

**A New Perspective on Civil-Military Relations:
Military Deployments in COVID-19 Containment in Europe**

By

DINH THI MINH CHAU

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Supervisor: András Bozóki

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Abstract

As the virus COVID-19 took the world by surprise by the end of 2019, life as we know took a fundamental change as human contact was suddenly a phenomenon to avoid. At the quickly overwhelmed civilian healthcare and support systems, armed forces all over the world have been deployed in dealing with a public health crisis. How the military has been deployed differed from state to state, however, the militaries of twenty-six European Union Member States have engaged in tasks of four spheres of responsibilities: (1) logistics, (2) medicals, (3) mental health and psychosocial support and (4) security. While the majority of the armed forces fulfilled generally similar tasks in the logistical, medical and psychosocial support spheres, the most important difference lies in the degree and the nature of security tasks that they engage in. The thesis points out that it is not enough to look at such a phenomenon from the traditional civil-military relations perspective, but to situate this structure within its environment and to study the interactions among the citizenry, the civilian government and the military. By comparing the four cases of Germany, France, Poland and Hungary, the research provides evidence that environmental attributes of legal basis and the normalization of securitization narrative reflect the interactions within the civil-military relationship and help determine the security tasks handled by the respective armed forces in containing the COVID-19 pandemic.

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Standing for	First appear
EU	European Union	2
EUROMIL	European Organization of Military Association and Trade Unions	2
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support	2
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization	5
EMC	European Medical Command	7
MMCC/ENC	Multinational Medical Coordination Centre/European Medical Command	7
UN	United Nations	26
SALIS	Strategic Airlift International Solution	37
GAF	German Armed Forces	41
FAF	French Armed Forces	41
PAF	Polish Armed Forces	41
HDF	Hungarian Defense Forces	41
LDI	Liberal Democracy Index	41
FAG	The Armed Forces in Guiana	52
FAA	The Armed Forces of Antilles	52
FAZSOI	The Armed Forces in the Southern Indian Ocean Zone	52
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force	57

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH RATIONALES

1.1 - Introduction

Since the dawn of the modern states, the armed forces have been playing an indispensable role whenever the circumstances call for the use of force, the defense and expansion of the nation. Along with modern developments, the “original” goal that shapes the existence and function of the military adapted to purposes beyond the monopoly of violence, however, their readiness, resilience and the will to support the society are still the central pillars to their activities - hence the seemingly natural need for military deployment in crisis situations that require immediate responses that may not be inherent in the social support system of the civilian sphere. In 2020, the militaries have once again been mobilized and deployed on an unparalleled scope in support of the society as the “normal life” we know took a sharp turn at the emergence and rapid spread of SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19). The respiratory disease marks the first public health crisis that threatens every country across the world, to the extent that on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared a global pandemic and to this day, even though its scale has diminished, the virus has made its appearances in the widest and most populated continents, as well as the disperse island states of the Pacific¹ with few equals in history. In response to this new threat, the standard conduct among the majority of governments has directed towards preventive measures, such as restrictions of movement, mass testing, vaccination campaigns and so on. In several instances, strict measures such as national lockdowns and states of emergency are also in place, putting constraints on frequent practices of civil rights and social contact. To implement restrictive policies while ensuring compliance, several armed forces have been deployed to take responsibility for a variety of tasks. Similarly to how containment efforts have been tied largely to national governments

¹ The Pacific Community. “COVID-19: Pacific Community Updates,” September 5, 2022. <https://www.spc.int/updates/blog/2022/05/covid-19-pacific-community-updates>.

without timely and efficient coordination on an international level, the tasks of the militaries vary from state to state, depending on the distinct conjunctions of factors in play. To explore the question of how governments deploy military resources in dealing with COVID-19, I will situate the analysis within a theoretical framework of civil-military relations with shared responsibility in which the characteristics of the relationship adapts and responds to external and internal challenges, which can be applied to political systems of different natures. With a focus on cases of the European Union (EU), the analysis is based on qualitative data collected from official websites and online archives of twenty-six EU Member States' Ministries of Defense and their armed forces in each country (with the exception of data from Cyprus), as well as the summary report of the European Organization of Military Associations and Trade Unions (EUROMIL). Through descriptive analysis of the dataset, the 26 militaries generally take on tasks belonging to four different spheres of responsibility, namely logistics, medicals, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and security. While all militaries carry out similar logistical, medical and MHPSS tasks, such as supply transport, medical care and social/ psychosocial service, the pattern of deployment diverges when it comes to security responsibilities: on the one hand, not all armed forces engaged in security tasks, on the other hand, militaries deployed on security missions to support COVID-19 containment engaged in different security missions. The narrative of military deployment also diverges as even though there are a few governments that describe military deployment in a non-security, pure civilian crisis management language, the majority of cases adopt a securitization narrative that portrays COVID-19 as a "war" against an invisible enemy. To demonstrate the variety of deployment patterns, the cross-case analysis of the collected data will depict the responsibilities of the armed forces in the pandemic, as well as identify a number of cases in which military deployment on security purposes is in connection with the use of a securitization narrative. To demonstrate the range of security tasks handled by the armed forces deployed under a securitization narrative, I will look into the cases of Germany, France, Poland and Hungary for more detailed, within-case analysis with the goal of contributing to the understanding of civil-military relations in a relatively wide range of political systems, institutional cooperation in crisis management and the growing responsibility of the military. By and large, the thesis

will elaborate the argument that the civil-military relations have an adaptable nature, the physical lines that divide the civilian-military spheres become blurred as a direct result of military deployment at the face of a public health crisis, due to the conversion of the military beyond its traditional role as a security institution in response to changing environment and an expansion of principles and norms, in particular, the demand for medical treatment and prevention of human contact in the environment, and the norms of normalized securitization discourse and relatively high public trust in the military. More importantly, the civil-military relations should be understood in a triangular balance among the citizenry - the civilian government and the military for a meaningful evaluation of democratic quality when it comes to military deployment and the narrative in use.

1.2 - Rationales

The topic introduced briefly above brings out several rationality questions to address.

Why COVID-19? Initially, the project focuses on the context of COVID-19 for several reasons, besides that the pandemic is still the current reality. This respiratory epidemic has its scopes outgrowing previous pandemic since the Spanish flu - as COVID-19 has reached every corner of the world. Compared to pre-modern epidemics, modern diseases have a significantly less impact due to a much lower level of prominent, systematic socio-political effects, thanks to developments in technology, medicines and public health management, allowing for lowered mortality rates and enhanced life expectancies. The significance of the current pandemic lies in its being the first of its kind and challenging several aspects of life, leading to the necessities of fundamental adaptations and implying the demand for a model of systematic solution, at the same time emphasizing the importance of contexts and uniqueness for appropriate application in different societies. In comparison to SARS in the 2000s, COVID-19 has a relatively lower crude

mortality rate of 0.28%,² while SARS recorded between 1.4% and 16.7% in heavily affected regions.³ This lower rate partially allows COVID-19 to spread more widely and quickly, but it has also been accelerated by a globalized economy and the movement of people. From an academic perspective, COVID-19 provides a “natural experiment” and a context for emerging questions in the social science realm: trust in public institutions in times of emergencies, disinformation and conspiracies, authoritarian governance practices, democratic backsliding and so on.

Why the Armed Forces? By studying the role of the military in crisis management, this project will contribute to an under-researched question - the role of the armed forces, which belongs to a popular perception that they are traditionally effective and necessary in dealing with security or humanitarian crises, however, the nature of the decision-making process and implications of military deployment have not been studied under a systematic perspective, but rather ad-hoc or dependent on the traditional standards of civilian control. In relations to the research question, although it is common knowledge that military deployment in public health crisis is not a new phenomenon, with the most recent well-known operations of peacekeeping forces helping in the Ebola outbreaks in Liberia in 2014 and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2019,⁴ the scale of COVID-19 is globally overwhelming with nationally-issued military mobilizations. Its time-sensitive attribute has also drawn attention to issues that are of no less urgency if not more, such as efficiency of vaccinations, restrictions of movements and

² “Coronavirus Death Rate (COVID-19) - Worldometer,” May 14, 2022. <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/coronavirus-death-rate/>.

³ World Health Organization. “Consensus Document on the Epidemiology of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).” World Health Organization, 2003. <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/70863>.

⁴ Gowan, Richard, and Louise Riis Andersen. “Peacekeeping in the Shadow of Covid-19 Era | DIIS,” December 6, 2020. <https://www.diis.dk/en/research/peacekeeping-in-the-shadow-of-covid-19-era>.

liberty or priority over the economy or saving lives.⁵ Without an effective internationally coordinated plan or binding international obligations, COVID-19 has exposed governance failures and reduced all policy responses to national level.⁶ Consequently, each country has an independent approach, involving different combinations of measures, timeliness of responses and distinct technological and medical capacities to cope within their borders. How the armed forces participate and contribute to management of a civilian crisis captures limited attention so far, therefore, studies of this issue are scarce, case-based, limited in terms of timeframe and theoretical frameworks. Due to scientific claims that there will be more pandemics to come,⁷ COVID-19 is the premiere experiment to witness the universal involvement of militaries in domestic and international policies. Bringing policies into comparison will provide implications and useful prototypes for future policy in crisis and public health management, while presenting a new context for traditional theoretical study of civil-military relations, which has been limited to the study of political regimes, the professionship of armed forces and how to maintain civilian control over the military. All in all, the study of military deployment in pandemic context is important as it targets both crisis management and the increasingly expanding role of armed forces, especially with the return of traditional security challenges to Europe by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, turning the balance of military resources into an issue of priority.

Why Europe? The study will look at the responsibilities of militaries in COVID-19 measures primarily among Member States of the EU due to the variety of political systems in the

⁵ The Economist. "Covid-19 Presents Stark Choices between Life, Death and the Economy | The Economist," April 4, 2020. <https://www.economist.com/leaders/2020/04/02/covid-19-presents-stark-choices-between-life-death-and-the-economy>.

⁶ Lee Jones and Shahar Hameiri, "COVID-19 and the Failure of the Neoliberal Regulatory State," *Review of International Political Economy* 0, no. 0 (March 1, 2021): 1–25, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09692290.2021.1892798>.

⁷ BBC. "Stopping the next One: What Could the next Pandemic Be? - BBC Future." Accessed June 2, 2022. <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20210111-what-could-the-next-pandemic-be>.

region, the density of democracies next to autocratizing societies,⁸ general transparency in reporting military activities, together with the availability of several cooperation mechanisms among European states, including the EU, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and sub-regional initiatives. The focus on different political systems is partially based on the assumption that autocratic governments tend to be in a more comfortable position when it comes to military mobilization, due to the lack of strong political opposition or a strong civil society; while in democracies with systems of checks and balances, the impression is usually that military deployment is the last resort after deliberation. However, the pandemic reality has established that both democracies and autocracies deployed their armed forces to deal with COVID-19, and both forms of political systems witness the use of a securitization narrative among themselves. The rule of law is also believed to entail a legal basis for every use of military resources to avoid the misgivings of violations and encroachment of a powerful institution.⁹ For some instances, the legal basis is not the only instrument from the toolbox as governments may also employ certain narratives to legitimize the involvement of the military into every day's matter. In short, the decision of military deployment is among the most important policies in democracies with constitutional regulations that restrict the liberties of the executive to do so, although such restrictions might be more rigid in democracies without an imperial past¹⁰ and much stricter than autocracies. The choice to study among European countries and potential cooperation mechanisms is also based on the overarching, symbolic commitment to democracy, although the

⁸Vanessa A. Boese et al., "Democracy Reports," V-Dem, 2022, https://www.v-dem.net/democracy_reports.html.

⁹ Zivorad Rasevic, "The Resort to Military Force in the COVID-19 Health Emergency: A Justification," *Revista Científica General José María Córdova* 19, no. 35 (July 1, 2021): 549–69, <https://doi.org/10.21830/19006586.777>.

¹⁰ Harald Müller et al., "Democracy and Its Armed Forces: The 'Second Social Contract,'" *Democracy, the Armed Forces and Military Deployment*: (Peace Research Institute Frankfurt, 2011), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep14470.4>. 8.

EU may face its own wave of autocratization as 6 Member States - more than 20% of the organization, are autocratizing¹¹. Despite the statistics, the region still concentrates the majority of the highest ranked democracies under several institutional requirements and commitments. At such an unprecedented public health crisis, the European External Actions Service has established a EU Task Force with the primary aim at supporting EU solidarity by maintaining an online platform by which Member States and their militaries can exchange information, experiences and deployment assistance if necessary.¹² Another important initiative by the EU aiming at enhancing readiness of military medical support among EU Member States is the European Medical Command (EMC), which has been merged with a NATO initiative serving the same purpose among NATO Member States, creating the Multinational Medical Coordination Centre/European Medical Command (MMCC/EMC). The MMCC/EMC currently observes and coordinates military medical mobilization among 18 Member States, marking an important contribution to international cooperation between NATO and EU, between national level and multinational level, while recognizing the importance of civil-military cooperation in dealing with future challenges.¹³

¹¹Vanessa A. Boese et al., "Democracy Reports."

¹²"Coronavirus: Taskforce to Facilitate Information Exchange among EU's Armed Forces | EEAS Website," European Union External Action, April 15, 2020, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/coronavirus-taskforce-facilitate-information-exchange-among-eus-armed-forces_en

¹³ "Multinational Medical Coordination Centre / European Medical Command," accessed June 2, 2022, <https://www.bundeswehr.de/en/organization/bundeswehr-medical-service-/mmcc-emc->.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

The scopes and influences of COVID-19 have attracted studies on several aspects, however, most research is dedicated to governance and quality of democracy rather than the focus of this project. One popular branch of research focuses on comparing efficiency and effectiveness of governance between authoritarian and democratic regimes. So far the debate on regime types and efficient COVID-19 policy responses is yet to come to an end, due to the fact that political regime is only one among many factors shaping the efficiency of responses. When looking at empirical examples, one can categorize how well authoritarian governments manage the crisis on both ends of the spectrum of effectiveness, and the same notion applies to the performance of democratic governments. In short, neither regime type nor income level have correctly indicated the likelihood that political leadership will be more or less successful at containing the disease or limiting deaths.

The pandemic has also brought about issues of conspiracies and disinformation, resulting in a great amount of research studying the impact of these phenomena on compliance with COVID-19 measures. In Storer et al's research in Uganda, conspiracy theorists see the disease as a curse from God, or the result of transmission from Chinese workers, or simply as a story established by political elites to justify postponing elections.¹⁴ Another popular conspiracy theory has led to the destruction of public and private properties, in which almost 80 mobile masts in the United Kingdom were burned down as subscribers blamed 5G for spreading the epidemic.¹⁵ The study of Ndinojuo on conspiracies in Nigeria attributes the links between

¹⁴ Isaac Onzoma, "Do Covid-19 Conspiracy Theories Challenge Public Health Delivery?," *Africa at LSE* (blog), April 21, 2020, <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/africaatlse/2020/04/21/conspiracy-theories-curses-in-uganda-wuhan-origins-covid-19-health-policy/>.

¹⁵ Isobel Asher Hamilton, "77 Cell Phone Towers Have Been Set on Fire so Far Due to a Weird Coronavirus 5G Conspiracy Theory," *Business Insider*, June 5, 2020, <https://www.businessinsider.com/77-phone-masts-fire-coronavirus-5g-conspiracy-theory-2020-5>.

multiple conspiracy theories and a lack of governmental transparency and poor communications by mobile phone companies, allowing the rise of disinformation narratives.¹⁶ In other research, transnational disinformation campaigns on COVID-19 have shown to link to far-right, hostile state actors and extremists,¹⁷ the preferences for “strongman” politicians, organized crimes and scams taking place both online and on the street.¹⁸

Several research is also dedicated to how public trust impacts COVID-19 recording and containment. In societies with limited trust in public institutions, even with the availability of healthcare services, the public would hesitate due to trust and legitimacy issues. Among the Rohingyas taking refuge in Bangladesh, many associated the action of reporting COVID-19 symptoms to the authorities with disapproval due to the fear of being taken away, at the same time social pressure turned the act of contacting the authority about COVID-19 symptoms into posing dangers onto one’s own community.¹⁹ Many success stories have also been attributed to how a higher level of public trust ensures societal compliance with containment policy. The success of Mauritius, for example, stems from effective communication strategies that reassure public trust in science and in political leadership in general.²⁰ The story of Vietnam’s success by June, 2020 explains how public trust has been strengthened by a “well-coordinated multi-media

¹⁶ Ben-Collins Emeka Ndinojuo, “5G, Religion, and Misconceptions in Communication during Covid-19 in Nigeria,” *Jurnal The Messenger* 12, no. 2 (2020): 97–110.

¹⁷ Manveen Rana, “Russians Spread Fake News over Oxford Coronavirus Vaccine,” October 16, 2020, sec. news, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/russians-spread-fake-news-over-oxford-coronavirus-vaccine-2nzpk8vrq>

¹⁸ Philip Ball and Amy Maxmen, “The Epic Battle against Coronavirus Misinformation and Conspiracy Theories,” *Nature* 581, no. 7809 (May 27, 2020): 371–74, <https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-020-01452-z>.

¹⁹ ACAPS, “Rohingya Crisis: Secondary Impacts of COVID-19: Potential Consequences of the May 2021 Containment and Risk Mitigation Measures - Bangladesh | ReliefWeb,” May 31, 2021, <https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/rohingya-crisis-secondary-impacts-covid-19-potential-consequences-may-2021>.

²⁰ Marie Chan Sun and Claude Bernard Lan Cheong Wah, “Lessons to Be Learnt from the COVID-19 Public Health Response in Mauritius,” *Public Health in Practice* 1 (November 1, 2020): 100023, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.puhip.2020.100023>.

approach” and a public health system that prioritizes care, solidarity and communal responsibility.²¹

Several restrictive measures - increased state surveillance, restrictions on protests, emergency measures, are being used in different regime types, authoritarianism and democracies alike, leading to the worry of democratic backsliding and authoritarian governance practices. Studies on threats of authoritarian practices represent another popular strand of research relating to the global pandemic, with observations made on increasing centralization of executive powers, human rights violations, growing state surveillance and limits to electoral processes.²² From the perspective of critics, the authorities have managed to expand their powers significantly compared to the scope before the crisis.²³ To point at the small and even tolerable, day-to-day weakening of democratic governance, Fisher echoes Pepinsky’s work on Malaysia before COVID-19 in 2017²⁴ in reference to the emergency responses by the United Kingdom’s government since the outbreak.²⁵ Also referring to responses by the UK government, Bloomfield names this phenomenon as *acceptable authoritarianism*,²⁶ in which the public becomes comfortable with restrictive measures implemented by the government, whose justification is

²¹ Era Dabla-Norris et al., “Vietnam’s Success in Containing COVID-19 Offers Roadmap for Other Developing Countries,” IMF, June 29, 2020, <https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2020/06/29/na062920-vietnams-success-in-containing-covid19-offers-roadmap-for-other-developing-countries>.

²² Frances Z. Brown Carothers Saskia Brechenmacher, Thomas, “How Will the Coronavirus Reshape Democracy and Governance Globally?,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, June 4, 2020, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/04/06/how-will-coronavirus-reshape-democracy-and-governance-globally-pub-81470>.

²³ “Ending Hungary’s State of Emergency Won’t End Authoritarianism,” *Human Rights Watch* (blog), May 29, 2020, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/05/29/ending-hungarys-state-emergency-wont-end-authoritarianism>.

²⁴ Tom Pepinsky, “Everyday Authoritarianism Is Boring and Tolerable,” January 6, 2017, <https://tompepinsky.com/2017/01/06/everyday-authoritarianism-is-boring-and-tolerable/>.

²⁵ Jonathan Fisher, “Britain’s ‘Police State’ and the Dangers of Everyday Authoritarianism – Social Sciences Birmingham,” University of Birmingham, July 4, 2020, <https://blog.bham.ac.uk/socialsciencesbirmingham/2020/04/07/dangers-of-everyday-authoritarianism/>.

²⁶ Steve Bloomfield, “Coronavirus, the Rise of ‘Acceptable Authoritarianism’ and the Battle for Democracy,” *Prospect Magazine*, June 5, 2020, <https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/magazine/coronavirus-the-rise-of-acceptable-authoritarianism-and-the-battle-for-democracy-united-states-china-trump-xi>.

technocratic and derived from the guidelines of science. According to Bloomfield, although this is a refreshing discourse as political leadership had derailed from the good old populist narrative, such a new language is considered deceitful and destructive to the true spirit of liberal democracy.

Although both democracies and dictatorships use military resources in managing the COVID-19 crisis, several authors argue that there are differences among political regimes in military deployment. Tesfamichael argues that general public trust in democracies connects to trust in the security apparatus, allowing democratic governments to mobilize military forces with confidence in extraordinary situations without causing fear of military abuses. On the other hand, citizens of regimes with lower democratic quality and with historical impositions of states of emergencies by the armed forces would hesitate towards military personnels mobilized on the street.²⁷ Nevertheless, on the use of military resources under a non-democratic government, Vivian Ng demonstrates the tasks of the Singapore Armed Forces in assisting domestic contingency by more than logistical and medical support, but also by technical experiences in contact tracing since the previous threats of the SARS outbreak. In the remark of Prime Minister Lee Hsien Long in March, 2020, an important factor in Singapore's efforts in containing the epidemic is psychological resilience, taking roots in not only the government's swift responses but also in the effectiveness and physical presence of the Singapore Armed Forces.²⁸

The use of armed forces have also enhanced enforcement of lockdowns or sometimes brutal suppression of protests under the language of COVID-19 restrictions. Some COVID-19

²⁷ Robel Tesfamichael, "Two Sides of the Same Coin? The Use of Armed Forces in Responding to COVID-19," *Humanitarian Advisory Group* (blog), June 2, 2020, <https://humanitarianadvisorygroup.org/two-sides-of-the-same-coin-the-use-of-armed-forces-in-responding-to-covid-19/>.

²⁸ Vivian Ng, "How Singapore's Military Is Fighting COVID-19," March 24, 2020, <https://thediplomat.com/2020/03/how-singapores-military-is-fighting-covid-19/>.

health services have been brought under military rule such as Mexico and Ecuador, and the military have been enforcing lockdowns in Peru and South Africa, while the militaries of Chile and Honduras have brutally suppressed hunger protests.²⁹ For West Africa, there has been an increase of COVID-19 related violence against civilians by state forces. In Kenya and South Africa, for example, water cannons and rubber bullets have been used to enforce lockdown,³⁰ while in Nigeria, early on in the course of the pandemic, more civilians had died from anti-COVID-19 lockdown protests than from the disease itself.³¹ As states enjoy maximum jurisdictions in domestic military deployment without any universal standards in international law, Michell Bachelet, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, stated that the current pandemic does not justify states' ignorance of internationally recognized human rights.³²

Although limited, there has been certain theoretical engagement of researchers with the role of the military in COVID-19 management. Based on international law and arguments from international relations, Rasevic provides theoretical toolkits based on the just war theory to justify domestic military mobilization, which in the context of COVID-19 management is justifiable. However, justness of the decision relies on unpredictable consequences and therefore, military deployment is not always justified.³³ Another study by Gibson-Fall efficiently categorized COVID-19 responses of different regimes of both democratic and authoritarian characteristics into three groups based on the degree of military involvement in the process: (1)

²⁹ Sandra Weiss, "The Authoritarian Temptation," IPS, May 26, 2020, <https://www.ips-journal.eu/regions/latin-america/the-authoritarian-temptation-4384/>.

³⁰ Nic Cheeseman, "The Coronavirus Could Topple Governments Around the World," *Foreign Policy* (blog), March 31, 2020, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/03/31/coronavirus-regime-change-could-topple-governments-around-the-world/>.

³¹ Kars de Bruijne and Loïc Bisson, "States, Not Jihadis, Exploiting Corona Crisis in West Africa," *ACLEDA* (blog), May 28, 2020, <https://acleddata.com/2020/05/28/states-not-jihadis-exploiting-corona-crisis-in-west-africa/>.

³² Rasevic, "The Resort to Military Force in the COVID-19 Health Emergency." 551.

³³ *Ibid*, 566.

minimal technical military support, (2) blended civil-military responses and (3) military-led response.³⁴ While the categorization is clear and helpful for cross-country understanding, it cannot be applied with the relevance to the research question of this project. Research of the role of the military in COVID-19 responses is, however, limited in quantity and suffers from the classical view on the civil-military relations. An article by Brown, Brechenmacher and Carothers following this view expresses a fear of increasingly unbalanced civil-military relations, in which the authors emphasize the potential of the military's continuously expanding role into the economic and domestic affairs' realm despite their deployment limited within an emergency period.³⁵

³⁴ Fawzia Gibson-Fall, "Military Responses to COVID-19, Emerging Trends in Global Civil-Military Engagements," *Review of International Studies* 47, no. 2 (April 2021): 155–70, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210521000048>.

³⁵ Carothers, "How Will the Coronavirus Reshape Democracy and Governance Globally?"

CHAPTER III: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 - Traditional civil-military relations and the professionalism of the military

The traditional conceptions and standards of civil-military relations practice have been set by the classical work of Samuel Huntington, seeing an ideal and balanced relationship in a democratic setting via control over the security apparatus, including the military, by a civilian government, which places several legal and institutional restrictions over the operations of the military. While both institutions require the other for the existence and function of the state as the military represents its passive strengths and the politician gives it a purposive definition, Huntington argues that civilian control over the military is necessary for the politician to handle the politics of national policies and to maintain professionalism of the military. The concept of the officer's professionalism is important to understand civil-military relations; it explains the specialized characteristics of the military in terms of (1) *expertise of officership*: the military's central and universal skills that distinguish all officers from civilians being management of violence, (2) special *social responsibility* of the military toward their clients and the society and (3) *corporateness* of the military as a public bureaucratized profession whose legal right to practice the profession is restricted.³⁶ The military's professionalism is thus maintained by clear separation from the society and by restraints from participating in politics, leading to not only distinct institutional differentiations but also a separation of identities. In modern scenarios, armed forces around the world have increasingly grown out of the traditional monopoly of managing violence into other realms in response to rising perceived domestic and international security threats, such as counterterrorism, the maintenance of law and order and crisis management. At the increasing presence of the military in everyday life, the physical and

³⁶ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Harvard University Press, 1957), <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvjf9wx3>.

symbolic line distinguishing the military and civilians also changes, or becomes blurry, which subscribers to Huntington's classic perspective may expect an overall decrease in professionalism of officership but it is not necessarily the case. In his analysis, Huntington argues that civilian control over the military may take two forms, subjective or objective. On the one hand, subjective civilian control takes place in nondemocratic settings, in which it is secured by the maximized civilian power and a politicized military, the interests of the latter are bound to the civilian regime. On the other hand, objective civilian control in a democratic system allows a clear separation of labor between civilian and military, in which the military is autonomous and professionalized in its central skills (management of violence) without interfering into politics, while the civilian government conducts in the political realm and refrains from intervening into military matters.

Different from Huntington's insistence on the military keeping out of politics, in Abrahamsson's *Military Professionalization and Political Power*, it is considered fundamentally incorrect to regard the armed forces as an inherently apolitical profession. Abrahamsson argues that the military is, in fact, a strongly politicized interest group that actively promotes conservative tendencies. In order to maintain civilian control over a powerful interest group, it is necessary to recognize the political nature of the military and to establish a system of institutional control.³⁷ In relation to this perspective, in *Man on Horseback*, Samuel Finer poses a genuine question of why the military does not intervene in politics even though being the monopoly of the use of force, thus recognizing its potential political characteristics. According to Finer, it is the political culture of a society that determines the strength of civilian control over the military. In countries with a developed political culture, with clearly defined and

³⁷ Bengt Abrahamsson and Morris Janowitz, "Military Professionalization and Political Power /" (Beverly Hills (Calif.): Sage publications, 1972).

institutionalized legal processes, positions, roles and institutionalizations of the armed forces, civilian control tends to be stronger and more stable. In contrast, societies with limited political culture may sustain a lower degree of societal respect for governmental and legal institutions, leading to more coup-prone characteristics.³⁸ *Political Order in Changing Societies* by Huntington also addresses the question by positioning civil-military relations in two forms of societies. In the civic society with a higher level of institutionalization and lower political participation, civil-military relations are absorbed into the stable political system. On the contrary, the praetorian society with a lower level of institutionalization and higher political participation witnesses more coup attempts, which represents the military's institutional influence in the political landscape.³⁹ Using the United States as a case study, Janowitz argues in *The Professional Soldier* that as modernity leads to changes in technology and society, the missions of the military also adapt, thus resulting in an increasingly political role. However, despite changes, the US military maintains such a high degree of professional ethics that help them stay outside of politics. In general, he recommends that the military needs professional socialization through integration with civilians and sympathy for the values of society, instead of clear separation from the civilian realm, to ensure effective civilian control.⁴⁰

Together with several perspectives in the study of civil-military relations, there are also numerous approaches towards this research topic, ranging from Desch's mission model assuming that the military facing external threats would be more compliant with civilian control than

³⁸Samuel Finer, *The Man on Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics* (Routledge, 1962), <https://www.routledge.com/The-Man-on-Horseback-The-Role-of-the-Military-in-Politics/Finer/p/book/9780765809223>.

³⁹ Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (Yale University Press, 1996), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1cc2m34>.

⁴⁰ Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier* (Free Press, 2017), <https://www.simonandschuster.com/books/The-Professional-Soldier/Morris-Janowitz/9781501179327>.

military who is faced up with internal threats,⁴¹ Cilliers' civilian supremacy model prioritizing the active intervention of political leaders at every level of the decision-making process to ensure civilian control⁴² to Sir Michael Howard's humanitarian model which emphasizes the importance of harmonious relationships among all national defense elites, military and civilian institutions.⁴³

Despite different concepts and approaches, the majority of study focusing on civil-military relations so far has been fixated on certain issues that potentially limit the generalizability of the theory in different contexts and circumstances. Traditional theories have put the most weight on "dealing with" or "controlling" the military, precisely due to the institution's professionalism in the management of violence. However, assuming that the relations between civilian authority and armed forces are problematic and confrontational are fundamentally flawed and downplaying contexts, at the same time putting excessive assumptions on the clear-cut separation between the identities of a military and a citizen. Selecting the controlled autonomy and authority of the military as the heart of the question has also skewed research in the field towards finding theoretical solutions to preventing military intervention into politics, while disregarding political contexts and treating democracy and non-democracy under the same ideals. For example, under the Soviet Union, the Soviet military was certainly under the control of a civilian government, however, the democratic characteristic of such relations is questionable. Another issue stemming from the traditional approaches shows that civil-military relations are often seen as an one-way process with the prioritized civilian control of the

⁴¹ Peter Feaver and Michael Desch, "Civilian Control of the Military: The Changing Security Environment.," *The American Political Science Review* 94 (June 1, 2000): 506, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2586089>.

⁴² Cilliers Jakkie, "Armed Forces and Democracy: Security and Transition in South Africa," *Journal of Democracy*, 1995, <https://www.journalofdemocracy.org/articles/armed-forces-and-democracy-security-and-transition-in-south-africa/>.

⁴³ Michael Eliot Howard, *Soldiers and Governments: Nine Studies in Civil-Military Relations* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Pub Group, 1978).

executive branch of government over the armed forces. The argument is the most clear from the work by Janowitz, in which he sees the US military as a pressure actor among the US' cluster of interests group: "To believe that the military are not an effective pressure group on the organs of government is to commit a political error... the task of civilian leadership includes not only the political direction of the military, but the prevention of the growth of frustration in the profession, of felt injustice, and inflexibility under the weight of its responsibilities."⁴⁴ Much like other democratic procedures, civil-military relations should be studied within a structure shaped by interactions of various players and by the environment. As a result, civilian control is a dynamic process that is subject to changes within a platform of clearly defined sanctions and rules of the game.

3.2 - Theoretical Framework and Conception

To realize civil-military relations as an interactive, developing structure is to develop a framework beyond the theoretical constraints by Huntington's classical theory of objective civilian control. In this research, I will adopt the civil-military relations concept from the shared responsibility approach by Douglas Bland, in combination with the theoretical conception of institutional conversion by Kathleen Thelen to understand how civil-military relations as a structure adapts in response to COVID-19 as a disruptive external challenge and the conversion of the military as an institution.

In Douglas Bland's study of liberal democratic civil-military relations, he bases the analysis on regime theory that diverts from traditional civil-military relations concept, while keeping the argument on labor division - that the civilian authority bears responsibility for some aspects of control, while the military is responsible for others. The nature of the relation and the

⁴⁴ Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier*. vii-ix.

separation of responsibility, however, depend greatly on national contexts and the regime of principles, norms, rules and decision making processes that form the expectations and behaviors of political actors. Bland's theory, like the traditional view, emphasizes that the military does not participate in politics and has no legitimate right to act on its own. The theory also affirms that the sole source of legitimacy belongs to the people, indicating that civilian control means more than executive power of the government on the control of the military's action. Although the military is put under direct control of its respective government, controlling the government in possession of such a military is also equally important.⁴⁵ In summary, the shared responsibility approach by Bland rests on two assumptions, in which (1) the sole source of legitimacy for the direction and actions of the military is derived from civilians outside the military and defense establishment, and (2) civil control is a dynamic process that is subject to changing ideas, values, situations, personalities and to the pressure of crises and war.

The shared responsibility approach will be more fulfilled if situated in a wider theoretical conception that studies changes of institutions within their political systems. Institutional change may take one or more forms out of the five pathways defined by Streeck and Thelen: displacement, layering, conversion, drift and exhaustion.⁴⁶ For this research, I will adopt conversion institutional change by Thelen as the most relevant conception to changes in civil-military relations, in particular, changes in the institution of the military that leads to subsequent adaptations of the civil-military structure. In her theory, Thelen defines institutional conversion as the redirection of an established institution's goals in design to other ends.⁴⁷ This pathway of

⁴⁵ Douglas L. Bland, "A Unified Theory Of Civil-Military Relations," *Armed Forces & Society* 26, no. 1 (October 1, 1999): 7–25, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0095327X9902600102>.

⁴⁶ Wolfgang Streeck and Kathleen Thelen, *Beyond Continuity: Institutional Change in Advanced Political Economies* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

⁴⁷ Kathleen Thelen, "HOW INSTITUTIONS EVOLVE: INSIGHTS FROM COMPARATIVE HISTORICAL ANALYSIS," in *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, ed. Dietrich Rueschemeyer and

institutional transformations takes place due to a change in power relations or a change in environmental factors, in which an old institution is adapted to serve new goals or fit the interests of a newly powerful actor. Such a change is necessary as it might be costly or time-consuming to build up an efficient substitute, or because environmental changes take place more abruptly than the capacity to build up a new institution. Institutional transformation occurs due to at least one of the sources of gaps in the system: the ambiguities of the rules that define expectations allow for interpretations and applications of rules; the strategic actors pushing their agenda to reinterpret the rules in their favor on the domestic, national or international level; the cognitive limits of institutions' builders leaving unintended consequences within institutional design and finally, changes in the nature of the challenge or in the environment of the political system as a whole. The conversion pattern of institutional transformation shows us that institutions should be considered "multipurpose tools"⁴⁸ that can serve different goals and purposes regardless of how long the institution has been in existence. This attribute is made available due to the unforeseeable effects coming along with institutional design in the first place, depending on not only the external and internal dominant interest groups but also external challenges.

In this research project, the framework above that combines a shared responsibility perspective on civil-military relations and a conversion pattern of institutional transformation is relevant and applicable to the changes of the armed forces as an institution in a pandemic context. Initially, in the civil-military relations as a structure, the military is an institution under the control of a civilian government. In such an established system, civil-military relations in a

James Mahoney, *Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 208–40, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511803963.007>. P.228.

⁴⁸ Jacob S. Hacker, Paul Pierson, and Kathleen Thelen, "Drift and Conversion: Hidden Faces of Institutional Change," in *Advances in Comparative-Historical Analysis*, ed. James Mahoney and Kathleen Thelen, *Strategies for Social Inquiry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 180–208, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316273104.008>.

shared responsibility compromise their functions according to the rules of the game, defining expectations and appropriate behaviors. As an extension from the traditional theory, the civilian government is responsible for the politics of the country while the military is responsible for the security as the monopoly of violence. However, it expands this perspective by introducing the citizenry as the third interacting factor rather than grouping altogether with the government into the civilian sphere. In other words, military deployment is only possible at the decision of the civilian government, but how the citizenry perceives this decision has important implications for both the activities of the armed forces and the legitimacy of the democratic government.

Secondly, the military as an institution is significantly changing, growing out of their traditional roles as the monopoly of violence and serving national interests by engaging in the use of force in traditional warfare. Since the end of the Second World War with fundamental, systematic changes to the previous bipolar world order, the militaries of several democracies have been parts of non-traditional security and non-security operations, externally and internally, such as border or marine patrols to limit adversaries' assertiveness, engagement in security operations in the cyberspace, counter-terrorism, UN peacekeeping and state-building missions.⁴⁹ The expansion of the militaries' roles beyond the traditional missions has also been made possible thanks to constant (re)interpretations of the rules of law and what "security" means to a society, invoking a language of securitization. In order to fit the most appropriately with the aforementioned theoretical framework, the conception of securitization in this research is adopted from the expansion of the *Paris School*, implying both discursive and non-discursive constructions of information about security techniques that result in a change of embedded

⁴⁹David Kuehn and Yagil Levy, "Material and Discursive Militarisation in Democracies," GIGA Focus Global, 2020, 15.

conduct in multiple aspects of the society within its given context.⁵⁰ The “war” metaphor is particularly favorable among heads of states, as any issues capable of being turned into the “enemy” to declare a war on has been there: from the wars on terror, drug, poverty, to the wars against cancers, soap operas and salad.⁵¹ When the citizenry is taken into account into this two-way interactions between the civilian government and the military, a civilian-initiated political decision over military deployment using a securitized, militarized discourse has taken advantage of the generally high trust in the armed forces by the public to legitimize a political choice,⁵² at the same time, the deliberate separation of the military from its society to maintain professionalism may as well have turned the citizenry into indifference towards the security apparatus,⁵³ which may turn into a different perception at the recent globalized scope of military appearance in the civilian sphere. By adopting the shared responsibility framework, the project regards civil-military relations as an anarchic political structure that is controlled and influenced by a regime of principles and a surrounding environment, with a dual purpose of exploring how COVID-19 as a disrupting phenomenon opened up an opportunity for reconfiguration or continuity of the rules of the game that define civil-military interactions and how governments of various political systems deploy military resources in response to this emerging challenge.

⁵⁰ Ayelet Banai and Regina Kreide, “Securitization of Migration in Germany: The Ambivalences of Citizenship and Human Rights,” *Citizenship Studies* 21 (October 2, 2017): 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13621025.2017.1380649>. p. 906.

⁵¹ Stephen J. Flusberg, Teenie Matlock, and Paul H. Thibodeau, “War Metaphors in Public Discourse,” *Metaphor and Symbol* 33, no. 1 (January 2, 2018): 1–18, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10926488.2018.1407992>.

⁵² Kuehn and Levy, “Material and Discursive Militarisation in Democracies.” p.10

⁵³ E. Cohen et al., “The Postmodern Military : Armed Forces after the Cold War,” 2000, <https://doi.org/10.2307/20049755>.

CHAPTER IV: CIVIL-MILITARY ADAPTABLE RELATIONS - COVID-19 AS AN INTERRUPTION IN THE ENVIRONMENT - A WAR OF CHOICE

4.1 - The European Model of Civil-Military Relations

The traditional standard of civil-military relations as established by Huntington is deeply entrenched in the history of civil-military development in Europe with democratic, objective civilian control of the military.⁵⁴ A major shift took place at the end of the Cold War, as the military, which was based on conscription and preparation for war against the Warsaw Pact and for defense of national and allied territory, became irrelevant at the disappearance of the Soviet threat. There was no immediate requirement of a large standing armies and mandatory conscription model, leading to a series of security and civil-military relations reforms in the early 1990s for Western Europe. Not only did the large armies shrink by the abandonment or scaling down of conscription, but the security agenda also moved away from the defense of national territories to power projection - opening the new era of security missions.

The Central-Eastern European militaries took a different path of development, but leading to a similar model of civilian control over the military. Prior to the fall of the Soviet Union, the communist model of civil-military relations in the East subject the military under deep penetration by the communist party, so that not only the armed forces were under civilian control, but it was well confined within the party by the existence of communist party cells in every unit and advancements of military ranks depended greatly on formal loyalty to the government, rather than based on merits. Despite such deep penetration, civilian control over defense policy was weak, due to the fact that military personnel were in charge of the structure

⁵⁴ Andrew Cottey, "Civil-Military Relations and Democracy in the New Europe," in *OSCE Yearbook 2007*, ed. Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg / IFSH (Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft mbH & Co KG, 2008), 281–97, <https://doi.org/10.5771/9783845207018-281>.

and organization of the military rather than the modern requirement of a civilian ministry of defense.⁵⁵ After the fall of the Soviet Union, reforming the civil-military relations in Central-Eastern Europe was only one part of the double challenge of building democratic political systems and market economies. The challenge could also be regarded as Westernization as the newly established governments tried to play along the rules of the game - to establish Western style liberal democracies and integrate into core Western institutions, such as NATO and the EU. In reality, the reorganization process involved two parts, de-politicizing the military and establishing new structures for civilian political control of the armed forces to match with Western counterparts. The former amendments occurred rather straightforward along the illustration of the Communist party off of the political system, while the latter task was more challenging as it had been traditionally the military in leadership over security matters, as a result, to establish civilian control equals limiting institutional power of the armed forces and inevitable resistance. Despite hardship in the reform process, obtaining full membership in NATO and the EU has symbolically recognized the successful transformation of the Central-Eastern European states,⁵⁶ even though the communist legacy still left certain remaining elements in the modern militaries.

Since Central-Eastern European countries' successful transitions and consolidation of a generally unified Western model of civil-military relations, the idea of a "second social contract" that guarantees harmonious coexistence of the civilian and military spheres has been developed among the military, the government, and the society, which rests on a precious bond of common national identity, loyalty and a sense of responsibility.⁵⁷ On the one hand, the officers and the

⁵⁵ Cottey, "Civil-Military Relations and Democracy in the New Europe."

⁵⁶ Ibid, 288.

⁵⁷ Müller et al., "Democracy and Its Armed Forces." 5.

soldiers forego certain citizen rights and be ready to sacrifice their lives and liberties for the greater national good out of one's career choices, while practicing self-restraints against abusing their capacity in the monopoly of violence for political purposes and prioritizing the interests of the state before their own. On the other hand, the second social contract is a reminder for the society to return the favor by recognizing and appreciating the value of the military profession, how they are an indispensable institution and a respectful line of work, which not only maintains the image of the military professionalism in the society, but also creates incentives for civilian governments to resort to the military image in decision making on military deployment and justifying political choices to the rest of the citizenry.

4.2 - The Shift to the *War of Choice*: The Conversion of the Military and Normalization of the Securitization Discourse

Compared to the time that Huntington published the groundbreaking civil-military relations theory and the standards of soldiers' professionalism in 1957, we are now living in an era that "war of choice" shapes the security agenda: humanitarian interventions, state-building operations, counter-terrorism and power projections, all of which are the evidence that shifted security dialogue away from the traditional "war of necessities." In parallel with this global structural movement, civil-military relations also derailed from Huntington's definition of *objective* civil-military relations, as it has been the norm for civilian political leaders to increasingly interfere with operational and strategic military decisions over issues such as the target, deployment sizes, goals and rules of engagement; at the same time, operational issues by the armed forces, such as what legitimate forces to be deployed, the appropriate tactics, and the

likelihood and proportions of casualties, have an increasing influence over political decisions in the civilian sphere.⁵⁸

The dominance of wars of choices since the end of the Cold War has also undermined the role of the second social contract mentioned above. At the absence of an immediate, tangible enemy in the form of state adversaries, foreign military deployment in peacekeeping and power projections have taken the spotlight in multiple national security agendas, despite the lack of a full and duly reflection of the implications of such developments. Deployment decisions have been, since then, a discussion topic among civilian and military leaders without meaningful participation of the citizenry, who only arrive at the receiving ends of the discussion, and whose opinions remain an opinion. As a result, wars of choices so far have posed a risk of growing estrangement and indifference from the citizenry towards the relations between their everyday life with the military sphere, partly due to the clear-cut separation between the two realms. The harmony among the citizenry, the civilian government and the military cannot be guaranteed merely based on democratic institutions of checks and balances for governmental control over the military, but it has to include a genuine sense of care of the civilian government towards the officers' safety and legitimacy, as well as the citizenry's interests in the destinies of the military.⁵⁹

The modern military institution has also engaged in a converting form of institutional transformation. Moskos, Williams and Segal argue that the abandonment of conscription in the Western civil-military relations model, together with the conversion away from the sole purpose of national defense towards power projection, belong to a wider transformation that eventually would create *postmodern* militaries. The militaries in the *postmodern* sense are defined by five

⁵⁸ Cottey, "Civil-Military Relations and Democracy in the New Europe." 286.

⁵⁹ Müller et al., "Democracy and Its Armed Forces." 3.

features: (i) increasing saturation between the civilian and the military spheres, (ii) shrinking gaps among branches, combat vs. support roles within the military; (iii) a shift of purpose from engaging in traditional war using violence to non-traditional missions that are unfamiliar to the original creation of the armed forces, (iv) the increase of international operations beyond the authoritative decisions of the nation-state - such as the United Nations (UN), NATO, and the EU, and (v) the establishment of multinational military forces - the internationalization of military structures.⁶⁰ The concept of the *postmodern* military is considerably reasonable given the modern developments of civil-military relations up until February, 2022, in which Russia reintroduced the original role of the Russian Armed Forces in Europe with the invasion of Ukraine. The invasion has been one unfortunate development, but it reminds civil-military relations and security studies scholars that the conversion of the military forces does not simply occur as an one-way shift from traditional monopoly of violence to non-traditional missions, but rather an expansion of purposes that require constant updates and upgrades of the military resources - materials, manpower, readiness and resilience.

In an argument from the International Relations field, the just war theory conceptualizes the legitimacy of the use of force as the reconciliation among the values of human life, the duty of the state to defend their citizens and responsibility for justice. While the theory provides a set of guidelines for the state to act in conflict situations, it also provides a framework and useful narrative for discussion of the legitimate use of military resources. The just war theory in its traditional sense aims at preventing wars unless it is just and hence military deployment in a just war context is justifiable, however, recent social and political developments have expanded applicability of the theory to cover any purposes of military mobilization regardless of foreign or

⁶⁰ David R. Segal, Charles C. Moskos, and John Allen Williams, eds., *The Postmodern Military: Armed Forces after the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000). p.2

domestic territories, the visibility of the enemy and the object of military protection.⁶¹

Accompanying the expanding responsibility of the military is the increasing pressure on democratic governments to provide comprehensive public justifications, as the old national honor and glorious imperialist narrative in this post-heroic era no longer appeals to men and women to sacrifice their lives and the liberty of decision,⁶² marked by the abolition of the conscription-based military model in Europe.

Military deployment today is popular and possible due to the normalization of the securitization discourse, which invokes the necessity of emergency responses. It is particularly effective and favored by politicians because such a security-based language appeals to people's attention and motivation by giving prominence to a pressing issue of the moment.⁶³ Such a language has been normalized as a result of frequent declarations of war against a multitude of enemies out of emergency, as well as convenience. The normalization of securitization discourse created incentives for the balance among the citizenry, the civilian government and the military to adapt: in the civilian sphere, the government has conveniently turned the securitization language into an efficient discursive tool to legitimize the ever-growing roles and responsibilities of the armed forces - for they are fast at responding, highly skilled and well-disciplined, and to refrain from the duty to inform their constituency with transparent information of military deployments. At the same time, the citizenry gets used to such a language that not only does it legitimize military deployment at the words of politicians thanks to previous safe and strategic uses, but it also generates a sense of emergency that makes the military and its capacities an

⁶¹ Rasevic, "The Resort to Military Force in the COVID-19 Health Emergency." 556.

⁶² Müller et al., "Democracy and Its Armed Forces." 9.

⁶³ Sami Chatti, "Military Framing of Health Threats: The COVID-19 Disease as a Case Study," *Language, Discourse & Society* 9 (1) (2021), <http://cejsh.icm.edu.pl/cejsh/element/bwmeta1.element.desklight-7b2f0262-e991-48a1-9a48-9c071237e9b7>. 4.

indispensable resource, while delaying the immediate question of over-reliance on the armed forces. In the military sphere, the history of successful responses to the calls against wars helped convince the society of how necessary and continuously relevant the armed forces are, especially at the emerging discussion of whether modern society truly has a need for a powerful military.

4.3 - COVID-19 as a War of Choice

On this unprecedented pandemic challenge, militaries across the world have partially withdrawn from the ordinary expectations and practices to redirect their readiness and resilience to assisting or taking over civilian forces in dealing with COVID-19, which is primarily a civilian crisis rather than a military challenge. In principle, military deployment to handle a pandemic is not entirely a matter of choice. The urgency of the disease without a confirmed treatment or an immediately effective vaccine made military deployment unavoidable and necessary, especially as the civilian healthcare system quickly became overwhelmed at high infection rates and a lack of an efficient logistical network of the civilian sphere. On the bright side of the matter, military deployment, in fact, is an opportunity to examine and enhance the quality of the second social contract and civil-military partnerships, as domestic deployment of the military on a sound legal basis increases the frequencies of witnessing military officers and their professionalism at work in everyday life, as well as the realization that the soldiers, who are also affected by the pandemic, do not refrain from their responsibility to fulfill their tasks. Nonetheless, the military represents neither the sole actors nor the final solutions to the pandemic, but their roles are important in managing efficient national command networks, disciplined personnel and a variety of resources - material, manpower and extensive experiences and training in crisis management.

To consider containment and treatment efforts as a “war”, however, is a choice that several governments have resorted to, in utilizing the respected image of the professional soldiers to ensure the society’s compliance with emergency measures. According to Teskey, this form of “emergency politics comes about when something has happened that is so serious, so threatening, and so outside the usual and accepted “rules of the game” that states are obliged to take on new and hitherto unthinkable powers.”⁶⁴ Several military deployments have been bolstered not only by a legal basis that mandates military support in extraordinary circumstances, but also by emergency politics and a securitization narrative that opts for regarding COVID-19 as an “invisible enemy,” turning military engagement into a necessity to support the civilian and military medical “heros” at the “frontlines” of such a “struggle,” a “war.” Adrienne Bernhard from BBC has coined a concise summary of such a discourse as: “an inevitable “D-Day” when the outbreak will overwhelm the hospital system, and allude to war with an invisible enemy. Healthcare workers are on the frontlines, scientists are the new generals, economists draw up battle plans, politicians call for mobilization.”⁶⁵ Rather than a tangible, real war, the language is helpful to invoke the individual and collective imagery of the idea of a war that can unite national sentiments and generate a natural sense of acceptance and compliance to emergency politics even at the expense of political deliberation and transparency.⁶⁶ On the one hand, this warlike language is inevitable at the emergency characteristic of challenge, on the other hand, it sets a precedent for future convenient usage to describe any emergencies.

⁶⁴ Graham Teskey, “The Worry of Governance: Coronavirus and Emergency Politics,” *Governance and Development Soapbox* (blog), April 3, 2020, <https://abtgovernance.com/2020/04/03/the-worry-of-governance-coronavirus-and-emergency-politics/>.<https://abtgovernance.com/2020/04/03/the-worry-of-governance-coronavirus-and-emergency-politics/>

⁶⁵ Adrienne Bernhard, “Covid-19: What We Can Learn from Wartime Efforts,” BBC, January 5, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200430-covid-19-what-we-can-learn-from-wartime-efforts>.

⁶⁶ Opillard, Palle, and Michelis, “Discourse and Strategic Use of the Military in France and Europe in the COVID-19 Crisis.” 243.

At the urgent shuffle of the environment towards the obligatory pause of normalcy for the majority of the society, together with the normalized, accepted usage of a securitization discourse, the immediate question of who is deemed the best fit for a security challenge has reached an absolute answer - the military, who went through conversion as an institution and service under several emergency operations.

CHAPTER V: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research has been conducted to ensure two layers of analysis: (1) cross-case level to identify potential patterns of military responsibilities and (2) within-case level to identify specifications and variations among the cases in which the armed forces have been tasked with security responsibilities.

On the cross-case level, the analysis is based on qualitative data collected from open official sources - websites and online news archives of 26 EU Member States' Ministries of Defense and their armed forces with the exception of Cyprus, due to the lack of information on military activities during COVID-19. The data have been primarily collected from news updates and press releases in chronological order with hyperlinks leading to individual original entries of the respective source. The majority of websites reporting military deployment among the EU states are recorded in the state's official languages and in some cases, English, however, access to news updates and press releases are always kept in the original language for the maximum entries recorded as possible. Due to the differences in the original report languages and the language of writing, the majority of updates and press releases have been put through translation using Google Translate or DeepL - each original language of report is put through only one translation tool throughout to ensure consistency. The self-collected data have also been enhanced by EUROMIL's compilations of reports on the roles of each European Armed Forces. The collected data has then been categorized and coded into four spheres of responsibilities.

Data entries on military deployment to support COVID-19 containment efforts among EU Member States are usually transparent, clarifying the number of soldiers deployed on certain missions. In several cases, the time limits of each mission is also indicated, although this does not necessarily apply to all cases and the time limits may be expanded if necessary. In most of

the entries that involves the deployment of a military vehicle as supporting means, such as helicopters, buses or ambulances, the specifics of such vehicles are usually mentioned as resources of pride of each military, such as the NH90 helicopter of the Netherlands Defense Force,⁶⁷ the C130 aircraft of the Portuguese Air Force⁶⁸ and the L-410 Turbolet Aircraft of the Slovenian Army.⁶⁹ The coding of the qualitative data was made possible due to the generally similar nature of actions involved in the tasks handled by the armed forces; there are four main spheres of responsibility that the armed forces of EU Member States have been carrying out throughout their deployment in support of the society in containing the pandemic: (1) logistics, (2) medicals, (3) MHPSS and (4) security. The coding and categorization of tasks into the four spheres have been based on the following rules:

In the first place, logistics refers to a set of responsibilities that utilize or deal with material resources, which are not directly serving the purpose of medical care to the receiving ends of the activity. The logistical sphere includes the following tasks:

- (a) Civilian Repatriation: The operation to bring stranded citizens back to home countries;
- (b) Contact Tracing: The activity to locate positive cases of COVID-19, identify chains of contact and potential infections;

⁶⁷ Ministerie van Defensie, "Patiëntentransport vanaf Waddeneilanden even terug in handen Defensie - Nieuwsbericht - Defensie.nl," nieuwsbericht (Ministerie van Defensie, April 20, 2020), <https://www.defensie.nl/actueel/nieuws/2020/04/20/patiententransport-vanaf-de-waddeneilanden-even-terug-in-handen-defensie>.

⁶⁸ Governo da República Portuguesa, "COVID-19: Defesa Nacional apoia SNS no transporte doentes para a Madeira," Portal da Defesa na Internet, January 29, 2021, <https://www.defesa.gov.pt/pt/comunicacao/noticias/Paginas/COVID-19-Defesa-Nacional-apoia-SNS-no-transporte-doentes-para-a-Madeira.aspx>.

⁶⁹ Ministrstvo za obrambo, "Republika Slovenija je z letalom Slovenske vojske Republiki Severni Makedoniji dostavila materialno pomoč | GOV.SI," Portal GOV.SI, March 4, 2020, <https://www.gov.si/novice/2020-04-03-republika-slovenija-je-z-letalom-slovenske-vojske-republiki-severni-makedoniji-dostavila-materialno-pomoc/>.

- (c) Supply/Equipment Distribution/Procurement/Production/Storage/Transport: the activities that serve the distribution/ procurement/ production/ storage/ transport of medical and protective resources, as well as necessities, to national or local institutions and individuals;

The medical sphere of responsibility have been made up of the following tasks that deals with individuals' health concerns, either directly or indirectly:

- (a) Blood and plasma donation;
- (b) Disinfection operation;
- (c) Dog training: the research and training and of service dogs to early detect positive cases via saliva or sweat samples;
- (d) Medical care: medical treatment of COVID-19 patients by military personnel at military of civilian health facilities;
- (e) Medical research: research on variants of the virus and potential treatments by a military institution;
- (f) Testing: PCR-testing and rapid testing campaign, in which military personnel participate in organization and taking tests;
- (g) Vaccination campaign: actions of vaccinating the population by military personnel or a military health facility.

The MHPSS responsibilities, referring to any activities that “aims to protect or promote psychosocial well-being and/or prevent or treat mental health condition,”⁷⁰ include:

- (a) Music Performance (either live performance from a distance or video performance)

⁷⁰ World Health Organization, “Introducing Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) in Emergencies,” OpenWHO, accessed June 2, 2022, <https://openwho.org/courses/mental-health-and-psychosocial-support-in-emergencies>.

- (b) Social/Psychosocial support: any activities that contribute to the mental and psychosocial wellbeing of the society, especially under confinement, such as psychological support hotlines, military chaplain service, celebration and greetings of holidays.

The last group of tasks and the most related to the traditional role of the military belongs to the security sphere, which is conceptualized as any activities that contribute to security in the economic, political and social aspects, which has been made up of:

- (a) Border Control: the patrol activities that refer to ensuring border lockdowns, the control of passenger flow and examination of health status;
- (b) Fight Disinformation: activities in the cyberspace that targets information that is not compliant with the government's narrative;
- (c) Infrastructure Protection: the guarding activities of buildings of importance in supply production, politics and diplomacy;
- (d) Institutional Takeover: the acquirement of military operational command in civilian institutions;
- (e) Law Enforcement: the joint operations of the military with the police force to ensure compliance with social distancing and curfews policies.

The set of four spheres of responsibilities above, together with categorization of tasks have been compiled and organized along the process of data collection. Due to the different descriptions of tasks and operations by individual ministries of defenses and armed forces, it was necessary to establish a common framework to ensure reasonable comparability and to identify certain general patterns.

Out of the results of the cross-case analysis, representative cases will be selected among armed forces which were tasked with security responsibilities according to the framework above

(the result of the overall data collection can be found in Appendix I). As the majority of armed forces engaged in security tasks, the cases of Belgium, Croatia, Ireland, Luxembourg and Portugal are not considered for within-case analysis for the lack of security responsibilities, however, it is an interesting research question to explore the reasons why these armed forces have not engaged in such activities. Out of the remaining 21 cases, the criteria for selection are derived from the variety of security tasks of the armed forces and the respective country's political system.

CHAPTER VI: THE USE OF MILITARY RESOURCES IN CRISIS MANAGEMENT

6.1 - Observations from Cross-case Analysis

The increasing military presence in aiding a non-military crisis represents a challenge to the traditional conception of ideal civil-military relations in democracy. Although the military, together with civilian forces, operate in such an extraordinary circumstance, this does not mean that they are exempt from the constitutional responsibility of internal and external security. In other words, COVID-19 is not the only responsibility for the armed forces, especially as there have been other overlapping natural disasters, as well as hybrid attacks, during the phase of the pandemic. The containment efforts of the Croatian Armed Force, for example, have been interrupted and overstretched due to the Zagreb earthquake in March, 2020 and the Petrinja earthquake in December, 2020, to which other EU armed forces have come to the rescue, such as the Bulgarian Armed Forces⁷¹ and the Romanian Armed Forces.⁷² The armed forces' responsibility of power projection and state building continues to play an important part despite the pandemic as several armed forces have been deployed in multinational missions, such as the Training Mission in Mali within the EU Common Security and Defense Policy⁷³ or the operations of NATO in Afghanistan, which has terminated in September, 2021.⁷⁴ These missions mark another theme that keeps coming back during data collection - solidarity among European

⁷¹ Министерство на отбраната на Република България, "Самолети „Спартан“ Започнаха Изпълнението На Специални Полети За Транспортиране На Хуманитарна Помощ До Република Хърватска.," January 1, 2021, https://www.mod.bg/bg/news_archive.php?fn_month=1&fn_year=2021.

⁷² Raluca Tindeche, "România, Pregătită Să Acorde Ajutor Croației, În Urma Cutremurului. Raed Arafat a Cerut ca Echipetele de Căutare-Salvare RO-USAR Să Fie Pregătite Pentru a Interveni - B1TV.Ro," B1, December 29, 2020, <https://www.b1tv.ro/stiri/eveniment/romania-pregatita-sa-acorde-ajutor-croatiei-in-urma-cutremurului-raed-arafat-a-cerut-ca-echipele-de-cautare-salvare-ro-usar-sa-fie-pregatite-pentru-a-interveni-355502.html>.

⁷³ Virginie Baudais and Souleymane Maïga, "The European Union Training Mission in Mali: An Assessment," *SIPRI Background Paper*, April 2022.

⁷⁴ North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Operations and Missions: Past and Present," NATO, October 9, 2021, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_52060.htm.

allies, especially through the institutional provisions of the EU or NATO. Such solidarity has been demonstrated via several video conferences among Ministers of Defense that shared experiences in the pandemic and how European armed forces have been deployed in response to the crisis,⁷⁵ as well as how these platforms provided countries with flight hours to repatriate their citizens, transport medical supplies to and from outside of the region, such as the Slovak Air Forces' transport of supplies from China via NATO's Strategic Airlift International Solution (SALIS) program,⁷⁶ or the Lithuanian Air Force's donation of humanitarian aid to Armenia, Moldova and Georgia.⁷⁷ Solidarity has also shown via cross-country donations of medical supplies and equipment, but the most notable act of solidarity has been the deployment of military medics across the EU countries for assistance, when the civilian and military healthcare systems of an ally was on the brink of collapse. Among the supportive gestures, multiple EU armed forces have rushed to support the crumbling Italian healthcare with both medical supplies and personnel, such as Denmark,⁷⁸ Latvia,⁷⁹ Romania,⁸⁰ and other regional allies, even though it

⁷⁵ Kaitseministeeriumi, "12 riiki arutasid kaitsevalmiduse säilitamist ja sõjaliste operatsioonide jätkamist kriisi ajal | Kaitseministeerium," March 19, 2020, <https://www.kaitseministeerium.ee/et/uudised/12-riiki-arutasid-kaitsevalmiduse-sailitamist-ja-sojaliste-operatsioonide-jatkamist-kriisi>.

⁷⁶ Ministerstvo obrany Slovenskej Republiky, "Na Slovensko Dorazil Zdravotnícky Materiál z Číny, Profesionálni Vojaci Pomáhali s Jeho Vykladaním a Prepravou :: Ministerstvo Obrany SR," March 25, 2020, <https://www.mosr.sk/46795-sk/na-slovensko-dorazil-zdravotnický-material-z-cíny-profesionálni-vojaci-pomáhali-s-jeho-vykladaním-a-prepravou/>.

⁷⁷ Lietuvos Respublikos krašto apsaugos ministerija, "Lietuvos Karinių Oro Pajėgų Orlaivis „Spartan“ Gabena Humanitarinę Pagalbą Armėnijai, Moldovai Ir Sakartvelui," *LR Krašto Apsaugos Ministerija* (blog), May 13, 2020, <https://kam.lt/lietuvos-kariniu-oro-pajegu-orlaivis-spartan-gabena-humanitarine-pagalba-armenijai-moldovai-ir-sakartvelui/>.

⁷⁸ Forsvarsministeriets departement, "Dansk hjælp til Italien," Forsvarsministeriet, August 4, 2020, <https://www.fmn.dk/da/nyheder/2020/2020/dansk-hjalp-til-italien/>.

⁷⁹ Aizsardzības ministrija, "Latvija dāvina dezinfekcijas līdzekļus Itālijai un Sanmarīno, apliecinot solidaritāti ar sabiedrotajiem | Aizsardzības ministrija," May 21, 2020, <http://www.mod.gov.lv/lv/zinas/latvija-davina-dezinfekcijas-lidzeklus-italijai-un-sanmarino-apliecinot-solidaritati-ar>.

⁸⁰ Ministerul Apărării Naționale, "O aeronava a Fortelor Aeriene Romane transporta personal medical in Italia," Ministerul Apararii Nationale, July 4, 2020, https://www.mapn.ro/cpresa/16547_o-aeronava-a-for%C8%9Belor-aeriene-romane-transporta-personal-medical-in-italia.

was such a grand crisis that it required extra help from medical staff from China, Cuba, Russia and so on.⁸¹

The military deployment serving containment efforts against COVID-19 has been among the major agenda of numerous Ministries of Defense, to the extent that several countries have given name to their military deployments, either in full coverage of the operation and all affiliated activities, or in partial coverage of certain missions. On the one side of the spectrum, full coverage of the entire deployment can be referred to the Swedish Armed Forces' *Operation Gloria*,⁸² the Spanish Armed Forces' *Operation Balmis*,⁸³ the logistical coordination *Operation Fortitude* of the Irish Defense Forces,⁸⁴ and the French *Opération Résilience*⁸⁵, all of which refer to the coordinated missions in all aspects of the armed forces in COVID-19 containment. Throughout the spectrum, there are a number of "operations" that partially describe the tasks handled by the respective military, for example, the Italian Army contributed two separate combinations: the *Operation Igea*⁸⁶ - a nationwide mass testing program and *Operation Safe Streets*, a campaign from 2008 to prevent criminal activities by deploying military personnel expanded to enforce confinement rules domestically.⁸⁷ Regardless of the coverage level of

⁸¹ Miro Jakovljevic et al., "COVID-19 PANDEMIA AND PUBLIC AND GLOBAL MENTAL HEALTH FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF GLOBAL HEALTH SECURITY," *Psychiatra Danubina* 32, no. 1 (April 15, 2020): 6–14, <https://doi.org/10.24869/psyd.2020.6>.

⁸²Försvarsmakten, "Ett år med coronapandemin," Försvarsmakten, December 3, 2021, <https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/sv/aktuellt/2021/03/ett-ar-med-coronapandemin/>.

⁸³Ministerio de Defensa, "La Operación 'Balmis' Despliega a Más 2.500 Efectivos En 172 Ciudades Para El Control Del Virus COVID-19 - EMAD," March 24, 2020, <https://emad.defensa.gob.es/prensa/noticias/2020/03/listado/200324-Continuacion-Operacion-Balmis.html>.

⁸⁴Irish Defence Forces, "JTF 'FORTITUDE' - Defence Forces," accessed June 2, 2022, <https://www.military.ie/en/who-we-are/army/covid-19-joint-task-force-jtf-/>.

⁸⁵Ministère des Armées, "Opération Résilience."

⁸⁶Ministero della difesa, "Covid-19: Parte l'operazione Igea Della Difesa, 200 Drive-through Effettueranno 30.000 Tamponi al Giorno," October 21, 2020, https://www.difesa.it/Primo_Piano/Pagine/operazione_Igea_Difesa.aspx.

⁸⁷Esercito, "'Safe Streets' Operation - Esercito Italiano," accessed June 2, 2022, <https://www.esercito.difesa.it/en/Operations/national-operations/Pagine/Safe-Streets-Operation.aspx>.

military's responsibilities, to name military deployments after an *operation* is to suggest a unified, coherent and realized military operation⁸⁸ and to legitimize the involvement of the armed forces in the civilian crisis.

An important observation on the dataset shows that the EU armed forces are not consistently deployed throughout time and space throughout the pandemic, but rather to locations that require the most support at the time and in response to waves of infections. In fact, the most military deployments among cases fall in between March and April, 2020 - in accordance with the first wave of mass infections in Europe, which posed an overwhelming challenge to civilian medical systems of several countries. Military deployment based on time and space has been a reasonable policy response, as the military resources are also finite, requiring optimal resource management to support respective systems that were inadequate for the sudden pressure. Although an overlap of responsibilities exists between civilian and military capacities in crisis management, specific military disciplines are not easily transferred to comply with civilian procedures. In fact, the majority among the European militaries played a supporting role to the civilian forces, correspondingly, most occasions of military deployment have been made possible at the approval of military headquarters towards the respective requests put forward by a civilian authority.

Among the 26 cases, almost every armed forces have engaged in responsibilities associated with the *medical* and the *logistical* tasks, due to the general expectations of available resources and efficient management of the military in such spheres. The armed forces have been generally fulfilling the same tasks, such as setting up provisional infrastructure, medical treatment, patient transport, disinfection, supply transport and so on. The most surprising and

⁸⁸ Opillard, Palle, and Michelis, "Discourse and Strategic Use of the Military in France and Europe in the COVID-19 Crisis." 243.

wholesome tasks that certain militaries fulfilled belong to the MHPSS sphere, in which several military units help release the stress associated with a confining situation in different ways, ranging from psychological support hotline by the Czech Armed Forces,⁸⁹ coloring campaign for children in Malta,⁹⁰ to musical performances at retirement homes in Austria⁹¹ or as music videos in the Netherlands.⁹²

Despite shared natures in some deployment responsibilities, not all militaries were deployed on the same scope and fulfilling the same tasks to the same extent, due to the vast range of capacities, available resources to each organization and socio-political environment. For example, on the one hand, the Bulgarian military took charge of the national management of COVID-19 policy responses and coordination of the healthcare system in its entirety, on the other hand, the armed forces of Luxembourg took responsibility for the most suitable tasks to their capacities, which are production and distribution of face masks along the borders to frequent commuters and setting up provisional facilities. The Luxembourgian military was deprived of material and human resources to handle further responsibilities, in fact, the first military aircraft A400M arrived in Luxembourg in October, 2020, 19 years after the order.⁹³

The most important variation takes place in the *security* sphere, as not every military plays this role and the levels of engagement in security tasks also vary among the cases that do.

⁸⁹ Lada Ferkálová, "Vojenská linka psychologické pomoci se osvědčila, bude pokračovat," August 7, 2020, <https://mocr.army.cz/informacni-servis/zpravodajstvi/vojenska-linka-psychologicke-pomoci-se-osvedcila--bude-pokracovat-222348/>.

⁹⁰ Armed Forces of Malta (AFM), "Stay Home, Stay Safe," April 13, 2020, <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.3055201731166664&type=3>.

⁹¹ Bundesministerium Landesverteidigung, "Vorarlberg: Ostergrüße der Militärmusik für Seniorenheime," bundesheer.at, June 4, 2020, <http://www.bundesheer.at/archiv/a2020/corona/artikel.php?id=5571>.

⁹² Ministerie van Defensie, "Militaire muzikanten steken Nederland hart onder de riem (video) - Nieuwsbericht - Defensie.nl," nieuwsbericht (Ministerie van Defensie, April 2, 2020), <https://www.defensie.nl/actueel/nieuws/2020/04/02/militaire-muzikanten-steken-nederland-hart-onder-de-riem>.

⁹³ Armée luxembourgeoise, "Militärflugzeug A400M in Luxemburg gelandet," July 10, 2020, <https://www.armee.lu/actualites/2020/militaerflugzeug-a400m-in-luxemburg-gelandet>.

As mentioned above, the data show five different security missions, including border control, fight disinformation, infrastructure protection, institutional takeover and internal order management.

6.2 - Within-case Analysis and Case Selection

From the established cross-case patterns, the research will continue with detailed analysis of four cases: Germany and the German Armed Forces (GAF) or the *Bundeswehr*, France and the French Armed Forces (FAF) - *Les Forces Armées Françaises*, Poland and the Polish Armed Forces (PAF) - *Siły Zbrojne Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*, Hungary and the Hungarian Defense Forces (HDF) - *A Magyar Honvédség*. While all cases of EU armed forces deserve their own detailed analysis due to each case's distinctive characteristics, it is important to generate certain observations among the study cases, and leave case-based conclusions to future projects.

The four cases above have been selected based on a number of criteria. Initially, all four countries have been suffering from waves of COVID-19 and all have resorted to military deployment in containment efforts. The tasks of the four armed forces are generally similar as they cover all four spheres of responsibilities, as reflected in the cross-case analysis observations. All four countries share dual membership to the EU and NATO, ensuring the similar access to all institutional platforms of coordinating military resources.

Moreover, these countries represent a range of political systems on the spectrum of democracy - non-democracy. According to the V-DEM database, Germany and France belong to the top 10% of countries on liberal democracy index (LDI) with a slight decline in their score, while Poland and Hungary score the lowest among the EU Member States, within the bottom 40-50% countries on the LDI and among those with substantial autocratization.⁹⁴ From these

⁹⁴ Boese et al., "Democracy Reports 2022: Autocratization Changing Nature?"

similarities and case distribution in the index, the comparison will take place in two pairs of two cases each to ensure the most comparability, in which the French Armed Forces will be put into the same perspective as the German Armed Forces to analyze the limited military intervention in security tasks in liberal democracies, and the Polish Armed Forces will be compared to the Hungarian Defense Forces in the setting of backsliding democracies, whose armed forces engage extensively with security responsibilities during COVID-19 under a story of securitization. Despite comparisons in pair, there are certain differences between two cases within a pair, especially in regards to the security tasks of the military, in which the GAF took responsibility for the least security task, followed by the FAF, while the HDF handled the most security tasks, much more extensively than the PAF within the pair.

The comparisons will follow principles of process tracing to gather supporting evidence, especially on the narrative that describes policy responses to COVID-19 in comparison to legal conception of each country's military deployment, the past narratives utilized on military deployment to find evidence of normalization, as well as their armed forces' security roles in COVID-19 containment efforts.

**CHAPTER VII: WITHIN-CASE ANALYSIS: *DIE BUNDESWEHR, LES FORCES
ARMÉES FRANÇAISES, SIŁY ZBROJNE RZECZYPOSPOLITEJ POLSKIEJ AND A
MAGYAR HONVÉDSÉG***

7.1 - Military Deployments in Liberal Democracies

As two of the most resourceful armed forces within the EU, the GAF and the FAF have engaged intensively in their governments' containment regimes. Similarly to most of the remaining cases, both armed forces have played a significant supporting role in the logistical and medical aspects of the campaigns. One of the most important operations have been patient transport, as the substantial airlift capacity allowed the GAF and FAF to use "flying intensive care units" in the Airbus A400M and A310 military aircrafts to evacuate COVID-19 patients with adequate medical care on board.^{95 96}

In the German case, the GAF gave special names to soldiers conducting logistical tasks as "*Helfende Hände*" - "helping hands," who fulfill general civilian force support tasks, such as taking body temperature, reception and administration at several civilian facilities,⁹⁷ and the "Containment scouts" who conduct contact tracing and breaking the infection chains.⁹⁸ The GAF also fulfilled MHPSS tasks by deploying the military music corps,⁹⁹ supporting the elderly at

⁹⁵ Bundesministerium der Verteidigung, "Corona-Krise: Freunde stehen zusammen," March 29, 2020, <https://www.bmvg.de/de/aktuelles/corona-krise-freunde-stehen-zusammen-230914..>

⁹⁶ Ministère des Armées, "RESILIENCE : Transfert de patients atteint du Covid-19 de la France vers l'Allemagne par un A400-M allemand," March 31, 2020, <https://archives.defense.gouv.fr/operations/territoire-national/france-metropolitaine/operation-resilience/breves/resilience-transfert-de-patients-atteint-du-covid-19-de-la-france-vers-l-allemand>.

⁹⁷ Bundeswehr, "Enge Kooperation der Behörden während der Corona-Pandemie," February 12, 2020, <https://www.bundeswehr.de/de/organisation/streitkraeftebasis/aktuelles/enge-kooperation-der-behoerden-waehrend-der-corona-4887446>.

⁹⁸ Bundeswehr, "Militärmusiker werden „Community Health Worker“,“ May 28, 2020, <https://www.bundeswehr.de/de/organisation/streitkraeftebasis/aktuelles/militaermusiker-werden-community-health-worker--261336>.

⁹⁹ Bundeswehr, "Heeresmusikkorps Hannover spielt in Seniorenheim," April 30, 2020, <https://www.bundeswehr.de/de/organisation/streitkraeftebasis/aktuelles/heeresmusikkorps-hannover-spielt-in-seniorenheim-253656>.

retirement and nursing homes¹⁰⁰ and offering chaplain service to civilian access.¹⁰¹ On the medical side, besides medical services provided by the five Bundeswehr hospitals, as well as the military-operated vaccination center in Saarland,¹⁰² an important feature of medical assistance by the Bundeswehr is the *Kleeblatt-Konzept* - “cloverleaf” in redistribution of COVID-19 patients across Germany. The concept refers to the division of Germany into five “clover leaves,” each of which covers one or more federal states.¹⁰³ The coordination among the clover leaves allows for reciprocal redistribution of intensive care patients across regions whenever there is a sign of a system overload. The “cloverleaf” concept has been successful in preventing patient prioritization in overwhelmed medical treatment.

In the case of France, one of the most important supporting mechanisms that formed the basis of the operation has been deploying the amphibious helicopter carriers *Le Dixmude*, *Le Mistral* and *Le Tonnerre* to connect the operation across French territories from the central coordination hub of Metropolitan France to distant overseas regions in French Guiana (6,500km) , in the Indian Ocean: La Réunion (8,500km) and Mayotte (7,000 km), in the West Indies:

¹⁰⁰ Bundeswehr, “Corona-Einsatz in Bamberger Alten- und Pflegeheimen,” April 19, 2020, <https://www.bundeswehr.de/de/organisation/streitkraeftebasis/aktuelles/corona-einsatz-in-bamberger-alten-und-pflegeheimen-251014>.

¹⁰¹ Bundeswehr, “Corona-Seelsorge-Hotline für HSU,” January 4, 2020, <https://www.bundeswehr.de/de/betreuung-fuersorge/militaerseelsorge/evangelische-militaerseelsorge/dienststellen/militaerpfarraemter/evangelisches-militaerpfarramt-hamburg-i/corona-seelsorge-hotline-fuer-hsu-247182>.

¹⁰² Bundeswehr, “„Ich bin froh, dass die Soldaten hier sind“,” June 18, 2021, <https://www.bundeswehr.de/de/organisation/heer/aktuelles/-ich-bin-froh-dass-die-soldaten-hier-sind-5096552>.

¹⁰³ Bundeswehr, “Kleeblatt-Konzept: Bundeswehr verlegt Intensivpatienten,” November 30, 2021, <https://www.bundeswehr.de/de/aktuelles/meldungen/kleeblatt-konzept-bundeswehr-verlegt-intensivpatienten-5294326>.

Martinique and Guadeloupe (both around 6,200 km).¹⁰⁴ ¹⁰⁵ Due to the limited medical and logistical capacities of the overseas territory, the three amphibious helicopter carriers of the French Navy have been mobilized in maximum capacity to transport not only medical supplies, logistical and medical personnel, but also additional airlift capacities to assist medical transportations among island territories.¹⁰⁶ A special A400M aircraft has also been made available to support patient transports by connecting the disparate islands of French Polynesia, which was also available to Australia and New Zealand if necessary.¹⁰⁷

On the security responsibilities, both the GAF and FAF are legally barred from intervening on their domestic territories on traditional security missions, however, the two armed forces were still deployed to serve operations of security characteristics due to the coding and categorization of this project, which counts both operations against disinformation and infrastructure protection as security missions against social and public health security. In particular, the Bundeswehr has been working against disinformation in cyberspace¹⁰⁸ - which is indirectly serving social security and compliance to medical requirements. The FAF has been deployed to serve missions that are closer to the traditional security operation, in which the

¹⁰⁴Ministère des Armées, "RESILIENCE : Arrivée du PHA Mistral et de la FLF Guépratte à la Réunion," April 15, 2020, <https://archives.defense.gouv.fr/operations/territoire-national/france-metropolitaine/operation-resilience/breves/resilience-arrivee-du-pha-mistral-et-de-la-flf-guepratte-a-la-reunion>.

¹⁰⁵Ministère des Armées, "RESILIENCE : Arrivée du PHA Dixmude aux Antilles," April 20, 2020, <https://archives.defense.gouv.fr/operations/territoire-national/france-metropolitaine/operation-resilience/breves/resilience-arrivee-du-pha-dixmude-aux-antilles>.

¹⁰⁶ Ministère des Armées, "Opération Résilience."

¹⁰⁷Ministère des Armées, "RESILIENCE : Arrivée d'un A400M au sein des Forces armées en Polynésie française," April 23, 2020, <https://archives.defense.gouv.fr/operations/territoire-national/france-metropolitaine/operation-resilience/breves/resilience-arrivee-d-un-a400m-au-sein-des-forces-armees-en-polynesie-francaise>.

¹⁰⁸ Bundeswehr, "Informationen auf einen Blick: Einsatz gegen Corona," September 4, 2020, <https://www.bundeswehr.de/de/aktuelles/meldungen/informationen-einsatz-bundeswehr-gegen-corona-247702>.

French soldiers have been crucial in guarding “sensitive sites” - nuclear power plants, healthcare institutions and civilian facilities that are important for medical supply/equipment production.

7.1.1 - The German Armed Forces

The constitutional framework on the use of military resources of the Federal Republic of Germany comes from the provisions of the Basic Law of Germany (*Grundgesetz*). Since the 1968 adoption of the emergency legislation that widened the legal foundation of internal deployment of the Bundeswehr, the majority of missions handled by the GAF have been within the spheres of logistical or technical support, thus in line with constitutional restrictions of the Basic Law. In the 1990s, the proposal to deploy GAF personnel on border control missions faced critical opposition from the Federal Border Police for fear of infringement on a civilian security institution’s jurisdiction.¹⁰⁹ In the modern history of securitization narratives in Germany, while not extensive, the coping mechanism did not concern with the deployment of the GAF, but rather via exclusion and direct target in the civilian sphere. For example, as a reaction to terrorist threat in the aftermath of 9/11 and then the immigration crisis at Europe’s door, the Muslim minorities in Germany became the scapegoat in a narrative that sees them as a danger in connection with terrorism, religious extremism and long-term socio-economic threat. Another minority group subjected to securitization in Germany is the Roma, who have been consistently seen as public security threats, prevented from social welfare and participation, and suffered from discrimination in bureaucracy and media presentation.

On historical grounds, there is a strong anti-militarism culture in Germany that views military deployment, both internal and external, under great scrutiny. The first external deployment of the GAF was made during the NATO/WEU’s *Operation Sharp Guard* deployed

¹⁰⁹ Derek Lutterbeck, “[PDF] Wearing the Outside in: Internal Deployment of the Armed Forces in Germany and Italy | Semantic Scholar,” *Security and Peace* 28, no. 3 (2010): 88–95..

in the Adriatic sea during the collapse of Yugoslavia, in which the GAF conducted maritime patrol with the F210 frigate and the Atlantique patrol aircraft.¹¹⁰ This first mission sparked heated debate as it did not fall into humanitarian support operation, therefore unconstitutional, to which the German Constitutional Court ruled against under the reason that the Bundeswehr was acting within a system of collective defense.¹¹¹ Anti-militarism still runs deep in the German context as domestic debate sparked once again over troop deployment to Afghanistan, which had been on an official term of a “stabilization mission.”¹¹² The civilian government in the German case had responded to public disapproval of foreign deployment on security operations that the Bundeswehr was not sent to fight in Iraq and Syria.¹¹³ It was not until the 2015 Paris attack did up to 1,200 soldiers become a part of *Operation Counter Daesh* in an international security alliance against the Islamic State.¹¹⁴ After a series of foreign deployments, the German government still stays relatively cautious on armed intervention with an increasing emphasis on clear objectives.¹¹⁵

According to the Basic Law, Article 35 - Legal and Administrative assistance and assistance during disasters, and Article 87a, paragraph 4 on Internal State of Emergency, the legal foundation for the German Bundeswehr to be deployed domestically is to provide

¹¹⁰North Atlantic Treaty Organization, “NATO/WEU Operation Sharp Guard - October 2, 96,” February 10, 1996, <https://www.nato.int/for/general/shrp-grd.htm#4>.

¹¹¹ Germany, “DFR - BVerfGE 90, 286 - Out-of-Area-Einsätze,” Das Fallrecht, accessed June 2, 2022, <https://www.servat.unibe.ch/dfr/bv090286.html>.

¹¹² Siobhán Dowling, “The World from Berlin: ‘New Evaluation on Afghanistan Long Overdue,’” *Der Spiegel*, February 11, 2010, sec. International, <https://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/the-world-from-berlin-new-evaluation-on-afghanistan-long-overdue-a-677289.html>.

¹¹³Jens Thureau, “Germany’s Military Reluctance Rooted in History,” DW, December 4, 2018, <https://www.dw.com/en/germanys-military-reluctance-rooted-in-history/a-43366599>.

¹¹⁴ Christian Dewitz, “Bundeswehr-Journal Bundeswehr Unterstützt Erstmals Luftangriffe Gegen Den IS - Bundeswehr-Journal,” Bundeswehr Journal, December 16, 2015, <http://www.bundeswehr-journal.de/2015/bundeswehr-unterstuetzt-erstmal-luftangriffe-gegen-den-is/#more-6091>.

¹¹⁵ William Noah Glucroft, “After Afghanistan: Germany Rethinks Its Military Missions | Germany | News and in-Depth Reporting from Berlin and beyond | DW | 19.08.2021,” DW, August 19, 2021, <https://www.dw.com/en/after-afghanistan-germany-rethinks-its-military-missions/a-58912418>.

“administrative assistance,” and only in extraordinary circumstances of a state of defense or a state of tension can the Bundeswehr be deployed to support police measures in the protection of civilian property.¹¹⁶ As a pandemic does not belong to the specified extraordinary circumstances, the tasks of the Bundeswehr is strictly limited to those of administrative characteristics and security tasks of law enforcement and policing of public space are not legal.

The securitization narrative by the German government has been minimal rather than a full-fledged address of the containment efforts as a “war.” In fact, German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier has contrasted this view and portrayed the pandemic as “a test of our humanity,”¹¹⁷ which has reflected on the minimal engagement with security responsibilities by the GAF via cyberspace activities against disinformation.¹¹⁸

The clearcut separation between the two spheres is particularly important in how Germany engaged in COVID-19 policy responses, in which the procedure to deploy military assistance in logistics and medicals is transparent and well-respected. As the states and municipalities had been put under heavy pressure to function efficiently, in January, 2021, the Federal Cabinet passed a resolution to waive the expenses and bureaucratic obstacles to local governments in applying for military support in direct connection with the pandemic. The decision applied to applications between March 1, 2020 and the end of 2021.¹¹⁹ This special regulation does not affect the fundamental requirement for a procedure of a written application

¹¹⁶ Germany, “Grundgesetz für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland,” dejure.org, September 29, 2020, <https://dejure.org/gesetze/GG>.

¹¹⁷ Leah Carter, “Germany’s President Calls for Patience, Solidarity in Face of Pandemic | DW | 11.04.2020,” DW, November 4, 2020, <https://www.dw.com/en/germanys-president-calls-for-patience-solidarity-in-face-of-pandemic/a-53095804>.

¹¹⁸ “Informationen Auf Einen Blick: Einsatz Gegen Corona,” accessed June 2, 2022, <https://www.bundeswehr.de/de/aktuelles/meldungen/informationen-einsatz-bundeswehr-gegen-corona-247702>.

¹¹⁹ Bundeswehr, “Wie funktioniert Amtshilfe? Der Weg hinter den Kulissen,” October 12, 2020, <https://www.bundeswehr.de/de/organisation/streitkraeftebasis/aktuelles/wie-funktioniert-amtshilfe-der-weg-hinter-den-kulissen-248674>.

for military assistance by a civilian authority as designated in the German Basic Law.¹²⁰ This is among the evidence that the separation of the military from the civilian sphere is clear and highly regulated. Due to such pronounced separation of the spheres, it is not necessarily clear to the civilian authorities to recognize the details of assistance to apply or to the military on how to provide assistance. As a result, the Bundeswehr provided a system of district liaison commands - Bezirksverbindungskommando and Kreisverbindungskommando to advise local civilian authorities on how and for what purpose an application for assistance can be submitted, on assessment of the level of urgency and situation observation. These systems of district liaison commands form a conjunction between the civilian and the military spheres, as they also transfer the accumulated information from their regions higher up the chains of command, to the concentration hub of data at the 15 state commands and the Berlin Site Operations Department - who also have in their possessions the information of currently available assets, manpower in the local barracks, speculations of potential deployment locations and possible civilian requests for assistance.

The decision is, however, taken centrally at the Bundeswehr Territorial Tasks Command (BTTC) after processing all situation reports from the regional commands, in combination with available information from the German Red Cross, the Robert Koch Institute, the Federal Ministry of Health, multiple embassies, the Bundeswehr Medical Service among others. Besides clarifying potential resources for a request of assistance, the Operation Center within the BTTC has to verify the legality of such a request with its legal advisors before reaching the final decision with Major General Carsten Breuer - the Commander of the BTTC. If the application requires assistance in medical supplies or personnel, the perspective from the Bundeswehr

¹²⁰ Bundeswehr, "Wie funktioniert Amtshilfe?"

Medical Service Command must be consulted. In special cases, it might be necessary to forward the request to the Federal Ministry of Defense. If the application is approved, which is an equivalent response to the absolute exhaustion of local civilian capacities, the “Corona Assistance Contingent” will come into play under the coordination of four special regional commands (North, East, West and South). The number of soldiers on standby for deployment has been adjusted in accordance with the situation in Germany: from 12,000 in April, 2020 to the highest of 25,000 soldiers at the peak of the first wave, down to 3,000 soldiers during the summer of 2021 at the temporarily specialized situation after the nationwide vaccination campaigns. At the beginning of the Omicron wave in the end of 2021, the number of soldiers deployable for assistance in Germany doubled up to 8,000 in November, 2021. The Bundeswehr also managed to fulfill 8,000 out of 9,000 civilian requests for military assistance by November, 2021.¹²¹ In less than a month, at the beginning of the 2021 holiday season, the Omicron variant officially became the fourth wave of COVID-19 to hit Germany, leading to the respective skyrocket in the number of contingent to 17,500 soldiers standing by, with 16,000 soldiers with a response time between 48 and 72 hours, the remaining had a response time of 72 hours.¹²²

7.1.2 - The French Armed Forces

Since its professionalization in 1997, the French Armed Forces have been deployed mostly on external operations¹²³ to serve non-traditional security purposes, such as state-building, power projection and counterterrorism. Similarly to the case of Germany, the capacity

¹²¹ Bundeswehr, “Bundeswehr verstärkt „Hilfskontingent Corona“,” November 26, 2021, <https://www.bundeswehr.de/de/organisation/streitkraeftebasis/aktuelles/bundeswehr-verstaerkt-hilfskontingent-corona-5292294>.

¹²² Bundeswehr, “Amtshilfe: Bundeswehr Unterstützt Gegen Die Vierte Welle,” December 15, 2021, <https://www.bundeswehr.de/de/organisation/streitkraeftebasis/aktuelles/amtshilfe-bundeswehr-unterstuetzt-gegen-die-4-welle-5316342>.

¹²³ Opillard, Palle, and Michelis, “Discourse and Strategic Use of the Military in France and Europe in the COVID-19 Crisis.” 251.

to intervene militarily on the French national territory is strictly limited by law. In fact, the only occasions in which the FAF could conduct military intervention is during a state of siege (Article 36 of the French constitution) - including the extraordinary circumstances of the immediate threat from a foreign war or a domestic armed insurrection, allowing the transfer of power from police authorities to the military.¹²⁴

The environment surrounding civil-military relations in France witnesses several occasions in which the FAF was called upon in support of the population, either on a local or a national level to cope with natural disasters, fire fighting or to cooperate with the police force. The FAF has long been a global security actor that joined the US in international operations and extensive global power projection. In 2003, more than 13,000 French soldiers were deployed across the world on more than 20 missions.¹²⁵ Despite legal restrictions of domestic military intervention in the Fifth Republic due to public mistrust in the armed forces under the Fourth Republic, the FAF has been deployed on several operations even prior to *Operation Resilience*, under more or less a securitizing language that legitimizes the institution in each engagement, even the *Hephaestos Operation* has also been portrayed as a “fight” against forest fires.¹²⁶ The November, 2015 terrorist attacks in Paris triggered the swift declaration of a state of emergency for 2 years until the solidified legislation on anti-terrorism, as the series of attacks in 2015 was considered an act of armed aggression on French territory. Despite the recognition of the failure of the US’ war on terror, the French government had managed to link their own security issue in securitizing a French version of counterterrorist narratives that connects the threat of a “jihadist army” to the region of Iraq and Syria, as well as the Sahel and Central Africa - justifying for the

¹²⁴France, The French Constitution.

¹²⁵ Giegerich and Wallace, “Not Such a Soft Power.” 172.

¹²⁶ Opillard, Palle, and Michelis, “Discourse and Strategic Use of the Military in France and Europe in the COVID-19 Crisis.” 246

urgency of intervening in Mali and Iraq.¹²⁷ The securitization narrative also expanded to target Muslim minorities in French, while indirectly linking to terrorist threat, the principle of *laïcité* helped legitimize social and cultural discrimination against Muslim, especially via the ban on the headscarf.¹²⁸ The partial essence of such a securitization narrative led to emergency measures in the public place, in particular, the *Operation Sentinelle* - a French domestic version of the “war on terror” has been in place since 2015. Until this day, 7,000 soldiers of this operation have been permanently mobilized on national territory on surveillance missions and counterterrorism.¹²⁹

According to the French Constitution, while the President of the Republic is the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, only the Parliament holds the power to declare war,¹³⁰ President Emmanuel Macron had addressed the country in March, 2020 with six times of “*Nous sommes en guerre*” - “we are at war.”¹³¹ The *Livre Blanc pour la Défense et la Sécurité Nationale* in 2013 identified threats from “natural, health, technological, industrial or accidental risks” as major crises¹³² rather than in warlike language, providing a legal ground for French Armed Forces to prepare at least one regiment to deal with disinfection specialization (the 2nd Regiment of Dragoons - specialists in CBRN). To refer to a pandemic as a “war” is a legal stretch, especially as it is not the case on March 23, 2020 - just two days prior to the deployment

¹²⁷ Elena Dück and Robin Lucke, “Same Old (Macro-) Securitization? A Comparison of Political Reactions to Major Terrorist Attacks in the United States and France,” *Croatian International Relations Review* 25 (March 16, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.2478/cirr-2019-0001>.

¹²⁸ Jocelyne Cesari, “Securitization And Laïcité,” *International Institute of Islamic Thought* (blog), 2021, <https://iiit.org/en/secritization-and-laicite-the-two-main-challenges-of-french-islam/>.

¹²⁹ Opillard, Palle, and Michelis, “Discourse and Strategic Use of the Military in France and Europe in the COVID-19 Crisis.” 242

¹³⁰ France, The French Constitution

¹³¹ Emmanuel Macron, “Adresse aux Français, 16 mars 2020,” [elysee.fr](https://www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/2020/03/16/adresse-aux-francais-covid19), March 16, 2020, <https://www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/2020/03/16/adresse-aux-francais-covid19>.

¹³² France, “Livre Blanc Sur La Défense et La Sécurité Nationale,” 2013, <http://www.livreblancdefenseetsecurite.gouv.fr/>.

of *Operation Resilience* in the Statute no. 2020-290, in which the pandemic was described as “a state of health emergency.”¹³³

The FAF has been deployed on a small number of security missions as a part of *Operation Resilience*. As the *Operation Sentinelle* in counterterrorism is still in place at the time, FAF soldiers were not serving law enforcement missions in Metropolitan France, but conducting infrastructure protection of “sensitive sites,” ranging from military bases,¹³⁴ storage units,¹³⁵ hospital,¹³⁶ to manufacturer sites of medical and pharmaceutical supplies.¹³⁷ The military assistance in France has also been available at civilian requests and exhaustion of all alternatives, indicating a similar system of regulated civil-military relations to the German model. Due to the fact that *Operation Resilience* stretches all over French territories across the world, it has been an exhaustive and efficient coordination of resources thanks to the inherent capacities of the FAF and its overseas branches: the Armed Forces in Guiana (FAG), the Armed Forces of Antilles (FAA) and the Armed Forces in the Southern Indian Ocean Zone (FAZSOI).¹³⁸ As an implication of the wide geographical coverage, there is no single physical “battlefront” in the

¹³³ France, “LOI N° 2020-290 Du 23 Mars 2020 d’urgence Pour Faire Face à l’épidémie de Covid-19 (1),” 2020-290 § (2020).

¹³⁴ Ministère des Armées, “RESILIENCE : Les marins-pompiers de la Base Navale de Port des Galets sur tous les fronts,” May 25, 2020, <https://archives.defense.gouv.fr/operations/territoire-national/france-metropolitaine/operation-resilience/breves/resilience-les-marins-pompiers-de-la-base-navale-de-port-des-galets-sur-tous-les-fronts>.

¹³⁵ Ministère des Armées, “RESILIENCE : Le 1er régiment d’Artillerie (1er RA) patrouille dans Besançon,” May 13, 2020, <https://archives.defense.gouv.fr/operations/territoire-national/france-metropolitaine/operation-resilience/breves/resilience-le-3e-rg-participe-a-la-protection-de-l-hopital-manchester>.

¹³⁶ Ministère des Armées, “RESILIENCE : Le 3e RG participe à la protection de l’hôpital Manchester,” April 14, 2020, <https://archives.defense.gouv.fr/operations/territoire-national/france-metropolitaine/operation-resilience/breves/resilience-le-3e-rg-participe-a-la-protection-de-l-hopital-manchester>.

¹³⁷ Ministère des Armées, “RESILIENCE : La protection de sites sensibles sur le Territoire de Belfort,” June 5, 2020, <https://archives.defense.gouv.fr/operations/territoire-national/france-metropolitaine/operation-resilience/breves/resilience-la-protection-de-sites-sensibles-sur-le-territoire-de-belfort>.

¹³⁸ “Opération Résilience.”

French war against COVID-19. Another implication points at the potential overstretched military resources, making it inevitable to request additional help from allies. In fact, the French Air Force has resorted to emergency medical evacuations of 161 COVID-19 patients to neighboring countries: Austria, Luxembourg, Switzerland and Germany,¹³⁹ all of which have been paid tribute to by an invitation to the Bastille Day parade 2020 in Paris.¹⁴⁰ Furthermore, activities in the overseas territories have also been made possible by the optimization of deployment by joint military coordination among armed forces in the region: the militaries from the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and the FAF cooperated and strengthened each other's capacity from the French island Martinique in the Caribbean.¹⁴¹

7.2 - Military Deployments in Backsliding Democracies

As indicated above, the literature that deals with civil-military relations throughout the pandemic was already rather scarce, the number of studies on this topic with a focus on democracies in decline is even more limited. In fact, the majority of studies on Central-Eastern European countries during COVID-19 have concentrated on the quality of democratic governance and how these societies continue on a steeper backsliding ride created by the pandemic. As it is certainly an important topic, this research will offer an additional aspect for further considerations, as changes in civil-military relations and the roles of the armed forces, being the generally under-researched issue, also contribute to developments in these countries.

Similarities in their status as latecomers to the Westernized game - Poland and Hungary went through major political transitions within a short period of time - since the collapse of

¹³⁹ Bundeswehr, "Auch die deutsche Fahne weht am 14. Juli in Paris," July 17, 2020, <https://www.bundeswehr.de/de/organisation/heer/aktuelles/auch-die-deutsche-fahne-weht-am-14-juli-in-paris-413672>.

¹⁴⁰ "France Honours Military and Heroes of Covid-19 Response at Bastille Day Parade," France 24, July 14, 2020, <https://www.france24.com/en/20200714-live-france-honours-heroes-of-covid-19-response-at-bastille-day-parade>.

¹⁴¹ Defensie, Ministerie van. "Krijgsmachten werken samen in strijd tegen coronavirus Caribisch gebied - Nieuwsbericht - Defensie.nl." Nieuwsbericht. Ministerie van Defensie, April 23, 2020. <https://www.defensie.nl/actueel/nieuws/2020/04/23/krijgsmachten-bundelen-krachten-in-strijd-tegen-coronavirus-caribisch-gebied>.

communist rule until their admission to the main leagues, requesting their armed forces to go through a rapid process of institutional reforms, in which the purposes of the militaries continued to be updated and converted in parallel with professionalization at a much faster rate and more externally imposed than the process among the Western societies. Due to this inorganic development, there has been an ongoing tendency of re-militarization in Central-Eastern Europe. In essence, it is a response to a combination of factors, including the emergence of perceived geopolitical and security challenges, the general trend of democratic sliding in the region, as well as an increasing urge for self-sufficiency at the crisis of global neoliberalism.¹⁴² Grzebalska & Maďarová argue that this remilitarization trend demonstrates itself via military spending, an increase in materials and personnel, at the same time promotional programs and grassroots-level paramilitary and vigilant activism.¹⁴³

Similarly to the remaining cases, the PAF and the HDF engaged extensively in logistical and medical roles, as well as a majority of security tasks - both armed forces have been the prominent forces in border control operations, indicating “a desire to control mobility across borders rather than within the state.”¹⁴⁴ The data shows that both militaries have been mobilized and deployed rather early in the first wave, but engagement gradually and steadily became more significant to support, or even to replace, the limited capacity of the parallel civilian system. On a more generalized level, both Polish and Hungarian governments served an intense securitization narrative of the pandemic which they paid with pluralism and transparency, and

¹⁴² Weronika Grzebalska and Zuzana Maďarová, “The Grand Return of the Troops: Militarization of COVID-19 and Shifting Military-Society Relations in Visegrad,” *Intersections* 7, no. 3 (December 29, 2021): 139–56, <https://doi.org/10.17356/ieejsp.v7i3.784>. 142.

¹⁴³ Ibid, 142.

¹⁴⁴ Opillard, Palle, and Michelis, “Discourse and Strategic Use of the Military in France and Europe in the COVID-19 Crisis.” 253

built up with the deeply penetrated militarized storyline from the migration crisis - in which both countries have declared a “war on illegal immigration.”

7.2.1 - The Polish Armed Forces

In the case of Poland, the PAF has traditionally enjoyed a generally high level of public trust throughout its history of struggle for national independence, which left an important mark in the society in the form of strong cultural militarism.¹⁴⁵ This strong culture, together with a heightened sense of perceived regional security threat and constant military modernization and increase in defense budget,¹⁴⁶ formed an opposite model of civil-military relations to the case of Germany and France.

Since October, 2015, politicians from PiS and Law and Justice parties have already occupied the securitization language over issues of immigration. In 2018, this position was made clear by Minister of Interior and Administration Joachim Brudziński, who refused the admission of refugee children from Aleppo on the ground of terrorist and epidemiological threats linked to migrants from outside of the EU.¹⁴⁷ The xenophobic parties in Poland has increased their representation rapidly between 2015 and 2018, since then, they have had great influence over migration policies and helped consolidate the physical and mental walls over the European border against migration.¹⁴⁸

In its history of military deployment, the PAF has started participating in international missions since 1953 with a supervising mission in Korea, then consistently carrying out logistical

¹⁴⁵ Grzebalska and Mađarová, “The Grand Return of the Troops.” 143.

¹⁴⁶ Grzebalska and Mađarová, “The Grand Return of the Troops.” 142.

¹⁴⁷ Katarzyna Sidło and Givi Gigitashvili, “Merchants of Fear. Discursive Securitization of the Refugee Crisis in the Visegrad Group Countries : EuroMeSCo – Euro-Mediterranean Research, Dialogue, Advocacy,” 2019, <https://www.euromesco.net/publication/merchants-of-fear-discursive-securitization-of-the-refugee-crisis-in-the-visegrad-group-countries/>.

¹⁴⁸ Ainhua Ruiz Benedicto and Pere Brunet, “Building Walls,” Transnational Institute, November 9, 2018, <https://www.tni.org/en/publication/building-walls>.

operations within the UN frameworks until 1995.¹⁴⁹ Before the collapse of the Soviet Union, Poland had been a significant supporter of the Warsaw Pact and therefore, operating a highly politicized military. The juncture in 1989 opened up new challenges to the PAF as an institution to convert and adapt to changing circumstances. Since then, the newly recognized defense role of the reformed PAF allowed further deployment into the security realm outside of the country. Besides fundamental reforms domestically, the institution took a critical turn at deployment on a NATO operation without the official status as a member, to law enforcement operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. With NATO membership, the PAF became a substantial contributor to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) coalition in Afghanistan and a leading force in the Multinational Division in the Iraq War,¹⁵⁰ as well as the anti-terrorism operation *Enduring Freedom* with international alliance in Afghanistan out of general support to the US' war on terror.¹⁵¹ Together with time, the responsibilities of the Polish Armed Forces kept expanding, from the struggle to democratize and fundamentally reform the institution to an absolute success in catching up with the scopes of military deployment of Western counterparts. Regardless of this seemingly smooth process of expanding military roles, scholars have pointed out that certain foreign deployments of the Polish Armed Forces were made possible without public consensus but out of elite consensus and limited issue salience to spark public debate about the matter. (Surprisingly,) the majority of Poles have been opposed to military deployment to Iraq in 2003, but elite decision on an alliance with the US had triumphed.¹⁵² As the citizenry is excluded from

¹⁴⁹ Ministry of National Defence, "Missions - Ministry of National Defence - Gov.PI Website," Ministry of National Defence, accessed June 2, 2022, <https://www.gov.pl/web/national-defence/missions>.

¹⁵⁰ Krisna Silawa, Achmed Sukendro, and Bayu Setiawan, "The Influence of Military Characteristics on Polish Foreign Policy," *International Journal of Recent Advances in Multidisciplinary Topics* 3, no. 2 (February 25, 2022): 86–91. 86.

¹⁵¹ Ministry of National Defence, "Missions - Ministry of National Defence - Gov.PI Website."

¹⁵² Fredrik Doeser, "When Governments Ignore Public Opinion in Foreign Policy: Poland and the Iraq Invasion," *European Security* 22, no. 3 (September 2013): 413–31, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09662839.2013.808190>.

the national defense dialogue, the Polish Armed Forces has also been deprived of power in decision making in terms of strategic deployment, meaning the Polish government enjoys full supremacy in the supposedly triangular relations.¹⁵³

The legal foundation for military deployment as an emergency solution is designated in Article XI of the Constitution of Poland 1997, describing three extraordinary circumstances to be invoked: martial law (Article 229), a state of emergency (Article 230) and a state of natural disaster (Article 232).¹⁵⁴ Article 232 of the Constitution does not directly describe which conditions qualify as a state of natural disaster, however, Article 3, point 2 of the Act on the State of Natural Disaster of 2002 has well classified the event of infectious human diseases into a form of natural catastrophe, to which the Armed Forces could be deployed in support of a civilian authority.¹⁵⁵ However, the Polish government ignored this sound legal basis with an established set of code of conduct and invoked the 2007 Act on Crisis Management instead, referring to COVID-19 in a dual state of epidemic threat and state of epidemic.¹⁵⁶ The important difference between constitutional provision and the 2007 provisions is that a state of natural disaster, according to the Polish Constitution, prevents the occurrence of a presidential election and its equivalents at the introduction of extraordinary measures, as well as for a period of 90 days after its conclusion.¹⁵⁷ With this strategic choice, Polish President Andrzej Duda succeeded

¹⁵³ Peter D. Feaver, "The Right to Be Right: Civil-Military Relations and the Iraq Surge Decision," *International Security* 35, no. 4 (April 1, 2011): 87–125, https://doi.org/10.1162/ISEC_a_00033.

¹⁵⁴ "The Constitution of the Republic of Poland," accessed June 1, 2022, <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/prawo/konst/angielski/kon1.htm>.

¹⁵⁵ Kancelaria Sejmu (2017). OBWIESZCZENIE MARSZAŁKA SEJMU RZECZYPOSPOLITEJ POLSKIEJ z dnia 15 września 2017 r. w sprawie ogłoszenia jednolitego tekstu ustawy o stanie klęski żywiołowej. <https://www.gov.pl/web/rcb/prawo>

¹⁵⁶ Eliza Rutynowska, Marek Tatała and Patryk Wachowiec (2020): Rule of law in Poland 2020: The Rule of Law Crisis in The Time of The COVID-19 Pandemic. Civil Development Forum. <https://for.org.pl/en/publications/for-reports/rule-of-law-in-poland-2020-the-rule-of-law-crisis-in-the-time-of-the-covid-19-pandemic>, p. 8

¹⁵⁷ Poland, "The Constitution of the Republic of Poland," accessed June 2, 2022, <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/prawo/konst/angielski/kon1.htm>.

in overcoming all obstacles created by the pandemic to win the election with several new legal provisions to skew the electoral games. As mentioned above, under the re-elected government, the PAF has been deployed under a heavily securitized language, with a combination xenophobic storyline from the migration crisis. The intense securitization narrative in COVID-19 containment in Poland also has a special twist, in which government officials are the main characters in the “fight” against the virus, capitalizing on the inevitable sacrifice of essential workers in a heavily feminized healthcare system.¹⁵⁸

The majority of deployment of the PAF belongs to the Territorial Defense Force (TDF) - the fifth military branch made of both full- and part-time soldiers, coming after Land Forces, Air Force, Navy and Special Forces. The deployment has been divided into two separate military operations with partial coverage of all missions: *Operation “Resilient Spring”* (and later *Continued Resilience*) by the TDF and *Operation “Shield”* dealing with border control tasks.¹⁵⁹ As the pandemic went downhill in Poland, the TDF stepped in to fulfill logistical and medical support on a wide geographical scope. On the peak of deployment during *Operation Resilient Spring* (March-April, 2020), the TDF deployed 12,000 troops in a variety of tasks, which made up 50% manpower of the TDF.¹⁶⁰ However, in the sequel operation, *Continued Resilience*, the TDF had also been deployed on security tasks in domestic joint patrol missions with the Polish

¹⁵⁸ Grzebalska and Maďarová, “The Grand Return of the Troops.” 144.

¹⁵⁹ Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, “Gotowość, odzew, ratunek - 4 miesiące walki Wojska Polskiego z epidemią koronawirusa - Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej - Portal Gov.pl,” Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, February 6, 2020, <https://www.gov.pl/web/obrona-narodowa/gotowosc-odzew-ratunek---4-miesiace-walki-wojska-polskiego-z-epidemia-koronawirusa>.

¹⁶⁰ Dowództwo Wojsk Obrony Terytorialnej, “Summary of „Resilient Spring” – an anti-crisis operation held by the Polish Territorial Defence Forces,” 27/042020, <https://media.terytorialsi.wp.mil.pl/informacje/503046/summary-of-resilient-spring-an-anti-crisis-operation-held-by-the-polish-territorial-defence-forces>.

police to enforce compliance with quarantine since October, 2020,¹⁶¹ expanding their activities beyond logistical and medical scopes. During this second wave, around 20,000 soldiers have been deployed among the entire PAF.¹⁶² As it is necessary for civilian institutions to submit a request for military assistance, the TDF responded to an overwhelmed society by creating a special application: “The Territorial Defense Forces Support Platform” dedicated to relieving bureaucratic weight and allowing straightforward submission of requests. Successful institutional applications may also receive updates on the progress of military assistance on the grounds.¹⁶³

The majority of security tasks conducted in Poland’s COVID-19 containment efforts belong to *Operation “Shield.”* As the name suggested, the goal of the operation is to establish a protective fence along the Polish borders, in which soldiers supported border guards in examining health requirements and controlled passenger flows into Polish territory.¹⁶⁴ While the operation ended on June 13th, 2020, border controls remained among the top priorities of the Polish Armed Forces due to geopolitical and security challenges as by the end of 2021, the chaotic situation along the borders with Belarus was deemed a “hybrid attack,”¹⁶⁵ triggering an immediate response of the deployment of almost 15,000 soldiers to support the Border Guard and the setup of over 180km of temporary fencing.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶¹ “Wojsko Polskie cały czas zaangażowane jest w walkę z COVID-19 - Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej - Portal Gov.pl,” Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, accessed June 1, 2022, <https://www.gov.pl/web/obrona-narodowa/wojsko-polskie-caly-czas-zaangazowane-jest-w-walke-z-covid-19>.

¹⁶² Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, “Wojsko Polskie cały czas zaangażowane jest w walkę z COVID-19 - Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej - Portal Gov.pl,” Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, July 4, 2021, <https://www.gov.pl/web/obrona-narodowa/wojsko-polskie-caly-czas-zaangazowane-jest-w-walke-z-covid-19>.

¹⁶³ Marek Pietrzak, “Wsparcie wojska zamówisz online,” October 27, 2020, <https://media.terytorski.wp.mil.pl/informacje/587620/wsparcie-wojska-zamowisz-online>.

¹⁶⁴ Joanna Tańska, “Jak Żołnierze Walczyli z COVID-19,” June 19, 2020, <http://www.polska-zbrojna.pl/home/articleshow/31462?t=Jak-zolnierze-walczyli-z-COVID-19#>.

¹⁶⁵ “Euronews, “Belarus Border Chaos a ‘Hybrid Attack Not a Migration Crisis’: VDL,” euronews, November 10, 2021, <https://www.euronews.com/2021/11/10/dozens-of-migrants-detained-in-poland-after-breaking-across-belarus-border>.

¹⁶⁶ “W Obronie Polskiej Granicy - Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej - Portal Gov.Pl,” Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, accessed June 1, 2022, <https://www.gov.pl/web/obrona-narodowa/w-obronie-polskiej-granicy>.

The process of collecting data for the case of Poland was among the most challenging of the 26 cases, due to the lack of transparency in reporting military activities. For example, how the Polish Armed Forces breached their law enforcement activities in October, 2020, never made it to the communications of the Ministry of Defense. Coincidentally, this is also around the time that the military police deployed hundreds of soldiers to selected churches during a popular protest against abortion bans,¹⁶⁷ questioning the neutral and apolitical features of the PAF.

7.2.2 - The Hungarian Defense Forces

In a similar light to the Polish case, the deployment of the HDF in response to the pandemic is in parallel with the overall decline of liberal democratic values in Hungary. Despite being a Member State of the EU - which is believed to prioritize and uphold democratic values as an international organization, Hungary passed an emergency legislation that allowed Prime Minister Viktor Orban to rule by decree until the end of the crisis. While legislators voted to end the government's emergency powers in July, 2020, commentators had identified several red flags to democratic freedom.¹⁶⁸ In June, 2020, the Hungarian government passed another bill that codifies the right of the government to declare state of health emergencies for undefined periods with minimal judicial and parliamentary opposition.¹⁶⁹

Different from the PAF, the HDF does not enjoy a high level of public trust - only 52% in 2017, due to "doubtful political reliability" and a lack of successful operation for national independence.¹⁷⁰ However, a grand securitization language throughout the year, especially

¹⁶⁷ Grzebalska and Mađarová, "The Grand Return of the Troops." p. 148.

¹⁶⁸ Orsolya Lehotai, "Hungary's Democracy Is Still Under Threat After Coronavirus Emergency Rule," Foreign Policy, July 17, 2020, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/07/17/hungary-democracy-still-under-threat-orban-state-public-health-emergency-decree/>.

¹⁶⁹ BBC, "Coronavirus: Hungary Votes to End Viktor Orban Emergency Powers - BBC News," June 16, 2020, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-53062177>.

¹⁷⁰ Grzebalska and Mađarová, "The Grand Return of the Troops." 143.

against migration, has helped (re)shaping the image of the HDF into a desirable, prestigious institution. In the 2015 National Consultation on Immigration and Terrorism, Viktor Orbán and his government identified migration and waves of refugees as “a new type of threat,”¹⁷¹ dehumanizing an entire social group - migrants and asylum seekers, while securitizing a cluster of connecting phenomena. In targeting migrants and refugees, the frequent frames describe this group as not only the bearers of economic threats, but also criminals who cross borders illegally and abusers of international law. The main characteristics attributed to asylum seekers fall into a wide, and at times self-contradicting, range of descriptions - such as welfare cheats, job stealers and terrorists.¹⁷² Within the cluster of securitized issues, Viktor Orbán had managed to declare war on any available obstacles: terrorism, the Left (including George Soros and pro-refugee NGOs), who are supported by a betraying Brussels and diplomats of the EU.¹⁷³ To clarify the agenda, one of the Hungarian government’s national consultations on relations with Brussels has been named ‘Stop Brussels!’¹⁷⁴ In relations to such a cluster and to distance themselves from Brussels and Western Europe, the Orbán government also attempted to solidify a national, cultural identity via the securitization of LGBT rights - which have been consistently portrayed as a threat to “the institution of marriage as the union of a man and a woman.”¹⁷⁵ The securitization language of several issues has been in use extensively in Hungary for more than a

¹⁷¹ Ákos Bocskor, “Anti-Immigration Discourses in Hungary during the ‘Crisis’ Year: The Orbán Government’s ‘National Consultation’ Campaign of 2015 - Ákos Bocskor, 2018,” *Sociology* 52, no. 3 (January 6, 2018): 551–68.. 560.

¹⁷² Ibid, 562.

¹⁷³ Kriszta Kovács, “Hungary and the Pandemic: A Pretext for Expanding Power,” *Verfassungsblog* (blog), November 3, 2021, <https://verfassungsblog.de/hungary-and-the-pandemic-a-pretext-for-expanding-power/>.

¹⁷⁴ Bocskor, “Anti-Immigration Discourses in Hungary during the ‘Crisis’ Year: The Orbán Government’s ‘National Consultation’ Campaign of 2015 - Ákos Bocskor, 2018.” 559.

¹⁷⁵ Family Law in Hungary. 2011. Thomson Reuters Practical Law. [https://uk.practicallaw.thomsonreuters.com/1-613-2107?transitionType=Default&contextData=\(sc.Default\)&firstPage=true](https://uk.practicallaw.thomsonreuters.com/1-613-2107?transitionType=Default&contextData=(sc.Default)&firstPage=true)

decade, solidifying political and social populism in the country and pushing democratic backsliding with every political move.

The Hungarian Fundamental Law from 2011 designated seven circumstances that can invoke a Special Legal Order: a state of national crisis (of danger of war - Article 48), a state of emergency (of violence threat and taking over of power - Article 49), a preventive defense situation (Article 50), an emergency response to terrorism (Article 51), an unforeseen intrusion (Article 52), and a state of danger (of a natural or industrial crisis - Article 53)¹⁷⁶. The Hungarian government decided on classifying the COVID-19 into “a state of danger” in the 487/2020. (XI.3.) Government Decree,¹⁷⁷ leading to the subsequent declaration of the Hungarian Defense Forces’ responsibility during an unprecedented Special Legal Order in relations to epidemiological preparedness in Government Decree 287/2020. (VI. 17.).¹⁷⁸ Interestingly enough, among the seven extraordinary circumstances for the declaration of a state of emergency, “a state of danger” is the only criteria without any direct indication of the military’s engagement in policy responses, but requiring military deployment in a separate government decree. What is equally notable is that this criteria of emergency describes natural or industrial threats, instead of the inherently public health-related feature of a pandemic - such an argument against the constitutionality of the Hungarian government’s declaration is, in fact, possible.

COVID-19 Deployment on Security Tasks: among the four countries in detailed analysis in this project, Hungary is the only case that did not resort to naming their military deployment,

¹⁷⁶Hungary, “Magyarország Alaptörvénye (2011. Április 25.) - Hatályos Jogszabályok Gyűjteménye,” accessed June 2, 2022, <https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=A1100425.ATV>.

¹⁷⁷ Hungary, “478/2020. (XI. 3.) Korm. Rendelet a Veszélyhelyzet Kihirdetéséről - Hatályos Jogszabályok Gyűjteménye,” accessed June 2, 2022, <https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=a2000478.kor>.

¹⁷⁸ Hungary, “287/2020. (VI. 17.) Korm. Rendelet Az Egészségügyi Készlet Állagának Megóvása Érdekében Szükséges Intézkedésekről - Hatályos Jogszabályok Gyűjteménye,” accessed June 2, 2022, <https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=a2000287.kor>.

but also the one that deployed military personnel to the most of security tasks. As a continuation of the highly normalized securitization narrative in Hungary, the storyline extended its hatred towards the enemy of the Left and then a provisional health concern, which has also been turned into an “invisible enemy.”

As the public health crisis became serious in Hungary, one of the first missions that the HDF got deployed on was security-focused - the responsibility of border control to protect the Hungarian people, regardless of how the pandemic was already putting pressure domestically. The border control missions stretched along the Hungarian boundaries with Serbia, Slovakia, Austria, Croatia and so on. Within the first month of these missions, Szilárd Németh - Secretary of State for Defense, re-emphasized its importance by indicating a link between illegal migration and the spread of the virus,¹⁷⁹ expressing the deeply intertwined security issues and justification for emergency deployment. This through-and-through operation to guard the borders during a public health, civilian crisis has later been financially supported by the European Commission using the “emergency assistance” proportion from the Internal Security Fund, resulting in two occasions of the EU’s coverage of 20 million euros of payments each to police and military officers on patrol mission on the Hungarian-Serbian border between January 1st, 2019 to August 31st, 2020, once in July, 2020¹⁸⁰ and in January, 2021.¹⁸¹ Another security task that the HDF fulfilled was law enforcement, in which soldiers conducted street patrol in 17 cities with the permission to detain the perpetrator of a crime before handing them to the police force. The

¹⁷⁹ MAGYAR HONVÉDSÉG, “Benkő Tibor: Nem félni kell a katonáktól, hanem éppen ellenkezőleg,” March 20, 2020, <https://honvedelem.hu/hirek/hazai-hirek/benko-tibor-nem-felni-kell-a-katonaktol-hanem-eppen-ellenkezoleg.html>.

¹⁸⁰ MAGYAR HONVÉDSÉG, “Megerősített határőrizet a magyar-szerb határszakaszon az Európai Unió támogatásával,” July 13, 2020, <https://honvedelem.hu/hirek/hazai-hirek/megeirosített-hatarorizet-a-magyar-szerb-hatarszakaszon-az-europai-unio-tamogatasaval.html>.

¹⁸¹ “MAGYAR HONVÉDSÉG, “Schulung von Bundeswehr-Angehörigen für Schnelltests,” May 2, 2021, <https://www.bundeswehr.de/de/organisation/streitkraeftebasis/aktuelles/schulung-von-bundeswehr-angehoerigen-fuer-schnelltests-5026716>.

purpose of such a domestic deployment has been to increase the sense of security of the population, the maintenance of public order and the visibility of the military forces.¹⁸²

At the same time, the HDF became responsible for an additional and exceptional security mission of taking over the operational commands of several institutions: hospitals¹⁸³ and major businesses. Within the newly established Action Group for the Security of Vital Hungarian Companies, in which military personnel took part to monitor and coordinate the work of the *chosen* company to ensure their smooth operation.¹⁸⁴ More than a hundred companies have been chosen to be taken over by military personnel, belonging to major industries such as energy, telecommunications, transport and healthcare, however, some of the institutions also include questionable takeover, such as a mint, an investment fund, at the same time the lack of the largest food suppliers of „Csányi-érdekeltségek” or „Mészáros Lőrinc Opus Global-érdekeltsége.”¹⁸⁵ On the surface, this bureaucratic move is justified as necessary for the efficient function of the whole Hungary via smooth operation of the most fundamental and necessary industries. While one can argue that it is beneficial in terms of economic expansion for the military, to find concrete evidence of economic benefits is not always straightforward. However, it is safe to argue that it is a part of a top-down, yet underground, movement with an ambition of expanding the Hungarian Defense Forces as it portrays the Hungarian soldiers as not only professional, but also competent in operating any institutions under great pressure that taking over leadership of

¹⁸²MAGYAR HONVÉDSÉG, “Fokozódik a katonai jelenlét,” March 20, 2020, <https://honvedelem.hu/hirek/hazai-hirek/fokozodik-a-katonai-jelenlet.html>.

¹⁸³ MAGYAR HONVÉDSÉG, “Több mint száz kórház élére került egyenruhás kórházparancsnok,” April 1, 2020, <https://honvedelem.hu/hirek/hazai-hirek/tobb-mint-szaz-korhaz-elere-kerult-egyenruhas-korhazparancsnok.html>.

¹⁸⁴MAGYAR HONVÉDSÉG, “Benkő Tibor: csütörtök reggel jelennek meg az érintett vállalatoknál a honvédelmi irányító csoportok,” March 18, 2020, <https://honvedelem.hu/hirek/hazai-hirek/benko-tibor-csutortok-reggel-jelennek-meg-az-erintett-vallalatoknal-a-honvedelmi-iranyito-csoportok.html>.

¹⁸⁵MAGYAR HONVÉDSÉG, “Benkő Tibor: a legfontosabb, hogy az ország megőrizze a működőképességét,” March 27, 2020, <https://honvedelem.hu/hirek/hazai-hirek/benko-tibor-a-legfontosabb-hogy-az-oroszag-megorizze-a-mukodokepesseget.html>.

institutions may become a repetitive instrument in the toolbox. Furthermore, the ambition of expanding the Hungarian Defense Forces can also be witnessed via a major legislative adjustment that creates economic incentives for young people to join the service.

CHAPTER VIII: FURTHER DISCUSSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The above cross-case and within-case analyses have shown a compilation of military responsibility patterns and distinctions among cases within two years of COVID-19. Further questions and considerations have then emerged from the research.

Are we over-depending on the military and the securitization language?

The pressing challenge of a sudden crisis has proven a multitude of functions capable of by the armed forces across the world, as well as how effective a securitization language could be in justifying emergency military deployment and other drastic measures.

In the first place, the pandemic has shown how incapable and unprepared the civilian healthcare system is in responding to the new challenge, how quickly it became overwhelmed in multiple parts of the world, including the most prepared countries. In every society, it is important to ask the question whether civilian institutions have adequate capacity and resilience to support the society because the armed forces, while capable, were created with their own purposes and responsibilities to fulfill. Among the European study cases, there have been occasions of double crises together with the pandemic, for example, Croatia experiencing both COVID-19 and two earthquakes,¹⁸⁶ Greece dealing with the cyclone Janos,¹⁸⁷ and Lithuania coping with hybrid warfare from Belarus,¹⁸⁸ at the Russian invasion of Ukraine, a potential traditional security crisis should be taken into consideration in managing military resources.

¹⁸⁶ Ministarstvo obrane, "Hrvatska vojska u potpori gradovima Petrinji i Sisku," MORH, December 31, 2020, <https://www.morh.hr/hrvatska-vojska-u-potpori-gradovima-petrinji-i-sisku/>.

¹⁸⁷ Γενικό Επιτελείο Στρατού, "Συνδρομή Του Στρατού Ξηράς Στην Αποκατάσταση Περιοχών Οι Οποίες Επλήγησαν Από Τον Κυκλώνα «Ιανός» | Army Gr," accessed June 2, 2022, <http://www.army.gr/el/ekdiloseis/syndromi-stratoy-xiras-stin-apokatastasi-periohon-oi-opoies-epligisan-kyklona-ianos-0>.

¹⁸⁸ Lietuvos kariuomenės, "Kariuomenės analitikai fiksuoja išaugusį dezinformacijos srautą ir suaktyvėjusią neigiamą Kinijos komunikaciją | Lietuvos kariuomenė," Kariuomenės analitikai fiksuoja išaugusį dezinformacijos srautą ir suaktyvėjusią neigiamą Kinijos komunikaciją | Lietuvos kariuomenė, December 14, 2021, <https://kariuomene.lt/kariuomenes-analitikai-fiksuoja-isaugusi-dezinformacijos-srauta-ir-suaktyvejusia-neigiama-kinijos-komunikacija/24462>.

Secondly, the securitization narrative in use extensively has indicated how easy it is to socially construct a threat while cutting the political debate short, without meaningful and active citizenry's participation in the dialogue. On the one hand, the citizenry has not been a part of a deliberation process to determine the language of storytelling, on the other hand, civilian-led securitization of the discourse has capitalized on public trust in the soldiers. There have been discussions of immediate budget cut on military activities after the re-stabilization of the society, however, the performance of readiness and resilience of the majority of the armed forces have demonstrated that once again, the military is a force for the good of the society and that it is necessary to maintain or increase budget for the security and defense industry to deal with "new threat."¹⁸⁹ The citizenry, once again, should be a part of the discussion and develop genuine interests towards the expanding responsibilities of the military.

Are we asking too much from the soldiers?

In review of such an expanding role, more and more is demanded of the soldiers as they are required to consistently perform and deliver, often unavoidably accepting increased risks during service in both physical sense and mental health due to the increasingly complex missions. To put on a uniform and to serve the society does not take away the stressful feelings and burdens associated with the nature of the job. During the pandemic, it is often forgotten that the armed forces are among groups that easily contract the virus due to their close proximity of living conditions and engagement in the "frontline" activities. The HDF, while deployed on their supporting missions, has partially compromised their operationality as by December, 2020, there

¹⁸⁹ Ana Lazaro, "EU Wants Funds for 'stronger Defence Policy' amid Coronavirus Threat | Euronews," May 14, 2020, <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2020/05/14/eu-wants-funds-for-stronger-defence-policy-amid-coronavirus-threat>.

were casualties within the barracks and almost 800 positive cases.¹⁹⁰ As a society, are we asking too much of the soldiers?

The soldier was not born ready. Their resilience and readiness to support a society have been built up by their training and experience in a separate and disciplinary environment. Their experience in this pandemic has also been the first time, the same as the civilian sphere, and their readiness for this new challenge needed to be built up as well. For example, on the logistical side, the soldiers of the Czech Army had to complete a one-day training organized by the Czech Red Cross to get acquainted to the basics of patient caring - from providing personal hygiene, serving food and communicating with the patient,¹⁹¹ and on the medical side, the soldiers of the Bundeswehr had to receive training from the German Red Cross before deployment in the Saarland district on COVID-19 testing, proper use of personal protective equipment and disinfection.¹⁹² The pandemic did not wait for anyone, resulting in the soldiers having no time to switch off to process mentally during their deployment, especially at the special supporting missions at retirement homes and healthcare facilities, where young soldiers and volunteer soldiers of the reserve forces were exposed to elderly patients, the conception of aging, illness and death, while some might be reminded of their own grandparents at home, who may have passed away from COVID-19 or under high risks.

Out of the aforementioned implications, the thesis reminds security studies scholar

¹⁹⁰ MAGYAR HONVÉDSÉG, "Koronavírus-járvány: a legfontosabb megőrizni a honvédség hadrafoghatóságát," December 15, 2020, <https://honvedelem.hu/hirek/koronavirus-jarvany-a-legfontosabb-megorizni-a-honvedseg-hadrafoghatosagat.html>.

¹⁹¹ Magdalena Dvořáková, "500 vojáků absolvuje kurz Českého červeného kříže," November 16, 2020, <https://acr.army.cz/informacni-servis/zpravodajstvi/500-vojaku-absolvuje-kurz-ceskeho-cerveneho-krize-224731/>.

¹⁹² Bundeswehr, "Schulung von Bundeswehr-Angehörigen für Schnelltests," May 2, 2021, <https://www.bundeswehr.de/de/organisation/streitkraeftebasis/aktuelles/schulung-von-bundeswehr-angehoerigen-fuer-schnelltests-5026716>.

Despite the preliminary results, there is still room for improvement on this project, starting from acknowledging potential weaknesses of the thesis and how to develop better for future research. In the first places, reliance on translation tools inevitably subjected the data collection process to internal biases of the tools themselves, and reliance on the reporting of the ministries of defense and their armed forces also subjected the data to the respective institutions' biases and hidden agenda - however, it is an unavoidable obstacle of doing research on security, military-related topic. Secondly, among the study cases, there are cases with considerably many more entries and records than others, which may also undermine the comparability among the cases. For future research, the existing data could be improved with further triangulation from news outlets and official statements from the governments to balance out biases and increase the number of entries, at the same time capable of expanding the research to study the effect of securitization narrative on the media, as well as to understand more of a public opinion on military deployment. Furthermore, to quantify the data and establish a full-fledged research with fuzzy sets from such variables under Qualitative Comparative Analysis may also significantly improve the findings.

CHAPTER IX: CONCLUSIONS

Out of the data collected from 26 EU Member States on how military resources have been in use, a general pattern of military deployment has been uncovered in a systematic manner. The majority of the EU armed forces have been engaged to fulfill tasks in four spheres of responsibilities: (1) logistics, (2) medicals, (3) MHPSS and (4) security. Despite this general pattern, how armed forces engaged in security tasks in pandemic containment in individual cases differ in terms of intensity, as well as the specific security mission. After analyzing four cases on the within-case level analysis, the GAF, FAF, PAF and HDF split into military responses under liberal democracies and under backsliding democracies. Besides the importance of political systems, legal restrictions set the German and the French cases apart from the Polish and Hungarian cases based on the lack of extensive security operations and the well-regulated separation between the civilian and the military sphere. Additionally, the degree of normalization of the securitization narratives in the Polish and Hungarian societies also made it easier to justify emergency measures and the engagement of the PAF and HDF in security responsibilities, although there are still individual differences within each case. The essence of the thesis boils down to the reminders that the traditional description of the civil-military relationship should be understood more adequately in a three-way interaction within two spheres: the citizenry and the government within the civilian sphere and the armed forces in the military sphere. It is important to engage the citizenry and the military into the political discussion regarding military deployment to practice civilian control not only onto the military, but also on the militarization discourse to determine the appropriate response mechanisms via an open and autonomous deliberation process.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - The Roles of EU Member States' Armed Forces between January, 2020 to December, 2021

	Logistics	Medicals	MHPSS	Security
Austria			Music Performance	Border Control Infrastructure Protection Law Enforcement
Belgium			Social/Psychosocial Support	
Bulgaria				Border Control Institutional Takeover Law Enforcement
Croatia				
Czech Republic			Music Performance Social/Psychosocial Support	Border Control Fight Disinformation Law Enforcement
Denmark				Fight Disinformation
Estonia				Border Control
Finland				Border Control Law Enforcement
France			Social/Psychosocial Support	Border Control (Mayotte) Infrastructure Protection
Germany			Music Performance Social/Psychosocial Support	Fight Disinformation
Greece				Border Control
Hungary			Social/Psychosocial Support	Border Control Fight Disinformation Infrastructure Protection Institutional Takeover Law Enforcement
Ireland			Social/Psychosocial Support	
Italy				Law Enforcement
Latvia				Border Control Fight Disinformation Law Enforcement
Lithuania				Border Control Fight Disinformation Infrastructure Protection Law Enforcement

Luxembourg			Music Performance	
Malta			Social/Psychosocial Support	Border Control Infrastructure Protection Law Enforcement
Netherlands			Music Performance	Border Control Infrastructure Protection Law Enforcement
Poland			Social/Psychosocial Support	Border Control Law Enforcement
Portugal			Social/Psychosocial Support	
Romania				Border Control Law Enforcement
Slovakia				Border Control Law Enforcement
Slovenia			Social/Psychosocial Support	Border Control
Spain				Border Control Law Enforcement Infrastructure Protection
Sweden				Border Control Fight Disinformation

APPENDIX B - Sources of Data Collection for twenty-six cases between January, 2020 to December, 2021

Austria	https://www.bundesheer.at/aktuell/index.shtml	Latvia	http://mod.gov.lv/ https://www.mk.gov.lv/en/articles?category%5B125%5D=125&created%5Bmin%5D=-..-.-.-&created%5Bmax%5D=-..-.-.- =
Belgium	https://www.belgium.be/en/news	Lithuania	https://kam.lt/ https://kariuomene.lt/
Bulgaria	https://www.mod.bg/bg/news.php https://www.vma.bg/%D0%9D%D0%9E%D0%92%D0%98%D0%9D%D0%98-2.html	Luxembourg	https://www.armee.lu/covid-19
Croatia	https://www.morh.hr/kategorija/vijesti-najave-priopcenja/	Malta	https://homeaffairs.gov.mt/en/media/Press_Releases/Pages/PR.aspx https://www.facebook.com/Arm

			edForcesOfMaltaafm
Czech Republic	https://www.army.cz/scripts/detail.php?pgid=304&conn=9687&pg=168	Netherlands	https://www.defensie.nl/
Denmark	https://www.fmn.dk/da/nyheder/nyhedsarkiv/	Poland	https://www.gov.pl/web/obrona-narodowa
Estonia	https://www.kaitseministeerium.ee/et https://www.kriis.ee/en/node/119	Portugal	https://www.defesa.gov.pt/pt/comunicacao/noticias/Paginas/default.aspx
Finland	https://puolustusvoimat.fi/etusivu	Romania	https://www.mapn.ro/
France	https://archives.defense.gouv.fr/operations/territoire-national/france-metropolitaine/operation-resilience/breves	Slovakia	https://www.mosr.sk/41702-sk/archiv-tlacovych-sprav/?page=26
Germany	https://www.bundeswehr.de/de/aktuelles/meldungen https://www.mod.mil.gr/?tpent	Slovenia	https://www.slovenskavojska.si/
Greece	http://www.army.gr/els https://www.mod.mil.gr/?tpent	Spain	https://emad.defensa.gob.es/prensa/noticias/?__locale=es
Hungary	https://honvedelem.hu/hirek/hazai-hirek.html?page=243	Sweden	https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/sv/sok/#!/all?query=tema:%22Coronaviruset%20och%20F%C3%B6rsvarsmakten%22
Ireland	https://www.military.ie/en/#1 https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/departments-of-defence/#		
Italy	https://www.difesa.it/SMD/Avvenimenti/Coronavirus/ForzeArmateeoperazioni/rientroitaliani/WuhanCina/Pagine/coronavirus/ForzeArmateeoperazioni/news.aspx		

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