s sub-beliefs saw considerable change following the release of the strategic concept, that was consistent with many of the themes raised in the strategic concept.
5.6.2 Comparison

While both states' sub-beliefs saw changes that are consistent with themes in strategic concept, Norway by far saw the most change. Common for both cases was the increased importance prominence of NATO as a key partner in their threat perception and cooperation belief, along with the increased importance in cooperation with international actors with regard to missile defence, with NATO initiatives being catalysts for this cooperation. Both states also justified focus areas and prioritizations in their core tasks and focus areas by referring to the influence or support within NATO and its guarantee of article 5 that this would bring them.

For Norway this influence was bought by building a credible national defence capability, for Denmark, it was through high-intensity expeditionary missions. It is noteworthy that the states core tasks and focus sub-beliefs were distinctly different from one another, but sought to achieve the same goal, ensuring collective defence. Norwegian threat perception of Russia reduced in the analysis conducted after the strategic concept, with an increased focus on cooperation, makes this area another similarity the state's sub-beliefs shared. In addition, both states future focus was partly based on NATO priorities and requirements.

There however several differences in their changes which highlight Norway experiencing most change in its sub-beliefs following the strategic concept. While Norway refers to the strategic concept in multiple areas of its 2012 policy, Denmark makes no mention of it at all. Denmark also does not raise issues such as energy security, critical infrastructure, and communications lines that both Norway’s policy and the strategic concept raise. Even in areas that were present in the Danish policy before and after the strategic concept such as cyber defence, NATO is not mentioned. Denmark did focus on crisis handling in the same way as the strategic concept described it, but this focus was present before the release of the strategic concept.

In summary, while there is a change in the sub-beliefs of both states following the 2010 strategic concept, the change was clearer in the Norwegian case with more consistency with themes in the concept, also referencing to the concept as a justification for a change of strategy in several areas.
6. Discussion and Conclusion

6.1 Summary and discussion

This thesis set out to explore an area of strategic culture studies that has not received much focus, alliances. It did so by examining the impact that NATO membership had on member states Norway and Denmark’s strategic culture, and asking two questions; *How has NATO's 2010 strategic concept impacted and changed the strategic culture of Denmark and Norway during 2010-2012, if at all?* and *What similarities and differences are there in potential changes of strategic culture as a result of the strategic concept?*

Strategic culture was conceptualized through the sub-beliefs *core tasks and focus, justification for use of force, and threat perception and cooperation*, which were further operationalised into a number of questions to be applied to defence policies. Alliance membership was operationalised with the 2010 NATO strategic concept. The analysed material consisted of white papers setting out the Danish and Norwegian long-term defence strategies released before and after the strategic concept. The questions presented in the operationalisation of the sub-beliefs where then used to guide the analysis and identify the three different sub-beliefs within Norway and Denmark before and after the strategic concept. The questions were also applied to the strategic concept to identify key themes to be compared with any changes in the states’ sub-variables, based on the logic that if changes in sub-variables followed and likened themes in the concept, that concept may have impacted them.

The analysis found that following the strategic concept some sub-beliefs of Denmark and Norway did change in a way that was consistent with key themes in the strategic concept. Norway was a clearer case of this, as changes across all three of its sub-variables were consistent with the themes of the strategic concept. Further, policy changes were justified using reference to the strategic concept. For Denmark there was no reference to the concept and no meaningful change in its sub-variables, although two of three main themes of the concept were reflected in smaller changes of sub-beliefs.

To answer the thesis first research question in relation to Norway, the strategic concept did most likely impact the strategic culture of Norway. Following the release of the concept, all three of the sub-beliefs of Norway altered in a way consistent with the themes in the concept. By identifying sub-beliefs within the policy and seeing the policy as a representation and materialisation of Norwegian strategic thinking and culture in the vein of previous research, the
change in policy is also considered to represent a change in the sub-beliefs. This thesis therefore holds that alliance membership had an impact on Norwegian sub-beliefs and therefore aspects of their strategic culture. This claim is furthered strengthened by key elements of Norwegian policy directly referencing the strategic concept.

To answer the *how* part of the first question, the concept impacted the Norwegian strategic culture part of the first question, some of the ways Norway’s sub-beliefs changed were the increase of its sovereign defence focus and deterrence, increased commitment to NATO collective defence, and adaption of forces, command, and development around NATO initiatives and requirements. A full list is found in table 19. This thesis does not claim that the strategic concept was the only factor involved in the change of these sub-beliefs, but rather that it did have a considerable impact on them, especially considering the consistent referencing to the concept when justifying changes to policy found in the documents. Other factors that may have impacted the sub-variables are discussed further on in this chapter.

For Denmark the results are not clear enough to make the claim that it was the strategic concept that impacted the sub-beliefs of Denmark. While there were some changes to the core tasks and focus and threat perception and cooperation sub-beliefs consistent with the themes of the strategic concept following its release, these changes weren’t as clear as in the Norwegian case. Unlike Norway, there is also no reference to the strategic concept when the future strategy of Denmark was laid out, making it difficult to make a direct connection between the concept and changes sub-beliefs. While the concept could have impacted the strategic culture of Denmark given the changes listed in table 18, correlation is not causality, and there are other factors that could have led to these changes.

Moving on to the thesis’ second question, the key difference between the cases is the impact of the strategic concept on the sub-beliefs, with no clear relation between the concept and changes to Danish sub-beliefs, and a probable relation between the concept and the Norwegian sub-beliefs, with the concept impacting the sub-beliefs. An interesting similarity between the cases was the same expressed motivation for increased focus on NATO, with both states claiming that the purpose of them focusing on expeditionary missions in Denmark’s case, and national defence in Norway’s case, was to influence the alliance to ensure article 5 support and collective defence.
Both states seemed to place a higher importance on NATO following the strategic concept, with engagement in NATO initiatives and reaffirming to collective defence.

As previously mentioned, it is also important to examine the possibility of other factors impacting or changing the sub-beliefs, so as to some extent control for other variables. One of the frequently looked at factor impacting strategic culture are external shocks, Edström et. al. looks at external shocks in relation to Nordic states strategic culture and policies during the period this thesis analysis covers. The only external shock raised during 2008-2012 is the Russian invasion of Georgia in 2008. The invasion was found to have not been perceived a strategic shock by Denmark and Norway (Edström et. al., 2019:143). Russia was not considered to be a threat by either Denmark or Norway in the analysis, and no mention of the invasion is made. On this basis the major geopolitical security event during the time period is not considered to have a noticeable impact on the states’ sub-beliefs.

While this thesis puts forward the argument that alliance membership, here operationalised through the strategic concept, could have an impact on member states’ strategic culture, it is also important to discuss if the variables could be inverted. This would imply that with Norwegian and Danish strategic culture were impacting the strategic concept. As each NATO member state is involved in the drafting of the concept, it is likely that both Norway and Denmark did influence the concept. However, in Norway’s case there was a large change in its strategy following the concept, which was not present prior to it, indicating that it was the concept that influenced the strategic culture. In addition, the white paper refers to the concept in many areas. Denmark, while not seeing as large of a change to their strategic culture as Norway’s, did not have sub-beliefs consistent with the themes of the concept prior to its release, which they presumably would have had if they were to have influenced the concept. The two areas which share similarity between Denmark before the concept and the concept are international crisis handling and cyber defence, which may have been an area Denmark influenced in the concept.

These results do not mean that the strategic concept alone caused change in the states strategic culture, in the same way that strategic culture as a theory does not claim changes in culture come from only one source. There are many other variables involved beyond alliance membership, such as history of states, geography etc. The aim of the thesis was also not to examine if the concept was the sole influencer of member state strategic culture, but rather to further examine the impact it may have. Based on this aim and the results in the case of Norway,
alliances do have the potential to impact state strategic culture and are a valuable variable to research further.

In summary, the analysis implied that NATO’s 2010 concept strategic and Norway’s alliance membership likely impacted aspects of Norwegian strategic culture, but that the results for Denmark are not conclusive enough to claim that the concept impacted their strategic culture in any meaningful way.

It could also be the case that Denmark and Norway, being smaller states, chose aspects of the concept to adapt to, that were already in part present in their strategic cultures. Denmark, lacking neighbouring recent adversaries, may have been more inclined to continue to focus on the expeditionary crisis handling element of the concept, while Norway with its Russian border adapted to the national defence focus of the concept.

The studied cases are also interesting from a wider alliance setting. Small states that lack the ability to influence alliances through large armed forces or high financial contributions must find alternative ways to ensure the goodwill and collective defence of the alliances they are within. In this case Norway did this by increasing their national defence capabilities, and potentially adhering to aspects of the strategic concept. In Denmark’s case they sought to “buy” influence within NATO by taking part in expeditionary missions. Steering documents such as the strategic concept could be considered “external shocks”, similar to shocks such as 9/11 described by Edström et. al, which impacted small state strategy and strategic culture. Through constantly needing to validate their value within alliances, new purposes and directions presented by the alliance could in turn impact the strategic culture of states. For current and future NATO and alliance members, adapting to certain aspects of policy steering from the alliance could be a way to ensure goodwill and increase influence within. The aspects of strategy and culture that may change in the process of doing so are in turn influenced by the existing strategic culture. Norway, with a history of national defence, adapted more to the collective defence prioritisation in the concept, while Denmark, with a more expeditionary culture, focused on the international crisis management prioritisation.

6.2 Limitations and future research

The thesis has two main limitations. Firstly, by analysing long term defence policies, this thesis hoped to be able to discern aspects of Danish and Norwegian strategic culture. By
conceptualizing the theory into sub-beliefs and using these to guide the analysis and identify these aspects, aimed to strengthen the claim that strategic culture can be identified through defence policies as these are materialisations of decision making within the states community of decision makers. It also based this claim on previous research doing the same, presented in chapter 2. With this said, there would likely be other material to look at where additional insights into strategic culture could be gained, this could include debate protocols, interviews with decision makers, or public opinion. Secondly, as has previously been mentioned, there could also have been other factors that led to the changes in the sub-beliefs. The thesis has tried to meet this limitation by discussing other factors that could explain the change, and also by referring to the considerable reference made to the strategic concept regarding the change of sub-beliefs in the Norwegian case.

It is clear that there is a considerable lack of research on alliances impact on strategic culture, and in some ways on alliance influence as a whole. While there is much research on states rationale for joining alliances, and bandwagoning etc., the topic of how states create influence within alliances is still not particularly explored. It would be valuable to conduct a similar piece of research, using the strategic concept, on larger states within NATO, such as the UK or France, to see how states with a larger presence within the alliance, stemming from their pure force contribution, adapt to the concept.

It would also be interesting to examine the drafting process of the concept, to understand how states influence its creation. Research into alliances outside of NATO and western alliances could also be an area to look at, to see if there is variation in how states react and are impacted by their membership.

While it is not possible until states release new strategic documents in the coming years, it would also be interesting to conduct similar research on how member states strategic culture has adapted to the 2022 strategic culture. This concept has changed the tasks of NATO largely given the invasion of Ukraine, meaning there could be a measurable impact on strategic culture.
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