NATO AND HUNGARY - TOWARDS A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF CHANGE IN STRATEGIC CULTURE –

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ABSTRACT

Although the concept of strategic culture has received particular attention since the 1970's, the possibility of change has been somewhat neglected. Nevertheless, those scholars who have dealt with this specific topic focus mainly on singular effects as a source of change, omitting the significance of non-singular effects, such as the interaction with an international organization. In order to fill this gap in the literature, this research explores how the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has shaped the strategic culture of Hungary by using the method of process-tracing. Exploring the effect of NATO on the Hungarian strategic culture is of great significance, since without taking it into account, one cannot fully understand certain foreign and security policy decisions of Hungary regarding the use of military force. The research argues that NATO significantly influenced the strategic culture of Hungary at five interrelated levels. First, the interaction with NATO shifted Hungary's foreign and security policy orientation. Secondly, it pushed the country towards a more active international presence. Thirdly, it changed the way of thinking of the Hungarian political elite about the utility of the use of force. Fourthly, it made the attitude of the political elite less reluctant towards the use of military force in the international arena. Finally, it significantly increased the scope of action of the Government regarding the deployment of the armed forces.

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INTRODUCTION

Strategic culture can be best defined as "socially transmitted ideas, attitudes, traditions, habits of mind, and preferred methods of operation that are more or less specific to a particular geographically based security community that has had a necessarily unique historical experience."[1] The concept has given birth to several debates since the 1970s among scholars who have been dissatisfied with the prevailing rational approaches to international politics. Despite increasing interests in the concept, the possibility of change has been somewhat less discussed. Those scholars who have dealt with this specific topic focus mainly on singular effects as a source of change, neglecting the significance of non-singular effects, such as interactions with an international organization. In order to fill this gap in the literature, this research explores how the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has shaped the strategic culture of Hungary. It is of great significance, since without taking into consideration the influence of the Alliance, one cannot fully understand certain foreign policy decisions of Hungary where the use of force is involved.

Literature review

The emergence of the concept of strategic culture can be seen as part of the reactions to the predominance of rational actor approaches in the field of strategic studies in the late 1970s, first appeared in Jack Snyder's work.[2] At the heart of the concept of strategic culture lies the assumption that different states have different prevailing strategic preferences stemming from their previous experiences. These preferences are influenced by political, cultural, cognitive

[1] Gray Colin, "Strategic Culture as Context: The First Generation of Theory Strikes Back," *Review of International Relations* 25, no. 1 (January 1999): 51.
[2] Jack Snyder, "The Concept of Strategic Culture: Caveat Emptor," in *Strategic Power: USA/USSR*, ed. Carl G. Jacobsen (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 1990), 3–9, http://link.springer.com/10.1007/978-1-349-20574-5_1.

and philosophical characteristics of the state and its elites to a certain degree.[3] Despite the abundant research on strategic culture, relatively little attention has been paid so far to the possibility of change. Moreover, even when scholars have taken a look at this important aspect of the concept, they have neglected the role of international organizations as a source for inducing change.

However, even those researchers who have dealt with change are divided over to what extent it can influence strategic culture. Although Colin Gray acknowledges that strategic culture may change, though slowly, it is more enduring than in the case of other scholars.[4] One of them, Thomas Banchoff, claims that strategic culture can undergo "enduring transformation".[5] Similarly to Banchoff, John Duffield argues that change is possible, but it is not an easy process. Potential causes for change may be traumatic experiences, such as revolutions, economic catastrophes and wars which "discredit thoroughly core beliefs and values".[6]

Nonetheless, Jeffrey S. Lantis further expand the possible causes of change by using German responses to the Kosovo crisis as an example and claims that change is even easier than the literature would suggest.[7] According to him, two conditions can be identified which can create "strategic cultural dilemmas," thus facilitating change. On the one hand, similarly to Duffield, he argues that external shocks can fundamentally challenge core beliefs and the historical narratives of the past. On the other hand, Lantis claims that foreign policy behavior

[3] Alastair Iain Johnston, "Thinking about Strategic Culture," *International Security* 19, no. 4 (1995): 32.
[4] Gray Colin, "Strategic Culture as Context: The First Generation of Theory Strikes Back," *Review of International Relations* 25, no. 1 (January 1999): 49–69.
[5] Thomas F. Banchoff, *The German Problem Transformed: Institutions, Politics, and Foreign Policy, 1945 - 1995*, Social History, Popular Culture, and Politics in Germany (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1999). 2.
[6] John S. Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy after Unification* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1998). 23.
[7] Jeffrey S. Lantis, "Strategic Culture and National Security Policy," *International Studies Review* 4, no. 3 (January 2002): 111.

may go over the limits of strategic culture "when primary tenets of strategic thought directly conflict with one another."[8]

Additionally, Thomas Berger introduces another way: according to him, strategic culture is a "negotiated reality."[9] This "negotiated reality" means that while pursuing the legitimation of a preferred policy, the contention of the foreign policy elites could push the traditional boundaries of strategic culture. In the 2000s, a renewed interest in the concept led scholars to explore the role of change as a result of the interactions between states and international organizations, namely, the European Union.[10] Although their research agenda has shed light on the relationship between strategic culture and international organizations, the emphasis has so far been on how member states of a given organization can influence the common strategic culture and not the other way around.

All in all, it seems that scholars overlook an important source of change which can serve as a basis for either negotiated reality or conflicting fundamental dogmas: the effect of non-singular events, such as interactions with international organizations and its effects on individual member states.

Throughout the evolution of the concept, several definitions of strategic culture have emerged. Most relevant to this case study, a comprehensive research on European strategic cultures was conducted in 2013 based on the concept of strategic culture as it was defined by Colin Gray.[11] According to him, strategic culture consists of "socially transmitted ideas, attitudes, traditions, habits of mind, and preferred methods of operation that are more or less specific to a particular geographically based security community that has had a necessarily

[8] Ibid. 111.
[9] Thomas U. Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism: National Security in Germany and Japan* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins Univ. Pr, 1998).
[10] For example: Sten Rynning, "The European Union: Towards a Strategic Culture?," *Security Dialogue* 34, no. 4 (December 1, 2003): 479–96; Christoph O. Meyer, *The Quest for a European Strategic Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).
[11] Heiko Biehl, ed., *Strategic Cultures in Europe: Security and Defence Policies across the Continent*, Schriftenreihe Des Zentrums Für Militärgeschichte Und Sozialwissenschaften Der Bundeswehr 13 (Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2013).

unique historical experience."[12] This recent research conceptualized the notion of strategic culture in a detailed, complex and well-researchable way which provides us with guidance amidst the often seemingly overwhelming amount of different definitions, and thus will be used here.[13]

Puzzle and research question

As mentioned above, the scholars of strategic culture miss an important factor as a source of change in strategic culture: the influence of international organizations on their member states. They either almost completely neglect the study of the possibility of change and its sources, while others focus solely on singular events or contestation within a strategic culture, neglecting effects as a result of interaction. Though recent research focus on the European Union, they mainly discuss how member-states could create a common strategic culture thus not taking into consideration the role of international organizations in influencing the strategic culture of their member countries. Additionally, even if the aforementioned research from 2013 mentions that the role of the Alliance was fundamental as regards the foreign and security policy of Hungary, it does not go into details regarding how and on which areas of strategic culture this influence takes place.[14]

In order to attempt to fill the gap in the literature identified above, the case of Hungary is chosen as an ideal example for three mean reasons. First, it is a small country and is aware of the fact that it can pursue its interests the best by channeling them through international

[12] Gray Colin, "Strategic Culture as Context: The First Generation of Theory Strikes Back," *Review of International Relations* 25, no. 1 (January 1999): 51.
[13] Heiko Biehl, ed., *Strategic Cultures in Europe: Security and Defence Policies across the Continent*, Schriftenreihe Des Zentrums Für Militärgeschichte Und Sozialwissenschaften Der Bundeswehr 13 (Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2013). 12-16.
[14] Péter Tálas and Tamás Csiki, "Hungary," in *Strategic Cultures in Europe: Security and Defence Policies across the Continent*, Schriftenreihe Des Zentrums Für Militärgeschichte Und Sozialwissenschaften Der Bundeswehr 13 (Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2013), 165–79.

organizations. Consequently, Hungary is more likely to make attempts to live up to the expectations of an international organization than politically or economically stronger states. Secondly, as it became apparent in the following years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, only NATO could be considered as a viable alternative to the former Warsaw Pact for guarantying Hungary's security. Thus, these two factors mean that the influence of NATO is more significant and presumably more discernible in the examined period than, for example, in the case of Poland. Thirdly, as many of the specific sources vital to successfully conducting this research are not available in English, the author's language skills combined with his contacts to the Hungarian defense community made him well suited for the case study.

Therefore, this research aims at exploring how the NATO influenced the strategic culture of Hungary between 1994 and 2015. Although the existing literature omits the possibility of change in strategic culture as a result of non-singular effects, this research argues that the interaction between Hungary and the Alliance fundamentally changed the country's strategic culture compared to the period before 1994.

Nonetheless, this research does not claim that NATO was the sole driving force behind change, since evolving global trends (the increasing number of crisis management, stabilizing and peace support operations), the possibly changing threat perception of both the political elite and society or the abovementioned singular events could have an impact in the examined period. However, it considers the effect of NATO as fundamental and significant which influenced how those other sources of change were able to shape the Hungarian strategic culture. Investigating this process of change will help us better understand how international organizations can shape the beliefs and assumptions within a given society thus generating certain expectations in security and defense policy which is conducive to explaining certain foreign policy decisions.

Methodology

In order to achieve the objective of this study, two assumptions are needed to be verified. First, that change took place, and secondly, that NATO significantly influenced the strategic culture of Hungary in the given period.

Taking into consideration these two assumptions, process tracing is applied here as the preferred method to evaluate our prior explanatory hypothesis. As David Collier argues, process tracing is a fundamental tool of qualitative analyses, and it is used by several scholars of International Relations.[15] More importantly, process tracing is also applied by scholars focusing on change in strategic culture.[16]

By using process tracing, this research can establish a linear causal chain which links the dependent to the independent variable, Hungary and NATO, respectively while excluding other alternative explanations.[17] Jeffrey T. Checkel and Andrew Bennett claim that this method has a particularly strong explanatory power when it comes to exploring interactions since it can explain how certain events unfold over time.[18] The researcher who is applying this method reveals the causal chain between the dependent and the independent variable by dividing this causal mechanism into smaller steps and looking for evidences for each steps. In other words, the researcher needs to describe a series of key events at one point in time by taking snapshots.

[15] David Collier, "Understanding Process Tracing," *PS: Political Science & Politics* 44, no. 04 (October 2011): 823–30. Good examples include: Kenneth A. Schultz, *Democracy and Coercive Diplomacy*, Cambridge Studies in International Relations 76 (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2001); H. E. Goemans, *War and Punishment: The Causes of War Termination and the First World War*, Princeton Studies in International History and Politics (Princeton, N.J. ;Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000). and David A. Lake, "Two Cheers for Bargaining Theory: Assessing Rationalist Explanations of the Iraq War," *International Security* 35, no. 3 (2010): 7–52.

[16] For great examples, see: Nina Tannenwald, *The Nuclear Taboo: The United States and the Non-Use of Nuclear Weapons since 1945*, Cambridge Studies in International Relations 87 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). and Jeffrey S. Lantis, *Strategic Dilemmas and the Evolution of German Foreign Policy since Unification* (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 2002).

[17] Jeffrey T. Checkel, "Process Tracing," in *Experimental Political Science: Principles and Practices* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 114–30; David Collier, "Understanding Process Tracing," *PS: Political Science & Politics* 44, no. 04 (October 2011): 823–30.

[18] Jeffrey T. Checkel and Andrew Bennett, "Process Tracing: From Philosophical Roots to Best Practices," *Simons Papers in Security and Development*, no. 21 (June 2012): 48.

Then, relying on his or her expertise and in-depth knowledge about the case, s/he connects these key events through forming a causal chain to explain changes which leads to the outcome. The researcher must use historical documents, interviews or other relevant sources to determine whether his or her hypothesis can explain the triggers which brought about certain events the way they happened.

Considering the desiderata of the process-tracing method, the research proceeds as follows. First, it divides up the examined period into smaller phases delineated by key events, such as the regaining of independence of Hungary, the beginning of its participation in the Partnership for Peace program and its accession to NATO. Then, snapshots are taken to describe the strategic culture of Hungary at a given period. Thirdly, a causal relationship between the smaller phases of the process is made with constant reference to the potential inputs or effects from the Alliance.

Nevertheless, beside of its many advantages listed above, applying the method of process tracing has some drawbacks of which the author is fully aware. First, it simplifies reality by omitting certain alternative causal paths in order to preserve the feasibility and the coherence of the research. Secondly, one could argue that neither Hungary nor NATO appeared miraculously in history from nowhere, thus taking 1994 as a specific moment when the interaction started between the two parties is somewhat misleading since the Alliance should have had an impact on Hungary since its establishment or at least after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. The author is conscious of this possibility, however, he considers 1994 as a key date since at that time the Hungarian political elite gave up securing the country independently and tried to get closer to NATO. Another problem is that the research cannot go to the micro level since it is not possible to fully understand the reasons behind a decision of a politician, therefore the findings of this research cannot be justified with absolute confidence.

Nevertheless, by applying the method of process tracing, this research gets to the process which took place as close as possible.

As for the concept of strategic culture which is applied here, the approach of Heiko Biehl et al. is used who, based on Colin Gray's definition of strategic culture and a study of Nicolai von Ondarza and Alexandra Jonas from 2010, conceptualized strategic culture along four key areas which were further elaborated in details by guiding questions (see Appendices) providing a useful tool for scholars interested in strategic culture for conducting research.[19]

1) The level of ambition in international security policy which shows where a country is positioned on a continuum between active international leadership and passive indifference.
2) The scope of action for the executive in decision-making showing whether there is a high or low level of executive flexibility.
3) Foreign policy orientation which points at the country's preference between transatlantic and European focus as their preferred forum for cooperating on defense and security matters.[20]
4) The willingness to use military force which tells us to what extent a country is reluctant or unconstrained in using the armed forces as a tool of security policy.

As regards the sources, official documents, analyses and semi-structured interviews are used. In the case of analyses, in order to trace down the effect of NATO, the research relies on

[19] Alexandra Jonas and Nicolai von Ondarza, *Chancen Und Hindernisse Für Die Europäische Streitkräfteintegration: Grundlegende Aspekte Deutscher, Französischer Und Britischer Sicherheits- Und Verteidigungspolitik Im Vergleich*, 1. Aufl, Schriftenreihe Des Sozialwissenschaftlichen Instituts Der Bundeswehr, Bd. 9 (Wiesbaden: VS, Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2010). and Heiko Biehl, ed., *Strategic Cultures in Europe: Security and Defence Policies across the Continent*, Schriftenreihe Des Zentrums Für Militärgeschichte Und Sozialwissenschaften Der Bundeswehr 13 (Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2013). 12-16.

[20] It is important to note that Heiko Biehl et al. use "foreign policy" in narrow, militaristic terms. Since the author is aware of the fact that foreign policy encompasses a wide range of tools, including foreign aid and diplomacy, he uses the term "foreign and security policy" when referring to that specific area of strategic culture in the rest of this research in order to avoid confusion.

the works of Hungarian foreign, security and defense experts, such as István Gyarmati, Zoltán Szenes, Péter Tálas and Gergely Varga, while for official documents on defense policy, defense and security policy guidelines, strategic reviews and defense, foreign and national strategies are put under scrutiny.

Based on the instructions of James P. Spradley, semi-structured interviews are conducted with both practitioners and researchers.[21] As opposed to the structured interviews, semi-structured interviews grant a certain degree of freedom for both the interviewee and the interviewing by providing the opportunity to stray from the questions of the interview guide if necessary. Their role in this research is crucial, since they can help direct the focus of the research on particularly significant elements of strategic culture which were influenced by NATO and reveal important details which would remain hidden otherwise. The interviewees include those professionals who did or do have insight into the issues of Hungary related to NATO given their former or current positions. Thus, the current Head of the Department of Defense Planning and Defense Policy at the Ministry of Defense, the former Head of the Department for Security Policy and Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the former Chief of General Staffs and an assistant research fellow at the Center for Strategic and Defense Studies are interviewed. As one of the potential interviewees were not available, the research used snowball sampling to identify a new interviewee. According to Timothy P. Johnson, this technique works like a chain referral: the researcher asks for assistance from the subject to help identify additional people who could have valuable information on the topic of the research.[22] Snowball sampling is especially useful when the sample is extremely rare as is the case of a defense community of a small country.

[21] James P. Spradley, *The Ethnographic Interview* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979).
[22] Timothy P. Johnson, "Snowball Sampling," in *Encyclopedia of Biostatistics*, ed. Peter Armitage and Theodore Colton (Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2005).

CHAPTER 1 - THE HUNGARIAN STRATEGIC CULTURE UNTIL 1994

The chapter explores the Hungarian strategic culture from 1989 until 1994. The main argument here is that in this period, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization did not have a significant impact on the strategic culture of the country. Since this research is particularly interested in how the interaction between NATO and Hungary unfolds over time, the establishment of a starting point is crucial for achieving the objective of this research. This chapter serves as a basis for measuring the change caused by NATO from 1994. Following the conceptualization of strategic culture by Heiko Biehl et al., the chapter introduces the four key areas of the Hungarian strategic culture which are closely connected to each other: a) the foreign and security policy orientation; b) the level of ambition in international security policy; c) the willingness to use military force and d) the scope of action for the executive in decision-making.

1.1. Foreign and security policy orientation

Between 1989 and 1994, it was unclear whether Hungary regarded the European or the transatlantic path as their preferred forum of security and defense cooperation.

As Tamás Csiki and Péter Tálas argue, at the time of the dissolution of the Soviet Union and during the period of the political transformation of 1989/1990, six foreign and security policy options were open to the Central and Eastern European states who had just regained their independence from the Soviet rule.[23] They could either look towards the East by preserving ties with Russia and the post-Soviet countries (as exercised by Slovakia 1993-1998, Serbia 1991-2000, Belarus since 1992), choose neutrality based on mutual security guarantees (as in the case

[23] Péter Tálas and Tamás Csiki, "Hungary," in *Strategic Cultures in Europe: Security and Defence Policies across the Continent*, Schriftenreihe Des Zentrums Für Militärgeschichte Und Sozialwissenschaften Der Bundeswehr 13 (Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2013), 165–79.

of Moldova since 1991, Ukraine 1991-1996), focus on Central Europe by creating regional cooperative frameworks (as evident in the cooperation between the Visegrad countries since 1991), guarantee their own security independently (Hungary 1991-1994), join the collective security architecture within the framework of the Commission for Security and Cooperation in Europe (later Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) or choose the path of Euro Atlantic integration. Although these options had very different political reality, they appeared in the Hungarian strategic discourse and gradually lost their relevance as the internal and external circumstances changed.

After the end of the military alliance of the Soviet bloc (the Warsaw Pact) in 1991, Hungary attempted to guarantee its security independently.[24] From that period, the only available strategic documents this research can rely on were the Parliamentary Decision On the Security Policy Guidelines of the Republic of Hungary (11/1993, 12 March 1993) and the Parliamentary Decision On the Homeland Defense Guidelines of the Republic of Hungary (27/1993, 23 April 1993).[25] It is clear from these documents that the geographical focus of the Hungarian foreign and security policy was Europe in general and the neighboring countries in particular, since the threats identified by those two documents stemmed primarily from these areas. In securing the country, Hungary placed more emphasis on multinational cooperation than on bilateral relations. Although according to these documents, Hungary preferred the Euro Atlantic integration and was committed to its values, there was no clear orientation towards either international Euro Atlantic organization among the CSCE, NATO, the European Communities or the Western-European Union. Moreover, the precise role of these organizations in the Hungarian foreign and security policy remained vaguely defined. It could

[24] Gergely Varga, "Magyarország a NATO-ban," in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 59–73.
[25] Parliamentary Decision On the Security Policy Guidelines of the Republic of Hungary (11/1993. March 12, 1993) and Parliamentary Decision On the Homeland Defense Guidelines of the Republic of Hungary (27/1993. April 23 1993).

be the case since at that time all the six aforementioned foreign and security policy options had political reality, albeit to different degrees.

1.2. Level of ambition in the international security policy

After the end of the Warsaw Pact in 1991, Hungary's strategic culture with regard to its level of ambition was characterized by passive indifference towards a more prominent role for the country on the international scene. Since it aimed at guaranteeing its security independently, the Hungarian security and defense policy focused on territorial, all-rounded defense of the homeland.[26] As a consequence of this focus and that Hungary claimed a very modest responsibility for international order, stability and peace, the role of international operations remained marginal in this regard. The two official documents of 1993 shows that in guaranteeing its security, Hungary cooperated with international organizations and the use of force was strictly limited and only possible in accordance with international law. Nevertheless, unilateral actions could be "necessary," therefore possible.[27]

The international deployment of the Hungarian armed forces between 1991 and 1994 reflected the modest security policy objectives and was justified on the basis of humanitarian need and supporting peace. The number of the deployed forces remained very low ranging between 46 and 68 troops and individual deployments were frequent.[28] The geographical focus of the security policy was sporadic, divided among the Middle-East (Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait), the Caucasus (Georgia), Asia (Tajikistan, Cambodia) and Africa (Rwanda, Angola,

[26] Zoltán Szenes, "A Magyar Honvédség Nemzetközi Szerepvállalásának Fejlődése," in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 116.
[27] Parliamentary Decision On the Security Policy Guidelines of the Republic of Hungary (11/1993. March 12, 1993) and Parliamentary Decision On the Homeland Defense Guidelines of the Republic of Hungary (27/1993. April 23 1993).
[28] Zoltán Szenes (former Chiefs of General Staffs of the Hungarian Defense Forces), interview with the author, April 8, 2016.

Liberia, Mozambique, Uganda). The deployments took place mainly within the framework of the international missions of the United Nations (12 out of 14), while the participation of Hungarian troops in the international missions of the European Union and the Commission for Security and Cooperation in Europe remained modest (8 troops in two missions).[29]

1.3. Willingness to use military force

The Security Policy and the Homeland Defense Guidelines defined security policy in holistic terms, regarding both the military and non-military tools as having an important role in securing the independence of the country.[30] Nevertheless, until 1994, reluctance for the use of military force was a prominent feature of the Hungarian strategic culture. The use of the armed forces as a foreign and security policy instrument was considered as last resort, thus giving preference for non-military tools in dealing with security threats. The percentage of GDP spent on defense is a good indicator to measure the importance of the use of military force as a tool of foreign and security policy. Between 1988 and 1994, the defense budget plummeted from 3.6% to 1.8% which means a significant 50% drop.[31] It indicates that the use of the armed forces as a foreign and security policy instrument was considered to be less and less important.

Since between 1991 and 1994 the Hungarian government attempted to guarantee the security of the country independently, all-round territorial defense remained the core task of the Hungarian military, similarly to the Cold War period.[32] Therefore, the protection of the

[29] Zoltán László Kiss, *Magyarok a békefenntartásban: katonaszociológiai adalékok a nemzetközi béketámogató műveletekben történő szerepvállalásunk fejlődéstörténetéhez és aktuális dilemmáihoz* (Budapest: Zrínyi Kiadó, 2011).
[30] Parliamentary Decision On the Security Policy Guidelines of the Republic of Hungary (11/1993. March 12, 1993) and Parliamentary Decision On the Homeland Defense Guidelines of the Republic of Hungary (27/1993. April 23 1993).
[31] *The SIPRI Military Expenditure Database*, 1988-2015. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. 2016. accessed April 25, 2016, http://www.sipri.org/research/armaments/milex/milex_database.
[32] István Gyarmati, "A Magyar Hadsereg átalakulása és Helyzete 1988 és 2008 Között," in *Magyarorszag Politikai évhuszadkönyve Kormányzati Rendszer Parlamenti Demokráciában* (Demokrácia Kutatások Magyar Központja Alapítvány, 2009), http://www.politikaievkonyv.hu/online/mp20/.

homeland and its population by preventing and warding off "military attacks, conflicts and other dangers" was regarded as the most important objective of the Hungarian armed forces.[33] The priorities of the development of the armed forces reflected the focus on territorial defense: effective and mobile air defense and the procurement of anti-tank weapons were of utmost importance.[34] This direction did not change despite the evolving global trends including the growing number of intra-state conflicts and the increasing number of stabilizing, crisis management and peace support operations.

As a result of the lack of a clear security policy orientation and the focus of the defense policy on all-rounded territorial defense, the precise definition of the international role of the armed forces remained vaguely defined in the first strategic guidelines.[35] According to those documents, the aim of the armed forces in the international arena was twofold. On the one hand, to facilitate the fulfilment of those requirements which were necessary for cooperating with the armed forces of Western countries on a bilateral or regional basis. On the other hand, to be able to participate in peace support, stabilizing and international crisis management operations of the United Nations.

There were very strong national caveats or restrictions on the use of force in the case of international operations which reveal the very low risk-tolerance and the risk-limiting behavior of the political elite. Consequently, the Hungarian armed forces were only allowed to take supporting roles in those international operations, including observation, patrolling, the protection of headquarters and other tasks related to medical and liaison teams. Taking any combat role was explicitly ruled out. Furthermore, none of the two aforementioned official document declared a formal level of ambition for the participation in international operations.

[33] Parliamentary Decision On the Homeland Defense Guidelines of the Republic of Hungary (27/1993. April 23 1993).
[34] Ibid.
[35] Parliamentary Decision On the Security Policy Guidelines of the Republic of Hungary (11/1993. March 12, 1993) and Parliamentary Decision On the Homeland Defense Guidelines of the Republic of Hungary (27/1993. April 23 1993).

1.4. The scope of action for the executive in decision-making

After Hungary became independent, the country reformed its constitution in 1989 with the aim of adopting liberal democratic elements.[36] Bringing the armed forces under strict civilian control was an important aspect of this reform. As a result, the President of Hungary elected by referendum became the commander in chief of the Hungarian armed forces. Later, the 48/1991 Constitutional Court Resolution and the 1993 Homeland Defense Act further strengthened civilian control by increasing the authority of the government and making the role of the President representational with regard to the use of military force.[37]

As a part of this process, after the constitutional reform in 1989 the Hungarian Parliament became the key player in the decision-making about the deployment of the armed forces. As a result, without the permission of Parliament based on a qualified majority, the Hungarian armed forces could not be deployed in Hungary or abroad, cross the borders of the country and take part in peacekeeping or humanitarian operations and no foreign troops could be deployed in the country.[38] Consequently, the Hungarian Government had low level of executive flexibility. Nevertheless, since Hungary took part in the United Nations Iran–Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG) between 1988 and 1990, the desiderata of UN peacekeeping operations were taken into account thus making these operations the only

[36] Péter Tálas and Tamás Csiki, "Hungary," in *Strategic Cultures in Europe: Security and Defence Policies across the Continent*, Schriftenreihe Des Zentrums Für Militärgeschichte Und Sozialwissenschaften Der Bundeswehr 13 (Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2013), 173.
[37] György Csabai, "A Magyar Haderőreform Folyamata és Tapasztalatai 1988 és 2000 Között," *Katonai Logisztika*, no. 3 (2000): 17–24. and István Gyarmati, "A Magyar Hadsereg átalakulása és Helyzete 1988 és 2008 Között," in *Magyarorszag Politikai évhuszadkönyve Kormányzati Rendszer Parlamenti Demokráciában* (Demokrácia Kutatások Magyar Központja Alapítvány, 2009), http://www.politikaievkonyv.hu/online/mp20/.
[38] Gergely Varga, "Magyarország a NATO-ban," in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 61.

exceptions from this strict regulation.[39] Therefore, the Government had the right the make decisions in this regard. Consequently, if the Hungarian government had wanted to take part in an international operation which was not a UN peacekeeping operation, it would have had to ask for the permission from Parliament. Although this regulation strengthened the civilian control over the armed forces, it made the procedure of the use of force extremely slow which could have endangered the security of the country in case of imminent military threat.

1.5. Conclusion

All in all, this chapter has pointed at several characteristics of the Hungarian strategic culture between 1991 and 1994. First, although the preference for the Euro Atlantic integration is discernible, the specific multinational organization(s) through which the integration could have been achieved remained unclear. Secondly, both the official documents and the mandate and the number of deployed troops have unveiled a homeland-focused armed forces with very modest goals in the international arena, which manifested in meagre and sporadic contributions to the international operations of the UN with strong national caveats on the use of force. It highlights the very low risk-tolerance and the risk-limiting behavior of the political elite. Thirdly, although the use of military force was considered as an important tool of foreign and security policy, its importance gradually decreased in the examined period. The core task of the armed forces centered on the territorial defense of Hungary, while their international role remained vague. Fourthly, the civilian control over the armed forces was significantly strengthened. As a consequence, the Hungarian Parliament became the key player in the

[39] Zoltán László Kiss, *Magyarok a békefenntartásban: katonaszociológiai adalékok a nemzetközi béketámogató műveletekben történő szerepvállalásunk fejlődéstörténetéhez és aktuális dilemmáihoz* (Budapest: Zrínyi Kiadó, 2011).

decision-making about the deployment of armed forces thus making the scope of action for the executive limited.

CHAPTER 2 - HUNGARY'S STRATEGIC CULTURE FROM 1994 TO 1999

This chapter examines the strategic culture of Hungary from the time when the Hungarian political elite decided to join NATO until the NATO-accession of the country. This research argues that the Alliance started to gradually affect Hungary's strategic culture well before the date of the accession, from the time when joining NATO became a top priority for the Hungarian political elite. However, even though the foreign policy orientation changed in 1994, its impact was discernible on other areas of the Hungarian strategic culture only from 1995. Unlike the previous chapter, this one discusses only three key areas of the Hungarian strategic culture: a) the foreign and security policy orientation; b) the level of ambition in international security policy and c) the willingness to use military force. The fourth area, the scope of action for the executive in decision-making is omitted here, since there was no significant change between 1994 and 1999.

2.1. Foreign and security policy orientation

From 1994, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization gradually became the preferred forum for security and defense cooperation as the substantive interaction started between Hungary and the Alliance through the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program and as NATO-accession became top priority for the country.

Although there is a disagreement among foreign and security experts over the exact moment of change in the foreign and security policy orientation of Hungary, most of them agree that NATO-accession became a top priority issue of the political elite in 1994.[40] Even though

[40] Pál Dunay, "The Half-Hearted Transformation of the Hungarian Military," *European Security* 14, no. 1 (March 2005): 23-24; János Szabó, *Haderő-átalakítás: Az Ezredforduló Haderőreformjának Előzményei, Jellemzői és Perspektívája* (Budapest: Zrínyi, 2001); Zoltán Szenes and Péter Tálas, eds., *Tíz éve a NATO-ban* (Budapest: Zrínyi Kiadó, 2009); Péter Tálas, "Negyedszázad Magyar Haderőreform-Kísérleteinek Vizsgálódási Kereteiről,"

one of the interviewees mentions that joining NATO as an objective appeared before 1994, Pál Dunay argues that it was symbolic and remained merely "at the levels of declaratory policy and diplomacy."[41] Indeed, from 1994, as it will be discussed later, concrete steps of the Hungarian political elite indicated a change in the foreign and security policy orientation of the country. The reason for this change was threefold. First, as it was demonstrated in the official documents of 1993, by that time Hungary had already become committed to the Euro Atlantic values and institutions.[42] Secondly, the dialogue between the Euro Atlantic institutions and Hungary deepened which strengthened the institutional ties of the country.[43] These two factors opened up new opportunities for pursuing the foreign and security policy objectives of the country. Thirdly, it became clear for the Hungarian political elite that the all-rounded defense and the respective capability-development programs would cost too much.[44] As a result, the political will towards the realization of all-rounded defense decreased significantly. All in all, the NATO-accession appeared for Hungary as a realistic opportunity on the Euro Atlantic path to guarantee the security of Hungary while decreasing its costs.

As for the concrete steps which indicated a change in the foreign and security policy orientation of the country, Pál Dunay, Tamás Csiki and Péter Tálas agree that the launch of the Partnership for Peace program in January, 1994 and the fact that Hungary participated in it from the very beginning significantly influenced the foreign and security policy orientation of

in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 9–22; and Zoltán Szenes (former Chiefs of General Staffs of the Hungarian Defense Forces), interview with the author, April 8, 2016.

[41] Pál Dunay, "The Half-Hearted Transformation of the Hungarian Military," *European Security* 14, no. 1 (March 2005): 23-24 and István Gyarmati (former Head of the Department for Security Policy and Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) interview with the author, April 23, 2016.

[42] Parliamentary Decision On the Security Policy Guidelines of the Republic of Hungary (11/1993. March 12, 1993); Parliamentary Decision On the Homeland Defense Guidelines of the Republic of Hungary (27/1993. April 23 1993) and Zoltán Bali (Head of the Department of Defense Policy Planning, Hungarian Ministry of Defense), interview with the author, April 21, 2016.

[43] Tamás Csiki and Péter Tálas, "A Magyar Stratégiai Kultúráról," in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 29.

[44] Zoltán Bali (Head of the Department of Defense Policy Planning, Hungarian Ministry of Defense), interview with the author, April 21, 2016.

Hungary since it brought closer the prospect of NATO-accession.[45] Interestingly, the PfP caused change despite the fact that the possibility of enlargement was not on the agenda within NATO. Nevertheless, in 1995, the Alliance decided to launch the enlargement process which was indicated by a study on this subject.[46] This study defined the criteria of NATO-membership for aspirant countries, including the establishment of strong democratic and civilian control of the armed forces, and the provision of sufficient financial resources in order for the armed forces to be able to achieve compatibility (and later interoperability) with NATO-forces. Indeed, the Parliamentary Decision on the Long- and Mid-term Transformation and Development of the Hungarian Defense Forces (88/1995. July 6, 1995) explicitly connects the transformation of the armed forces to these requirements of the Alliance.[47]

The need to manage the conflict in the Balkans and the Alliance's new crisis management role accelerated the process of integration more than many could have expected in 1994.[48] Hungary's involvement in the peacekeeping operation of NATO in the Balkans in 1995 was largely due to the fact that the political elite of the country wanted to demonstrate its commitment to the Alliance.[49] As it became clear later on, the participation of the country in the realization of the Dayton Accords played an important role in the decision of the Alliance to invite Hungary to the NATO at the Madrid Summit in 1997.[50]

[45] Pál Dunay, "The Half-Hearted Transformation of the Hungarian Military," *European Security* 14, no. 1 (March 2005): 23-24. and Péter Tálas and Tamás Csiki, "Hungary," in *Strategic Cultures in Europe: Security and Defence Policies across the Continent*, Schriftenreihe Des Zentrums Für Militärgeschichte Und Sozialwissenschaften Der Bundeswehr 13 (Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2013), 168.
[46] Study on NATO Enlargement. accessed April 25, 2016. www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_24733.htm; Gergely Varga, "Magyarország a NATO-ban," in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 59–73.
[47] Parliamentary Decision on the Long- and Mid-term Transformation and Development of the Hungarian Defense Forces (88/1995. July 6, 1995), accessed April 25, 2016. http://mkogy.jogtar.hu/?page=show&docid=995h0088.OGY.
[48] Péter Tálas and Tamás Csiki, "Hungary," in *Strategic Cultures in Europe: Security and Defence Policies across the Continent*, Schriftenreihe Des Zentrums Für Militärgeschichte Und Sozialwissenschaften Der Bundeswehr 13 (Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2013), 169.
[49] Gergely Varga, "Magyarország a NATO-ban," in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 59–73.
[50] Zoltán Szenes, "A Magyar Honvédség Nemzetközi Szerepvállalásának Fejlődése," in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 107–27.

The change in the foreign and security policy orientation of the country towards the Euro Atlantic community was apparent and explicit in the new security and defense policy guidelines of 1998.[51] According to this document, the country's security relies on two pillars. The first pillar is the whole Hungarian nation itself, including citizens as well, while the second pillar includes the Euro Atlantic integration and the international cooperation. In this regard, NATO receives particular attention. The document claims that the most effective way of guaranteeing Hungary's security even in the long run is its membership in the Alliance and the principle of collective defense of NATO. Although the accession to the European Union appears in this documents, its significance is limited to economic and political issues.

On March 12, 1999, the Hungarian political elite achieved its top priority since 1994 as the country joined the Alliance along with Poland and the Czech Republic as the first former members of the Warsaw Pact.[52] The decision was not only based on the consensus of the political elite: a referendum was held in 1997 where 85.33% of the voters said yes to NATO.[53]

2.2. Level of ambition in international security policy

After 1994, Hungary became more active internationally through international organizations compared to the period of 1991 and 1994 in terms of the size of the deployed forces in international operations. Moreover, the main objectives of the country in the security realm broadened and became more precise at the same time.

One of the signs of this more active attitude was Hungary's participation in the NATO-operations in Bosnia and Croatia. In 1995, after several years of war, a peace agreement was

[51] Resolution No. 94/1998 (XII. 29.) of the Government on the Defense Policy Guidelines of the Republic of Hungary.
[52] NATO Member-countries. *NATO*. accessed April 25, 2016. http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_52044.htm.
[53] Dániel Berzsenyi and László Szabó, "A Védelmi Szektor Néhány Elemének Transzformációja," in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 55.

reached in Dayton. In order to make sure that the agreement would not be breached, NATO launched an operation in Bosnia (Implementation Force, IFOR) upon the request of the United Nations.[54] During the preparatory phase of the operation, the Alliance requested Hungary's participation. As it has already been mentioned before, Hungary joined the peacekeeping operation of NATO in the Balkans in 1995 as the political elite of the country wanted to demonstrate its commitment to the Alliance.[55]

As a result, the NATO-operation in Bosnia and Croatia significantly changed the Hungarian level of ambition in international security policy in terms of the size of the deployed forces compared to the period between 1991 and 1994, as shown in Figure 1. While between 1991 and 1994 the maximum number of deployed forces never went beyond 70 troops per year, the Hungarian Parliament allowed an engineering battalion to take part in the IFOR NATO-operation up to 500 troops.[56] Moreover, the country allowed the NATO-forces to use the country's airspace and territory and provided host nation support for them in Hungary as well.[57] Although no formal level of ambition was defined, the actual contribution of Hungary to the IFOR operation was 450 troops. On December 21, 1996, due to the success of IFOR, the international operation moved into the stabilization phase of the operation for consolidating peace by creating SFOR (Stabilization Forces). Although the total number of troops deployed by the contributor countries within SFOR was half of that of IFOR, the Hungarian contribution remained relatively high around 300 troops until 1999 which meant only a 30% decrease in comparison with the number of troops deployed within IFOR.

[54] History of the NATO-led Stabilisation Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina. *NATO*. accessed April 30, 2016. http://www.nato.int/sfor/docu/d981116a.htm.
[55] Gergely Varga, "Magyarország a NATO-ban," in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 59–73.
[56] Zoltán László Kiss, *Magyarok a békefenntartásban: katonaszociológiai adalékok a nemzetközi béketámogató műveletekben történő szerepvállalásunk fejlődéstörténetéhez és aktuális dilemmáihoz* (Budapest: Zrínyi Kiadó, 2011). 107-109.
[57] Ibid.

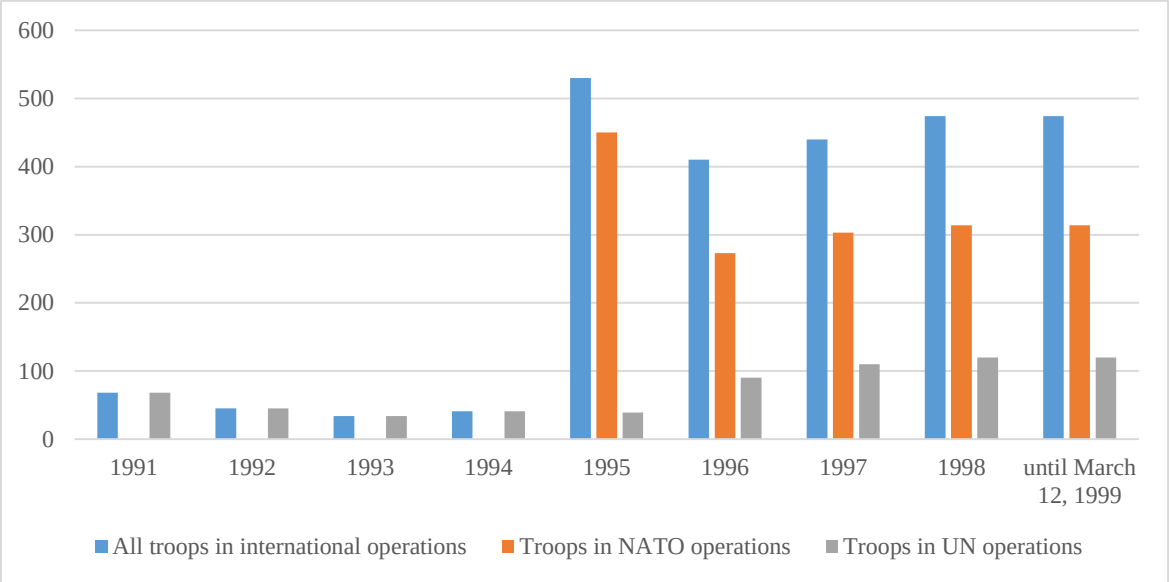

Figure 1: Hungarian troops in international operations between 1991 and March 12, 1999.[58]

According to the new security and defense policy guidelines of 1998, the progress made that far with regard to the Euro Atlantic integration required the reconfiguration of the principles of the security policy of the country. As a result, the main objectives of the country in the security realm broadened and became more precise at the same time.[59] The contribution to the security of the members of the Alliance appeared as a new element, while the geographical focus of the Hungarian security policy widened and included the whole Euro Atlantic area. Nevertheless, compared to the previous strategic documents of 1993, implicit or explicit reference to unilateral action could not be identified. Furthermore, the document emphasized that the use of military force was only acceptable within the framework of international organizations.

[58] The figure was created by the author based on the data from *The Military Balance* journal (years: 1991-1999, published by the International Institute for Strategic Studies) which provides annual assessment of global military capabilities and defense economics. It is important to highlight that as far as Hungary is concerned, there is no reliable statistical data with regard to the precise number of deployed forces in international operations. Even if *The Military Balance* provides us with comparable data, it is difficult to draw precise conclusions from such statistics since the number of the deployed forces changed on a monthly basis. Nevertheless, the data in our case is illustrative of comparing the volume of deployments of the two periods.

[59] Resolution No. 94/1998 (XII. 29.) of the Government on the Defense Policy Guidelines of the Republic of Hungary.

2.3. Willingness to use military force

After 1994, there were signs that the previously reluctant attitude towards the use of military force as a tool of security policy started to change slightly because of the interaction with the Alliance. As a result, the core tasks of the armed forces began to shift from purely territorial defense towards an international operations-oriented approach which entailed the more active use of the Hungarian armed forces abroad. Nevertheless, the strong restrictions on the use of the armed forces and the justification of their deployment remained similar to the previously examined period. Consequently, the very low risk-tolerance and the risk-limiting behavior of the political elite did not change.

Since there was no clear security policy orientation between 1991 and 1994, no modernization program could be taken place as all the six aforementioned options would have required different capabilities. Thus, the Hungarian armed forces remained identical to those of the Soviet times: a robust, slow, defense-focused mass army with heavy techniques. Nevertheless, as the NATO-accession became top priority for the Hungarian political elite, the armed forces of the country had to fulfil the requirements included in the Study on NATO Enlargement.[60] The study required the prospective member-countries to achieve compatibility (and later interoperability) with NATO-forces. However, it is important to note that the significance of the armed forces was downplayed by both the political elite and the society at large: issues related to security and defense policy were rarely present in the political and societal discourse and the security perception of Hungarian society was predominantly non-military.[61] Despite this fact, the requirements of the Alliance and the real possibility of NATO-

[60] Study on NATO Enlargement. accessed April 25, 2016. www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_24733.htm.
[61] Péter Tálas and Tamás Csiki, "Hungary," in *Strategic Cultures in Europe: Security and Defence Policies across the Continent*, Schriftenreihe Des Zentrums Für Militärgeschichte Und Sozialwissenschaften Der Bundeswehr 13 (Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2013), 166.

accession kept the security and defense policy issues on the agenda.[62] One interviewee even mentions that had it not been for the Alliance, the loss of significance of the armed forces after the Cold War would have been more drastic, resulting in a much smaller size, weaker capabilities and more modest financial support.[63] In line with his argument, the defense expenditure as a percentage of GDP reflects this impact of the NATO. Between 1988 and 1995, the defense budget fell from 3.6% to 1.3%, by 64% in total. However, this tendency stopped after 1995, reaching a relatively stable value around 1.4% with slight increase within the period of 1995 and 1999.[64]

In 1991, the Alliance adopted crisis management as its second core task along with collective defense and started to develop the necessary capabilities.[65] From 1995, the development of the Hungarian armed forces followed this direction. The gradual shift from all-rounded, territorial defense was apparent in the Parliamentary Decision on the Long- and Mid-term Transformation and Development of the Hungarian Defense Forces (88/1995. July 6, 1995) which aimed at transforming the armed forces in line with the NATO-requirements.[66] Although most of the tasks of the armed forces in this documents were related to the territorial defense of the homeland, the task of international crisis management appeared more prominently compared to the strategic documents of 1993.

The new security and defense policy guidelines of 1998 were more explicit in connecting the security of Hungary to its membership in the Alliance and placed more emphasis

[62] Pál Dunay, "The Half-Hearted Transformation of the Hungarian Military," *European Security* 14, no. 1 (March 2005): 17–32.
[63] Zoltán Szenes (former Chiefs of General Staffs of the Hungarian Defense Forces), interview with the author, April 8, 2016.
[64] *The SIPRI Military Expenditure Database*, 1988-2015. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. 2016. accessed April 25, 2016, http://www.sipri.org/research/armaments/milex/milex_database.
[65] The Strategic Concept of the Alliance, 1991. accessed April 26, 2016, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_23847.htm.
[66] Parliamentary Decision on the Long- and Mid-term Transformation and Development of the Hungarian Defense Forces (88/1995. July 6, 1995), accessed April 25, 2016. http://mkogy.jogtar.hu/?page=show&docid=995h0088.OGY.

on the obligations stemming from its membership.[67] It stated that there were two core tasks of the Hungarian armed forces: first, the territorial defense of the homeland and second, contributing to the collective defense of the Alliance. The participation in crisis management operations appeared with greater prominence, particularly in the case of the crisis management operations of NATO. The document also reiterated that the transformation of the armed forces would be in accordance with the requirements of the Alliance.

The procurements of military assets was determined by the scarcely available financial resources and the need to achieve compatibility with NATO-forces.[68] Within the period of 1994 and 1999, in spite of the growing importance of crisis management operations, these procurements attempted to fulfill the requirements of the two core tasks of the Hungarian armed forces: defense of the homeland and collective defense. Consequently, air defense systems, armored personnel carriers, anti-tank weapons, fighters and tanks were purchased.

As it became clear during the involvement of Hungary in the NATO-operations in Bosnia, the justification of the deployment of the armed forces and the strong restrictions on their use did not change.[69] The deployment of the Hungarian troops was justified on the basis of humanitarian need, supporting peace and the primacy of the United Nations resolutions. Their mandate included only logistical, engineering and liaison tasks where any combat role was out of question. One interviewee mentions that these reservations went to such length that in one instance the Hungarian Parliament requested to dismount machine guns from the deployed armored vehicles.[70]

[67] Resolution No. 94/1998 (XII. 29.) of the Government on the Defense Policy Guidelines of the Republic of Hungary.
[68] Péter Tálas, "Negyedszázad Magyar Haderőreform-Kísérleteinek Vizsgálódási Kereteiről," in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 21.
[69] Zoltán László Kiss, *Magyarok a békefenntartásban: katonaszociológiai adalékok a nemzetközi béketámogató műveletekben történő szerepvállalásunk fejlődéstörténetéhez és aktuális dilemmáihoz* (Budapest: Zrínyi Kiadó, 2011). 106-109.
[70] Zoltán Szenes (former Chiefs of General Staffs of the Hungarian Defense Forces), interview with the author, April 8, 2016. And István Gyarmati (former Head of the Department for Security Policy and Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) interview with the author, April 23, 2016.

2.4. Conclusion

As it has been shown, the interaction with NATO gradually influenced the Hungarian strategic culture between 1994 and 1999. First, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization gradually became the preferred forum for security and defense cooperation as it was indicated by several foreign and security policy decisions between 1994 and 1999. Secondly, NATO significantly contributed to a more active international presence of the country. As Hungary wanted to demonstrate its commitment to the Alliance, it contributed to the NATO-operations in the Balkans with around 400 troops. The size of the deployed forces in the Balkans meant a change compared to the period between 1991 and 1994 when the number of deployed forces never exceeded 70 per year. Thirdly, the previously reluctant attitude towards the use of military force as a tool of security policy started to change slightly as the Hungarian armed forces began their transformation towards an international operation-oriented military compatible with NATO-requirements. Moreover, this transformation took place despite the relative indifference of both the political elite and the society towards defense issues, for the real possibility of NATO-accession kept the security and defense policy issues on the agenda. As a result, participation in international operations as a task of the armed forces appeared more prominently in strategic documents. It is also important to emphasize that these changes did not end by 1999, but continued and became more discernible within the period of 1999 and 2015.

CHAPTER 3 - HUNGARY'S STRATEGIC CULTURE BETWEEN 1999 AND 2015

The chapter introduces how the Alliance influenced the strategic culture of Hungary from its accession to NATO until 2015. In doing so, all the four key elements of strategic culture will be discussed in details, namely, a) foreign and security policy orientation; b) level of ambition in international security policy; c) willingness to use military force and d) the scope of action for the executive in decision-making. The main argument of this chapter is that although the change in the Hungarian strategic culture had started before the country joined NATO, the effects of the Alliance became more prominent after 1999.

3.1. Foreign and security policy orientation

After its accession to NATO in 1999, Hungary continued to follow a relatively consistent Euro Atlantic path. Despite the fact that Hungary became a member of the European Union in 2004, the focus of the foreign and security policy of the country remained on the Alliance. Therefore, as the strategic documents, the foreign and security policy decisions regarding the country's involvement in Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan, and the distribution of Hungarian troops in international operations demonstrate, NATO was regarded as the preferred forum for security and defense cooperation between 1999 and 2015.

The first ever National Security Strategy of Hungary adopted in 2002 regards NATO as the prime guarantor of the country's security, in line with the Defense Policy Guidelines. of 1998.[71] Although strengthening the Common European Security and Defense Policy appears in the document as an important foreign and security policy objective of the country, the role of

[71] Resolution No. 2144/2002 (V.6.) of the Government on the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Hungary and Resolution No. 94/1998 (XII. 29.) of the Government on the Defense Policy Guidelines of the Republic of Hungary.

the European Union is secondary to the Alliance in providing security and stability to Europe. After the accession to the European Union, it was necessary to revise the National Security Strategy in 2004 so as to react to the new situation of the country. The new document is more balanced than its predecessor regarding the preferred arena for security and defense cooperation.[72] The significance of the European Union increased in this regard, as according to the document, the cooperation within the framework of the European Union and NATO is fundamental in guaranteeing Hungary's security. Nevertheless, as the document defines the term "security" in holistic terms, there is a clear division of labor between the two organizations. Thus, their relationship is described in terms of compatibility. The primary role of the Alliance in military issues, including collective defense is unquestionable, while the European Union is regarded as having particular importance only in economic and political matters.[73] The Foreign Relations Strategy of 2008 uses the same distinction between the European Union and the Alliance: while NATO is the primary guarantor of the security of the country, the EU "plays a large role" when it comes to security in broad terms.[74] The latest National Security Strategy of 2012 is in line with the previous one thus preferring NATO to the European Union as a forum for security and defense cooperation.[75] It emphasizes the role of the Alliance by arguing that "the active contribution to the collective defense and security is Hungary's most important security policy obligation."[76]

[72] Resolution No. 2073/2004. (IV. 15.) of the Government on the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Hungary.
[73] Such distribution of the tasks was also emphasized during one of the interviews. Zoltán Bali (Head of the Department of Defense Policy Planning, Hungarian Ministry of Defense), interview with the author, April 21, 2016.
[74] Resolution No. 1012/2008. (III. 4.) of the Government the Foreign Relations Strategy of the Republic of Hungary.
[75] Resolution No. 1035/2012. (II. 21.) of the Government on the National Security Strategy of Hungary
[76] Ibid.

Right after Hungary became a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, it demonstrated its commitment to the Alliance once again.[77] As fights broke out in Kosovo in 1999, the country faced a serious security challenge and foreign policy dilemma. On the one hand, the Hungarian political elite was well-aware that the country's direct and strong involvement in a military campaign against the Milosevic-regime could have a detrimental effect in the long run on the more than 300.000 Hungarian nationalities living in Serbia. On the other hand, Hungary wanted to demonstrate that it was a reliable ally and to prevent the conflict from escalating and affecting the Hungarian minorities. Accordingly, the question of the adequate reaction to the crisis caused a serious debate in domestic politics. Due to the sensitive nature of the issue, Hungary declined the idea of the Alliance to launch a military attack from the country on the ground. Nevertheless, the Hungarian political elite and society reached a consensus and aligned with NATO by allowing the allied aircrafts to use the airspace and the airports of Hungary even if it caused serious problems to the country.[78] First, areas within Serbia with a significant number of ethnic Hungarian residents were bombed by NATO-aircrafts. Secondly, as a result of the destruction of the bridges over the Danube by the Alliance, the river became unnavigable which, coupled with the economic blockade on Serbia, caused significant damage to the Hungarian economy. Thirdly, Hungary even confronted Russia, its important economic partner when it stopped an allegedly humanitarian Russian convoy to Serbia at the border and prevented the carried military assets from being transported to Serbia.

After the 9/11 terror attacks, Hungary supported the US operation Enduring Freedom only in political terms and did not provide practical assistance to the war in Afghanistan.[79] In 2001, the coalition of the willing led by the United States of America created ISAF

[77] Zoltán Szenes and Péter Tálas, eds., *Tíz éve a NATO-ban* (Budapest: Zrínyi Kiadó, 2009), 59-60. and Gergely Varga, "Magyarország a NATO-ban," in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 64-65.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Gergely Varga, "Magyarország a NATO-ban," in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 65-66.

(International Security Assistance Force) in order to provide security to the Afghan people.[80] In the beginning, from October 2002, the contribution of NATO to the ISAF was modest and limited to force generation, logistics and intelligence gathering. However, the Alliance gradually increased its involvement in ISAF and assumed full responsibility for the mission on August 11, 2003.[81] Although Hungary was reluctant to contribute to the operation Enduring Freedom, as the Alliance became increasingly involved in Afghanistan, it decided to join ISAF with an initial amount of 50 troops in February, 2003.[82] Apart from the objective of strengthening ties with the US, increasing its reputation within the Alliance played a significant role in its decision.[83]

In 2003, the member states of NATO were divided over the involvement in the war in Iraq which threatened the coherence of the Alliance. The then U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld even reinforced this division by talking about "old" and "new" Europe.[84] Despite the fact that some European allies, such as Germany and France opposed the invasion, Hungary supported the United States in this regard. Although the campaign in Iraq was not a NATO-operation, András Türke argues that Hungary's decision to contribute to the Operation Iraqi Freedom with a significant number of 300 troops between 2003 and 2005 was motivated partially by the fact that the country was constantly criticized by the Alliance for not being able to fulfil the requirements of NATO.[85] After NATO assumed greater responsibility in Iraq in

[80] Operation Enduring Freedom Fast Facts. *CNN Library*. September 30, 2015. accessed: May 5, 2016. http://edition.cnn.com/2013/10/28/world/operation-enduring-freedom-fast-facts/.
[81] ISAF's mission in Afghanistan (2001-2014) (Archived). *NATO*. September 1, 2015. accessed: May 5, 2016. http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_69366.htm.
[82] Zoltán László Kiss, *Magyarok a békefenntartásban: katonaszociológiai adalékok a nemzetközi béketámogató műveletekben történő szerepvállalásunk fejlődéstörténetéhez és aktuális dilemmáihoz* (Budapest: Zrínyi Kiadó, 2011). 129.
[83] Gergely Varga, "Magyarország a NATO-ban," in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 66.
[84] According to his interpretation, "old Europe" was represented by Germany and France which stood against the invasion, while "new Europe" consisted in large part of those formerly communist countries which supported the United States. Mark Baker, "U.S.: Rumsfeld's 'Old' And 'New' Europe Touches On Uneasy Divide," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, January 24, 2003, accessed: May 5, 2016. http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1102012.html.
[85] András Türke, "Magyarország Szerepvállalása Az Európai Unió Biztonság- És Védelempolitikájában," in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 77.

2004 by launching the NATO Training Mission in Iraq (NTM-I) for training, mentoring and assistant Iraqi security forces, Hungary supported this effort as well.[86]

In 2004, Hungary joined the European Union. Although the Common Security and Defense Policy of the European Union became stronger by time, the primacy of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as the guarantor of the security of Hungary was not questioned, as it can be seen in the strategic documents.[87] The soft power tools of the European Union (and those of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) were regarded as insufficient in guaranteeing the country's security.[88] Although the deployment of the Hungarian armed forces in international operations will be discussed in details in the next subchapter, their distribution between the EU and NATO, as shown in Figure 2, is telling in this regard. Hungary has taken part in international operations of the European Union since 2004. Until 2015, its contribution remained relatively stable, with around 150 troops each year. In contrast, the number of the Hungarian troops deployed in NATO-operations between 2004 and 2015 was far higher, ranging from 424 to 752. Compared to the number of all Hungarian troops deployed in international operations, 17% of them were deployed in EU operations, ranging from 12% to 20%. In the case of the Alliance, 64% of all the internationally deployed troops were deployed in NATO operations on average in the examined period, ranging from 42% to 72%. The proportion is more striking between 2005 and 2014, when 67.5% of all the Hungarian troops deployed abroad served in NATO operations. All in all, the contribution of Hungary to NATO operations was almost four times higher than in EU operations, which indicates a clear preference in this regard.

[86] Zoltán László Kiss, *Magyarok a békefenntartásban: katonaszociológiai adalékok a nemzetközi béketámogató műveletekben történő szerepvállalásunk fejlődéstörténetéhez és aktuális dilemmáihoz* (Budapest: Zrínyi Kiadó, 2011). 124-127.

[87] This finding was also supported by one of the interviewees. Zoltán Bali (Head of the Department of Defense Policy Planning, Hungarian Ministry of Defense), interview with the author, April 21, 2016.

[88] András Türke, "Magyarország Szerepvállalása Az Európai Unió Biztonság- és Védelempolitikájában," in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 77.

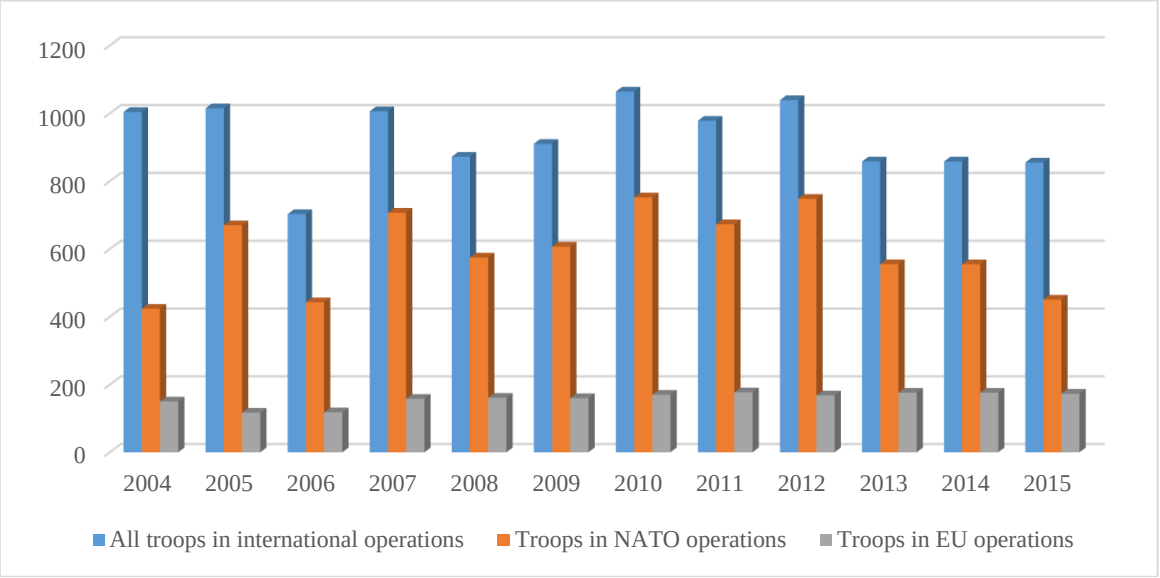

Figure 2: Hungarian troops in the international operations of the EU and NATO between 2004 and 2015.[89]

3.2. Level of ambition in international security policy

Between 1999 and 2015, Hungary took a more active international attitude compared to the previously examined periods. This change will be demonstrated in this chapter by strategic documents and the international deployments of the armed forces. As shown in previous research and the author's interviews, the reason for this change is closely connected to NATO. According to these sources, the country became more active in the international arena because the Hungarian political elite wanted to increase the reputation of the country and compensate for the low defense expenditure and the slow modernization process of the armed forces.[90]

[89] The figure was created by the author based on data from *The Military Balance* journal published by International Institute for Strategic Studies, which provides annual assessment of global military capabilities and defense economics. It is important to highlight that as far as Hungary is concerned, there is no reliable statistical data with regard to the precise number of deployed forces in international operations. Even if *The Military Balance* provides us with comparable data, it is difficult to draw precise conclusions from such statistics since the number of the deployed forces changed on a monthly basis. Nevertheless, the data in our case is illustrative of comparing the volume of deployments in the international operations of the EU and NATO.

[90] Péter Wagner, "A NATO ss Magyarország Szerepvállalása az Afganisztáni Válságkezelésben," *Külügyi Szemle*, no. 1 (2007): 96. and Zoltán Bali (Head of the Department of Defense Policy Planning, Hungarian Ministry of Defense), interview with the author, April 21, 2016. Another interviewee also mentioned the role of low defense expenditure in this regard. István Gyarmati (former Head of the Department for Security Policy and Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) interview with the author, April 23, 2016.

Furthermore, transferring political gains to other areas was also taken into consideration in this regard.[91]

In spite of the fact that the NATO allies agreed on spending 2% of their GDP on defense in 2006, Hungary has never reached this target since then.[92] Moreover, after a short upsurge between 1994 (1.4%) and 2003 (1.7%), the defense budget of the country shrunk to 0.8% in 2015.[93] Criticism from the part of the Alliance towards Hungary even came from the highest level. As one of the previous Secretary Generals of NATO, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer said during a press conference in Hungary in 2004: "There are different degrees of happiness in the life of a Secretary General, and there is a less degree of happiness... or lesser degree of happiness if he is confronted with cuts in defense spending, because nations had agreed to go for two percent GDP, and I'm afraid that Hungary is far away from that level on the basis of current defense spending."[94] In addition, the pace of the modernization of the armed forces has also left much to be desired. As Zoltán Szenes points out, although seven governments out of nine had plans for modernization between 1989 and 2012, none of these attempts were successfully completed.[95] Consequently, it is not surprising that the Hungarian political elite felt the need to contribute more to the efforts of the Alliance on other areas.

The more active presence of Hungary in the international system can be traced in its strategic documents, although it is not clear whether it is due to the European Union or NATO to a greater degree. The greater international responsibility taken by the country in the security and defense policy guidelines of 1998 is also reinforced by the National Security Strategies of

[91] Zoltán Szenes (former Chiefs of General Staffs of the Hungarian Defense Forces), interview with the author, April 8, 2016.
[92] Jan Techau, "The Politics of 2 Percent: NATO and the Security Vacuum in Europe," *Carneige Europe Papers*, September 2, 2015, 30.
[93] *The SIPRI Military Expenditure Database*, 1988-2015. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. 2016. accessed April 25, 2016, http://www.sipri.org/research/armaments/milex/milex_database.
[94] Press point with NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer and the Prime Minister of Hungary, Mr. Ferenc Gyurcsány. NATO. November 4, 2008. accessed: May 16, 2016. http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-60716335-38A20EC6/natolive/opinions_21127.htm.
[95] Zoltán Szenes, "A Magyar Honvédség Átalakítása (1989–2012)," *Honvédségi Szemle*, no. 6 (2012): 7–8.

2002, 2004 and 2012.[96] Nevertheless, it seems that it is more intensified than before. According to these documents, the framework of international organizations, NATO and the EU in particular, provides opportunities for Hungary in pursuing its interests. However, it also means increased responsibilities in the international arena. As the country joined NATO and the European Union in this period, it is not surprising that the security of Hungary seems more intertwined with that of two aforementioned international organizations. Consequently, a more active presence through NATO (and the EU) on the international scene results in more security for Hungary.

Nonetheless, the shift in the geographical responsibility of the country and the number and distribution of the internationally deployed troops can be more clearly connected to the influential role of NATO. As the security of Hungary and NATO became increasingly connected, the geographical responsibility of the country changed and broadened according to that of the Alliance. The National Security Strategy of 2002 focuses on the traditional regions: the Balkans and Eastern-Europe. However, as Hungary joined the Southern Flank of NATO, the Mediterranean region also gains importance. Interestingly, despite the fact that by 9/11, terrorism and the Middle-East became of great concerns for the whole transatlantic region, albeit to different degrees, the Middle-East is not even mentioned in the document. In contrast, the region appears in the National Security Strategy of 2004. It argues that "as a member of NATO and the EU, Hungary should pay more attention than before to the events happening outside of the Euro Atlantic region..."[97] It also says that as the focus of the international operations of the UN, the OSCE, NATO and the EU has shifted towards the Middle-East and

[96] Resolution No. 94/1998 (XII. 29.) of the Government on the Defense Policy Guidelines of the Republic of Hungary; Resolution No. 2144/2002 (V.6.) of the Government on the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Hungary; Resolution No. 2073/2004. (IV. 15.) of the Government on the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Hungary and Resolution No. 1035/2012. (II. 21.) of the Government on the National Security Strategy of Hungary.

[97] Resolution No. 2073/2004. (IV. 15.) of the Government on the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Hungary, 6.

Central-Asia, Hungary should be prepared to take a greater and enduring role in them. This shift from the narrow European focus can be clearly connected to the NATO-operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, since the Alliance started its operations in those countries in 2003 and 2004, respectively. Moreover, despite the fact that Central-Asia had never belonged to the traditional areas of influence of Hungary, the country's involvement in Afghanistan became the most significant operation in terms of the mandate and the size of the deployed forces which even reached 555 troops in 2012. It meant that more than 53% of all the internationally deployed Hungarian troops served in Afghanistan.[98] The National Security Strategy of 2012 also highlights that the security of Hungary and NATO is "inseparable."[99] Thus, the participation in the management of the conflicts in remote areas is still regarded as necessary.

As it has already been mentioned before, the high number of deployed troops in NATO-operations served as a form of compensation for the slow process of modernization of the armed forces and the low defense expenditures. As it has been demonstrated, even the significant contribution of 300 Hungarian troops to the US-led Operation Iraqi Freedom was the consequence of this compensatory mechanism. Furthermore, since joining NATO in 1999, Hungary has taken part in every land operation of the Alliance.[100] The participation in these operations was significant, as between March 12, 1999 and 2015, on average 66.6% of all the internationally deployed troops were deployed in NATO operations (see Figure 3).[101] In addition, by joining the two NATO-operations in 1999 in the Balkans, the maximum number of its internationally deployed forces increased by 40%.[102] At the Istanbul Summit, in 2004, NATO set out the requirement that every member country has to deploy at least 8% of its land

[98] *The Military Balance*. International Institute for Strategic Studies. 2013.
[99] Resolution No. 1035/2012. (II. 21.) of the Government on the National Security Strategy of Hungary
[100] Zoltán Szenes, "A Magyar Honvédség Nemzetközi Szerepvállalásának Fejlődése," in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 110.
[101] *The Military Balance*. International Institute for Strategic Studies. Years: 2000-2016.
[102] Ibid.

force in international operations within any organization.[103] Since the target size of the land force of the Hungarian armed forces was around 10,000 troops in the 2000s, this 8% meant 800 troops. Nevertheless, as Chart III. shows, the number of the Hungarian deployed forces has been around 1000 troops since 2003 which is 10% of the land force. Moreover, as the Hungarian armed forces rarely reach their target size, this percentage is even higher.[104] In 2007, Hungary set an official international level of ambition at a maximum of 1000 troops deployed simultaneously.[105] This over-performance in terms of the number of deployed forces is regarded as a compensatory mechanism towards NATO.[106]

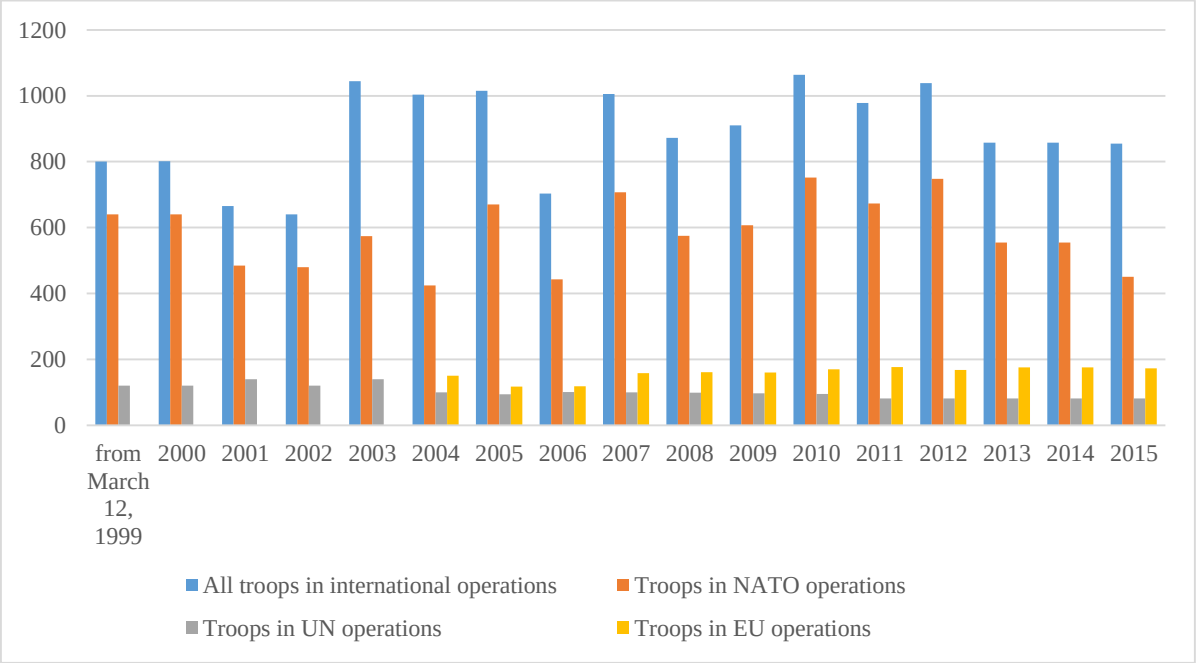

Figure 3: Hungarian troops in international operations between March 12, 1999 and 2015.[107]

[103] Sebastian Mayer, *NATO's Post-Cold War Politics: The Changing Provision of Security*, 2014.
[104] Zoltán Bali (Head of the Department of Defense Policy Planning, Hungarian Ministry of Defense), interview with the author, April 21, 2016 and Zoltán Szenes (former Chiefs of General Staffs of the Hungarian Defense Forces), interview with the author, April 8, 2016.
[105] 85/2007 Ministry of Defense Directive for Long-Term Defense Planning, 2009–2018).
[106] Zoltán Bali (Head of the Department of Defense Policy Planning, Hungarian Ministry of Defense), interview with the author, April 21, 2016 and Zoltán Szenes (former Chiefs of General Staffs of the Hungarian Defense Forces), interview with the author, April 8, 2016.
[107] *The Military Balance*. International Institute for Strategic Studies. Years: 2000-2016.

3.3. Willingness to use military force

Between 1999 and 2015, two important tendencies took place regarding the willingness of the Hungarian political elite to use military force as a result of the country's interaction with NATO. On the one hand, the Hungarian armed forces continued their transformation towards an international operation-oriented military in line with the expectations of the Alliance. Since it provided the necessary capabilities, this transformation of the military strengthened the belief of the country's political elite that the Hungarian armed forces can be useful foreign policy instruments. On the other hand, closely related to the first tendency and the desire of the political elite to demonstrate Hungary's commitment to NATO, the previously reluctant attitude towards the use of military force in the international arena and the risk-limiting behavior started to change.

The first tendency, that is, the increasing prominence of international operations as a task of the Hungarian armed forces was discernible even before the country's accession to NATO.[108] The Hungarian participation in the AFOR (Albanian Force) and the KFOR (Kosovo Force) NATO operations in the Balkans from 1999 was crucial for increasing the significance of the international operations for the armed forces.[109] First, it became clear for the Hungarian political elite that the conscripted army was insufficient for enduring peacekeeping operations. Secondly, the lack of proper training for expeditionary operations and the obsolete equipment were striking problems which put pressure on the political elite. Furthermore, NATO's new strategic concept of 1999 added crises management as a new, vital tool in guaranteeing the security of the whole Euro Atlantic region and urged the members of the Alliance for further

[108] Parliamentary Decision on the Long- and Mid-term Transformation and Development of the Hungarian Defense Forces (88/1995. July 6, 1995), accessed May 11, 2016. http://mkogy.jogtar.hu/?page=show&docid=995h0088.OGY and Resolution No. 94/1998 (XII. 29.) of the Government on the Defense Policy Guidelines of the Republic of Hungary.

[109] Zoltán Szenes, "Koncepcióváltás a Magyar Békefenntartásban?," *Nemzet és Biztonság*, no. 4 (April 2008): 77.

developing those military capabilities which were necessary for all NATO missions, including crisis management and peace support operations.[110] As a result of these pressures, a strategic review was launched in 1999 so as to identify the root causes. The aim of this review was to follow a Western-type of expeditionary model by establishing armed forces which are well-trained, have their own logistical capabilities and can be deployed fast.[111]

In order to create an international operation-oriented military based on voluntary forces, the new government decided to initiate a defense review in 2002 because of two main reasons.[112] On the one hand, the aim of the strategic review of 1999 was not fulfilled thus the aforementioned problems still persisted. On the other hand, the Alliance adopted the Prague Capabilities Commitment (PCC) at the Prague Summit in 2002.[113] According to the PCC, the members of the Alliance decided to continue the improvement of those operational capabilities which were needed to cope with the security challenges of distant areas in the 21st century, including the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism. Therefore, Hungary began to develop the operational expeditionary capabilities related to Special Operational Forces, light infantry, psychological operations and civil-military cooperation necessary for tackling those challenges. In addition, the country suspended the conscription-system in 2004 and introduced an all-volunteer, professional model, making an important step in the modernization process.

In spite of the previous direction, the importance of international operations seemed marginal in Hungary's first National Security Strategy adopted in 2002.[114] The opposition was critical of the document and when they came to power, they decided to rewrite it in 2002 and

[110] The Alliance's Strategic Concept, 1999, Washington, Accessed April 4, 2016 http://www.nato.int/cps/on/natohq/official_texts_27433.htm.
[111] Zoltán Szenes, "A Magyar Honvédség Nemzetközi Szerepvállalásának Fejlődése," in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 107–27.
[112] Gábor Nagy, "Haderõ-átalakítás és Haderõ Fejlesztés," *Hadtudomány* 14, no. 2 (2004): 31–41.
[113] Prague Capabilities Commitment. Accessed April 4, 2016, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_50087.htm.
[114] Resolution No. 2144/2002 (V.6.) of the Government on the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Hungary.

adopted the new version two years later. The new National Security Strategy was in line with the strategic concept of the Alliance and highlighted the importance of following the desiderata of NATO regarding the transformation of the Hungarian armed forces.[115] Moreover, it also put an emphasis on the need to take an active part in international operations, primarily in those of the Alliance. In addition, while the security and defense policy guidelines of 1998 considered collective defense as more important than international operations, the Homeland Defense Act of 2004 treated them with equal significance.[116]

After being reelected in 2006, the socialist government was determined to further develop the expeditionary capabilities of the armed forces, while the Foreign Relations Strategy reinforced the growing importance of international operations for the country.[117] The document highlighted that the country relied on – among many other foreign policy tools – the Hungarian armed forces carrying out international operations while it pursues its foreign policy objectives. Such a prominent role of the armed forces among other foreign policy instruments appeared as a new element compared to previous strategic documents. Later on, the National Military Strategy of 2012 also underlined that the military force was regarded as being an important element of international politics.[118]

In 2012, the National Security Strategy of the new conservative government (2010-present) further reinforced the significance of international operations in accordance with the Alliance's new strategic concept of 2010.[119] With regard to the utility of the Hungarian armed forces, the document highlighted that their role in the international arena made them

[115] Resolution No. 2073/2004. (IV. 15.) of the Government on the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Hungary.
[116] Resolution No. 94/1998 (XII. 29.) of the Government on the Defense Policy Guidelines of the Republic of Hungary and Homeland Defense Act, 2004, sec. 70.
[117] Resolution No. 51/2007. (VI. 6.) of the Government on the further directions of the development of the Hungarian armed forces and Resolution No. 1012/2008. (III. 4.) of the Government the Foreign Relations Strategy of the Republic of Hungary.
[118] Resolution No. 1656/2012 (XII. 20) of the Government on the National Military Strategy of Hungary.
[119] The Alliance's Strategic Concept of 2010. Accessed April 4, 2016, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_82705.htm and Resolution No. 1035/2012. (II. 21.) of the Government on the National Security Strategy of Hungary.

fundamental in guaranteeing the sovereignty of Hungary. It also underlined that the armed forces were one of "the decisive instruments" of Hungary as regards the realization of its foreign policy, albeit they remained as an instrument of last resort.[120] In addition, although the new National Military Strategy emphasized the protection of the homeland, it further expanded the tasks of the military forces with regard to international operations.[121]

The second tendency is closely connected to the first one. As the perceived utility of the Hungarian armed forces as a foreign policy tool increased, the previously reluctant attitude towards their use in the international arena started to ease. This shift was also partly the consequence of the desire of the political elite to demonstrate the country's commitment to NATO. This change was discernible in the case of the broadening mandate of the deployed troops in Afghanistan.

The initial mandate of the Hungarian armed forces deployed in Afghanistan reflected the reluctant attitude towards the use of military force which was identifiable in the previously examined periods in the case of other operations. Thus, the armed forces took on patrolling and medical services tasks in the beginning. However, their mandate was broadened by the time so as to compensate for the low defense expenditures which were constantly decreasing from 2001.[122] As a result, reconstructing tasks were incorporated into their mandate, even though with national caveats which ruled out the possibility of engaging in combat activity.[123] Nevertheless, the mandate of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams allowed them to use lethal

[120] Resolution No. 1035/2012. (II. 21.) of the Government on the National Security Strategy of Hungary.
[121] Zoltán Szenes, "A Magyar Honvédség Nemzetközi Szerepvállalásának Fejlődése," in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 107–27. and Resolution No. 1656/2012 (XII. 20) of the Government on the National Military Strategy of Hungary.
[122] Zoltán Szenes, "A Magyar Honvédség Nemzetközi Szerepvállalásának Fejlődése," in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 107–27. and *The SIPRI Military Expenditure Database*, 1988-2015. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. 2016. accessed May 10, 2016, http://www.sipri.org/research/armaments/milex/milex_database.
[123] Gergely Varga, "Magyarország a NATO-ban," in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 67.

force in case of self-defense.[124] NATO's new strategy for the Central-Asian country adopted in 2008 increased the presence of the Alliance in Afghanistan which put Hungary under increasing pressure to take greater responsibility.[125] Since the political elite realized that it could provide it with political gains, the country stepped up with its contribution.[126] Hence, Hungary deployed operational mentor and liaison teams, Special Operational Forces (SOF), training and assisting teams and also assumed the lead nation role for the protection and coordination of the strategically important Kabul International Airport.

Beyond the increased number of taken tasks, the strict restrictions on the use of military force softened regarding the operational mentor and liaison teams and SOFs, as they participated in high-intensity, combat operations for the first time ever.[127] The role played by the SOFs was a breakthrough in this regard.[128] Although the exact details of their mandate are confidential, it can be generally said that it includes unconventional warfare, foreign internal defense, special reconnaissance, direct action and counterterrorism where the use of lethal force is allowed.[129]

Moreover, it seems that the departure from the reluctant attitude towards the use of military force and the risk-limiting behavior was not ephemeral. First, as Tálas argues, the National Military Strategy of 2012 also indicates this change by saying that the Hungarian

[124] Zoltán Szenes (former Chiefs of General Staffs of the Hungarian Defense Forces), interview with the author, April 8, 2016.
[125] ISAF's Strategic Vision. *NATO*. August 27, 2008. accessed: May 10, 2016. http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_8444.htm.
[126] Zoltán Szenes, "A Magyar Honvédség Nemzetközi Szerepvállalásának Fejlődése," in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 110-111.
[127] A generally more daring attitude towards the use of military force was also mentioned during one of the interviews. Zoltán Bali (Head of the Department of Defense Policy Planning, Hungarian Ministry of Defense), interview with the author, April 21, 2016.
[128] Zoltán Szenes (former Chiefs of General Staffs of the Hungarian Defense Forces), interview with the author, April 8, 2016 and Tamás Csiki (assistant research fellow at the Center for Strategic and Defense Studies), interview with the author, March 8, 2016.
[129] László Forray, "A Különleges Műveleti Zászlóalj Kiképzésének, Felkészítésének és Felszerelésének Fejlesztési Lehetőségei" (PhD Dissertation, Zrínyi Miklós National Defense University, 2009). 30-61.

armed forces "should be able to carry out high-intensity operations in the medium-term."[130] Secondly, even if the mission in Afghanistan was terminated in 2014 and the mandate of the new NATO operation (Resolute Support) is limited to providing training, advice and assistance to the country's security forces and institutions, the Hungarian Special Operational Forces are still in Afghanistan with the permission to use lethal force.[131]

3.4. The scope of action for the executive in decision-making

This research argues that Hungary's accession to the Alliance led to significant changes in the scope of action for the executive. So as to meet the obligations deriving from the country's membership in NATO, several modifications were necessary. These modifications were not limited only to the foreign deployment of the Hungarian armed forces, but influenced the broader context of the decision-making process in this regard. As a result, the center of gravity shifted from the Parliament towards the executive (the Hungarian Government), consequently increasing the scope of action of the latter.

After the country regained its independence, the Hungarian constitution did not permit the Hungarian military to be deployed in the country or abroad, to participate in peacekeeping operations, and to cross the Hungarian borders in the absence of the preliminary permission of the Hungarian Parliament, except for the peacekeeping operations of the United Nations.[132] As a result, the permission of the Hungarian Parliament was required every single time the

[130] Tamás Csiki and Péter Tálas, "Stratégiától Stratégiáig. A 2009-es és a 2012-es Magyar Katonai Stratégia Összehasonlító Elemzése," *NKE SVKK Nézőpontok*, no. 5 (2013): 10 and Resolution No. 1656/2012 (XII. 20) of the Government on the National Military Strategy of Hungary.
[131] Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan. accessed April 4, 2016, http://www.nato.int/cps/in/natohq/topics_113694.htm.
[132] Gergely Varga, "Magyarország a NATO-ban," in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 61. and Zoltán Szenes and Péter Tálas, eds., *Tíz éve a NATO-ban* (Budapest: Zrínyi Kiadó, 2009). 61-68.

Hungarian military was to be deployed at the request of the Alliance or NATO-troops were to enter the borders of the country.

Although the fact that the Parliament became such a key player in this regard strengthened the civilian control over the armed forces, it made the process extremely slow. Since the members of the Hungarian political elite were well aware of the necessity of fulfilling the obligations stemming from the country's membership in the Alliance, consensus prevailed among them that the process had to be made simpler, quicker and more efficient.[133] In order to do so, the Parliament modified the constitution and increased the scope of action of the government in 2000.[134] Consequently, the government received the right to make decision about whether Hungarian armed forces can cross the borders of the country in peace time.

The emerging security challenges, the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the launch of operations in the broader Middle-Eastern region increased the need for the swift international deployment of the armed forces within the Alliance. As regards Hungary, this ability received particular attention when the possibility of deploying the Hungarian troops as part of the NATO Response Force became realistic after the Prague Summit in 2002. The NATO Response Force (NRF) is a joint, highly ready multinational task force made up of maritime, land, air and Special Operations Forces being able to react immediately (within days) to security challenges wherever needed.[135] When the readiness of the decision-making process of the member states was tested through simulations within the Alliance, it became clear that Hungary is among the slowest allies in NATO. The slow decision-making process endangered the efficacy of the NRF, thus provoking sharp criticism from other NATO members.[136] One typical example of this slow

[133] Gergely Varga, "Magyarország a NATO-ban," in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 61.
[134] Ferenc Almási, "Honvédelmünk NATO Integrációs Folyamatának áttekintése, Tapasztalatai és Következtetései Jogi Szempontból" (PhD Dissertation, Zrínyi Miklós National Defense University, 2005).
[135] NATO Response Force. Accessed April 4, 2016, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49755.htm.
[136] Gergely Varga, "Magyarország a NATO-ban," in *Magyar Biztonságpolitika, 1989–2014* (Stratégiai Védelmi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 62.

procedure was when the deployment of two Hungarian military officers for the NATO headquarters in Afghanistan took months in 2003. As a consequence of the strong criticism, the constitution was modified once again in the same year. Previously, the Parliament was in charge of making decisions about the participation of the armed forces in international operations.[137] As a result of the modification in 2003, the Hungarian government received this right regarding the unanimous decision of NATO (and the European Union).

3.5. Conclusion

The chapter has shown that NATO significantly influenced the strategic culture of Hungary within the period of 1999 and 2015. First, the interaction with NATO strengthened the position of the Alliance as the preferred arena for security and defense cooperation which was demonstrated through several foreign and security policy decisions. It was the case despite the fact that Hungary joined the European Union in 2004. Secondly, in order to compensate NATO for the low level of defense expenditure and the slow modernization process of the Hungarian armed forces, the country took a more active international attitude compared to the previously examined periods. The increased international presence was well seen in the case of the strategic documents and the international deployments of armed forces. Thirdly, the requirement of NATO to transform the Hungarian armed forces into an international operation-oriented military changed the way of thinking of the political elite about the utility of the use of force. As a result, the belief of the Hungarian political elite that the armed forces can be useful instruments of foreign policy was strengthened. Fourthly, as a consequence of the desire of the political elite to demonstrate the country's commitment to NATO and the previously mentioned

[137] Péter Tálas and Tamás Csiki, "Hungary," in *Strategic Cultures in Europe: Security and Defence Policies across the Continent*, Schriftenreihe Des Zentrums Für Militärgeschichte Und Sozialwissenschaften Der Bundeswehr 13 (Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2013), 165–79.

change in the belief of the political elite regarding the utility of the use of force, the previously reluctant attitude towards the use of military force in the international arena and the risk-limiting behavior started to change. Finally, as the Alliance pushed the Hungarian political elite for making the decision-making process of the deployment of the armed forces quicker and more efficient, the scope of action of the Government significantly increased.

CONCLUSION

This research has explored change in the strategic culture of Hungary within the period of 1989 and 2015. Based on the conceptualization of strategic culture from Heiko Biehl et al. and using process-tracing as the preferred method, it demonstrated that the interaction with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization significantly influenced all the four key areas of the Hungarian strategic culture between 1994 and 2015: a) foreign and security policy orientation; b) level of ambition in international security policy; c) willingness to use military force and d) the scope of action for the executive in decision-making.

Until 1994, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization did not have a significant impact on the strategic culture of the country, since Hungary aimed at guaranteeing its security independently. Nevertheless, from 1994, when joining NATO became a top priority for the Hungarian political elite, the Alliance started to gradually affect Hungary's strategic culture. The effects of the interaction between NATO and Hungary became more prominent between 1999 and 2015. As a result, the Alliance caused five significant changes in the strategic culture of Hungary.

First, NATO gradually became the preferred arena for security and defense cooperation, which was demonstrated through several foreign and security policy decisions. This position of the Alliance was not questioned even when Hungary joined the European Union in 2004 thus gaining new opportunities to guarantee its security. Secondly, so as to compensate the Alliance for the slow modernization process of the Hungarian armed forces and the low level of defense expenditure, the country had an increasingly active international presence compared to the period before 1994. As a result, Hungary significantly increased the number of its internationally deployed troops and eventually set the official international level of ambition at very high level: a maximum of 1000 troops deployed simultaneously. Thirdly, the constant

pressure from NATO to transform the Hungarian armed forces into an international operation-oriented military changed the way of thinking of the political elite about the utility of the use of force. Thus, as the strategic documents and the increased number of internationally deployed troops show, the armed forces were perceived by the political elite as being useful foreign policy tools more than before. Fourthly, as a consequence of the desire of the political elite to demonstrate the country's commitment to NATO and the abovementioned change in the belief of the political elite regarding the utility of the use of force, the previously reluctant attitude towards the use of military force in the international arena and the risk-limiting behavior changed as well. This change was evident in the case of the Special Operational Forces which took part in high-intensity, combat operations in Afghanistan where the use of lethal force was allowed. Finally, as the Alliance pushed the Hungarian political elite for transforming the decision-making process of the deployment of the armed forces into a quicker and more efficient one, the scope of action of the Government significantly increased.

The findings of this research support the argument of Thomas Banchoff, Jeffrey S. Lantis, Thomas U. Berger and John Duffield who claim that strategic culture can undergo transformation.[138] In contrast to the work of these scholars which focuses solely on singular events or on contestation within a strategic culture, this research directs the attention to a previously neglected source of change: the interaction with an international organization. It is great significance, since without taking into account this source of change, one cannot fully understand certain foreign and security policy decisions of a member-state of an international organization regarding the use of the armed forces. In the case of this research, for example,

[138] Thomas F. Banchoff, *The German Problem Transformed: Institutions, Politics, and Foreign Policy, 1945 - 1995*, Social History, Popular Culture, and Politics in Germany (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1999).; Jeffrey S. Lantis, *Strategic Dilemmas and the Evolution of German Foreign Policy since Unification* (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 2002); Thomas U. Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism: National Security in Germany and Japan* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins Univ. Pr, 1998) and John S. Duffield, *World Power Forsaken: Political Culture, International Institutions, and German Security Policy after Unification* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1998).

had it not been for the Alliance, Hungary's international presence would be much more modest and its risk-tolerance would be significantly lower today.

Nonetheless, this research does not argue that the singular effects identified by Thomas U. Berger, Jeffrey S. Lantis or other scholars, such as negotiated reality or conflicting fundamental dogmas of strategic culture are insignificant sources of change. What is more, the research reveals an environment created by NATO in which the aforementioned sources can operate and whose effects on strategic culture are constrained to varying extents.

Moreover, the findings of this research open up new opportunities for possible future research. First, by expanding the focus of the research over the former Warsaw Pact countries who later joined NATO, some general patterns could be observed regarding how the membership in a militarily-focused international organization can shape the way of thinking of a member country about the use of military force. Secondly, some of the interviewees highlighted the significant influence of organizational culture on certain foreign and security policy decisions regarding the use of military force.[139] Examining the organizational culture of both the Ministry of Defense and the armed forces of a country could provide valuable insight into how deep the change caused by NATO really is and how it affects the abovementioned decisions made at the level of political elites.

[139] Zoltán Bali (Head of the Department of Defense Policy Planning, Hungarian Ministry of Defense), interview with the author, April 21, 2016 and Tamás Csiki (assistant research fellow at the Center for Strategic and Defense Studies), interview with the author, March 8, 2016.

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APPENDICES

1) "Level of Ambition

In the first dimension, contributors were asked to assess their country's positioning on a continuum between passive indifference and active international leadership. The key questions authors were asked to address were:

1. What are the country's main objectives in the security realm?

a. How do security and defence policy documents (such as national security strategies, white papers, etc.) define the role the country seeks to play? For example, do policy documents or policy elites claim a particular responsibility for international order, stability and peace?

b. Which are the specific areas of geographic responsibility that a country defines for itself?

c. Does the country show a tendency, either in discourse or practice, to promote proactive intervention as a suitable response to security challenges?

d. How many troops has the country deployed (both in total and as a percentage of active armed forces) on crisis management operations and what are the arguments that are made in support of the deployments?

e. Does the country define a formal level of ambition for its participation in international crisis management operations? For example, does the government say how many troops it is able to deploy simultaneously, for how long, in how many concurrent operations?

f. Countries can be active through multinational frameworks or unilateral action. Does the country, either in key documents or in elite discourse, show a tendency, i.e. preferred channels to implement its level of ambition?

2) Scope of Action for the Executive

In the second dimension, contributors were asked to assess their respective country's positioning on a continuum between a low level and a high level of executive flexibility. The key questions in this dimension were: Who are the key players in security and defence policy?

a. What does the decision-making process for the deployment of armed forces look like?

b. Are there constitutional provisions or other legal instruments that regulate the deployment of armed forces?

c. Are there informal mechanisms or decision-making traditions that operate instead of (or alongside) formal legal instruments?

d. If there are instruments of parliamentary control, what do they look like? What powers does parliament have regarding the deployment of armed forces, how are they used and has the respective level of parliamentary control been altered in the recent past?

e. If there are weak formal instruments of parliamentary control (or none at all), how does the executive inform other actors (including parliament)?

f. Are there other players beyond the executive and legislative branches of government that influence decisions (such as, for example, the armed forces or interest groups)?

3) Foreign Policy Orientation

In the third dimension, contributors were asked to assess their respective country's positioning on a continuum between a European and a transatlantic focus as their preferred forum of security and defence cooperation. With regard to this dimension, authors were provided with the following guiding questions: Do security and defence policy documents define a preferred arena for cooperation? Is it possible to detect a preference for NATO or the EU?

a. How are the roles of the EU and NATO defined? Is their relationship described in terms of competition or compatibility?
b. Is the role of the EU and/or NATO changing in relation to other forms of cooperation, such as coalitions of the willing or bilateral cooperation?
c. Does the country favour a clear division of labour among the EU and NATO, either in functional or in geographic terms? Are there particular comparative advantages that are ascribed to specific organisations?
d. Do documents or elite discourses describe specific objectives for the future development of the EU and/or NATO?
e. Does the country assign particular instruments to the EU and/or NATO? How are the country's factual military contributions divided between the EU and NATO, in terms of operations but also with regard to the EU Battle Groups and the NATO Response Force?
f. Does the country define important bilateral relationships in the security and defence policy arena?

4) Willingness to Use Military Force

In the fourth dimension, contributors were asked to assess their respective country's positioning on a continuum between reluctance and unconstrained acceptance to use military force as an instrument of security policy. With regard to the last dimension, authors were asked to address the following questions:

a. How is the role of the armed forces, as an instrument of foreign, security and defence policy, defined in comparison to other instruments such as diplomacy, development cooperation, trade, etc.?
b. How are the core tasks for the armed forces defined? Is there an attempt to prioritise the different tasks, for example by saying that territorial defence is more important than international crisis management? If there is a prioritisation, is it reflected in recent defence reform projects, including force posture and equipment procurement?
c. What percentage of GDP does the country spend on defence? Is it possible to identify what the money is being spent on? For example, how much goes towards personnel costs, how much is available for defence investment (equipment procurement + R&D)? Are the costs of international deployments paid out of the defence budget or are there other arrangements, for example, a special fund or contributions from the general national budget?
d. Does the country usually deploy armed forces in international operations with or without national caveats? If there are caveats, what kind of restrictions do they entail?
e. What kind of tasks do the deployed forces usually fulfil and how are their missions framed? For example, are operations framed with reference to humanitarian needs, international stability demands or specific national interests, etc.?

f. Does the analysis of the international security environment – and the threats and risks it contains – within security and defence policy documents specify a broad preference for non-military instruments? What purpose is foreseen for the military against this background, for example, is it defined as an instrument of last resort?"[140]

[140] Heiko Biehl, ed., *Strategic Cultures in Europe: Security and Defence Policies across the Continent*, Schriftenreihe Des Zentrums Für Militärgeschichte Und Sozialwissenschaften Der Bundeswehr 13 (Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2013). 12-16.