



Liberal Arguments on Defence and Security

How to Protect our Values and
Meet Public Expectations



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Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Executive Summary | 4 |
| Introduction | 5 |
| Part 1 Understanding Security | 7 |
| What is Security? | 8 |
| Safety versus Security | 8 |
| Important Aspects of Security | 9 |
| Security and Liberal Values | 13 |
| A Very Special Market | 22 |
| Summary | 23 |
| Part 2 Public Attitudes towards Security Policies | 24 |
| Exploring Public Attitudes | 25 |
| Overview | 26 |
| Survey Results: Belgium | 28 |
| Survey Results: Lithuania | 31 |
| Survey Results: Hungary | 36 |
| Country Comparison | 38 |
| Summary | 41 |
| Part 3 When Security Policies Become Important to Everyone: the Example of the Baltic States | 42 |
| How Security Policies Matter | 43 |
| A Story from Lithuania | 44 |
| A Story from Estonia | 45 |
| Summary | 46 |

Executive Summary

Liberal arguments on security and defence need to be firmly based on liberal core values. Politicians have to deliver solutions to threats that are positively perceived among citizens, without sacrificing those values. Our discussion and research have yielded several insights that set out the framework for further elaboration on liberal answers to such challenges.

- **Strong theoretical base for liberal arguments on defence and security**

Liberal values sometimes seem to contradict security demands. We argue that, contrary to this perception, the protection of liberal values is actually essential for security. Liberals need to provide security, but security requires liberal values. Moreover, modern security politics are human security politics. They put the individual at the centre of their considerations, just as liberals do.

- **Empirical evidence of public attitudes towards security and defence**

We have not only scanned the openly available Eurobarometer and European Social Survey data, but also interviewed 3000 people in 3 countries in order to learn more about security political attitudes. We have found that Europeans in general feel fairly secure in their countries and in Europe as a whole. Even if they are afraid of different threats, they agree on more intense and more effective defence and security cooperation among EU member states.

- **When security policies become important to everyone: The case of the Baltic States**

Political competition often takes place in the field of domestic politics. Elections in European states are usually not decided over security and defence policies. However, the example of the Baltic States after the Russian aggression in Ukraine shows that this can change rapidly. Liberal parties in Estonia and Lithuania had to react quickly and eventually managed to run successful electoral campaigns with their defence policies.

Each section of this publication is subsequently summarised by a list of conclusions.

Introduction

Europeans had to realise in recent years that their security is being shaken up by a series of troubling developments. The threat of conventional war has re-emerged with Russia challenging the territorial integrity of Ukraine. The fear of terror has grown in the face of an increasing frequency of terrorist attacks. Stability around the continent has severely decreased with civil war and state failure on the rise in the Middle East and North Africa. At the same time, traditional alliances and security guarantees are being put into question. The newly elected American president only reluctantly confirmed his commitment to the transatlantic alliance, while the largest European military power, the United Kingdom, is likely to exit from the EU without a clear agreement on future security cooperation.

Against this backdrop, it is not surprising, according to a recent Eurobarometer poll, that Europeans expect the European Union to engage in stronger security politics. Potential liberal voters expressed an equally high desire for security as others. But in contrast to other respondents, they are more concerned about the restriction of fundamental rights and freedoms in Europe. This may suggest that liberal parties can live up to the expectations of their electorate by pronouncing security political positions that are distinct from competing political groups. But what makes liberal security politics special? How do liberal values correspond with the notion of security? And what can we learn from liberal voters' expectations?

The European Liberal Forum together with the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom undertook the endeavour to explore these guiding questions. In an effort to explore public attitudes towards security and defence, we defined some interesting questions and posed them to citizens in Belgium, Hungary and Lithuania: Would you be willing to pay higher taxes for your country's military? Would you support conscription if it meant that your child had to serve in the military? How important is NATO for your country?

The results and main findings are presented in this paper. They do only reflect a limited selection of countries and topics and thus do not serve as a valid basis for practical recommendations. However, they do provide a starting point for lively discussion.

In Part I, Václav Bacovský summarises the main arguments that were exchanged during our workshop discussions. He explores how liberal values correspond with security politics and stresses that the notion of security has shifted from a narrow, national definition to a broader individual one, commonly referred to as 'human security'. In this way of thinking, the individual must be understood as both the most important unit to protect, as well as a potential source of threat. That means that modern security politics place the individual at the centre of their considerations, just as liberalism does in principle. This being said, it becomes clear why liberal arguments are so important in security politics today.

In Part II, Péter Krekó and Csaba Molnár analyse the results of our survey and present their main findings. They summarise that there is strong support for more intense European military cooperation across all three countries. Potential liberal voters are among the most supportive of active defence politics. However, they also explain that Lithuanians, Belgians and Hungarians perceive different threats to their security and accordingly wish for different security political approaches on the EU level.

The political debates as well as electoral campaigns in European countries are usually dominated by domestic topics like social security, healthcare, education and infrastructure. Foreign and security politics are often shaped predominantly by experts and elites. This can be seen as an indicator for a strong perception of security and trust in the government. But this situation can rapidly change when a new threat emerges. This is why we take a closer look at the Baltic States after the Russian aggression of 2014. In Part III, Annika Arras and Renaldas Vaisbrodas explain how their parties in Estonia and Lithuania reacted to the new security demands.

By providing a theoretical framework for liberal security policies, an overview of security political attitudes across Europe and two case studies that show how liberal parties may rely on their security agenda in campaigning, this paper strives to motivate liberal stakeholders to engage more actively in security and defence politics.

Enjoy the read!



Part 1

Understanding Security

Václav Bacovský



What is Security?

Given that security is often used as the main argument for justifying wars, massive reallocation of public funds, and the curtailing of some of our liberties, one could expect that there is a relative clarity and consensus on the definition of what security is. Nevertheless, when researching the notion of security, the very first striking finding is the absence of a clear definition. Most scholars, including those teaching in ever more popular Security Studies programmes, allude to the ambiguity of the significance of resistance to a simple definition.

Since the purpose and method of this paper is not academic (creating a deeper knowledge), but rather pragmatic (fostering dialogue between citizens and decision makers and their mutual understanding) and exploratory (looking for the relationship of security to liberal values), let us begin with the basic understanding of security, as defined in the Oxford Dictionary, where 'security' is the state of:

- 1) being free from danger or threat;
- 2) feeling safe, stable, and free from fear or anxiety.

Security is associated to an ideal state of the absence of any threats (such as terrorism, armed conflicts, subversion, natural disasters, etc.). Some threats cannot be controlled or totally eliminated, but we can adopt policies and measures that minimise the consequences of potential threats and hazards. It is hence more useful to define security as resistance or protection from harm or damage caused by such threats.

However, such a definition does not state what the subject of harm is (what must be protected). Protection of human lives, the quality of life, political independence, territorial integrity may be the first examples that come to mind. These can be broadly summed up as assets or, even better, as values.

For the purpose of this paper, we can use the definition of security by David A. Baldwin as:

“a low probability of damage to acquired values.”¹

Since security is a very broad term and can refer to a wide variety of different situations under different circumstances, it is helpful to use further adjectives to clarify the meaning.

- Security for whom?
- Protection of what values?
- Security in what time span?
- At what price?

Safety versus Security

Unlike in other European languages, in the English language there are two very similar words: 'security' and 'safety'. Semantically,

¹ Baldwin David (1997): The Concept of Security. Review of International Studies (1997), 23, 5-26. Available online at: [https://www.princeton.edu/~dbaldwin/selected%20articles/Baldwin%20\(1997\)%20The%20Concept%20of%20Security.pdf](https://www.princeton.edu/~dbaldwin/selected%20articles/Baldwin%20(1997)%20The%20Concept%20of%20Security.pdf)

safety relates to hazards (rather than threats). Random incidents are unwanted incidents that happen as a result of one or more coincidences (car accident) or properties of a system. Security is then the protection against intended incidents (threats). Such incidents happen due to a result of a deliberate and planned act (e.g. criminality, terrorism, international conflicts, etc.). Security is much more morally laden than safety (as it deals with the limits of acceptable human behaviour).

In common language usage, both words partly overlap. In politics, both safety and security are the subject of different policies. Safety, among others, is related to consumer protection, different kinds of standard regulations which assure that people are not injured in the workplace, poisoned in restaurants, hit by a train, and which assure that Nature and the environment are not polluted or damaged by humans.

Security is clearly linked to policies that are related to the legitimate use of violence and coercion – either as the ultimate means of defence of national integrity against foreign aggressors (army) or as a tool for the preservation of order, ensuring law enforcement, protecting property rights, combating criminality (police).

The subject of this paper is primarily focused on security (rather than safety).

Important Aspects of Security

From National to Human Security

During the Cold War, security was primarily understood as the protection of national and territorial sovereignty. The end of the Cold War led to a new definition of security that abandons the narrow national sovereignty focus. It concerns not only a state and its values, but primarily humans as individuals and their values that are at the forefront. Territoriality is not limited to a nation state or regional sphere of interest, but the global sphere. At the same time, the new concept of ‘human security’ (or ‘cooperative security’) includes a wider scope of threats: these are not only of a political-military nature, but also societal, cultural and environmental. For liberals, it is crucial to note that while national states and the alliances among them are still the crucial players in providing global security, it is the individual, his or her life, that is firmly at the core of the concept of human security as the main subject of protection.

Absolute Security does not Exist

The definition above does not refer to an absence of damage, but rather to its low probability. That is for a reason. An absolute protection of all values is not possible. The absolute state of security does not exist, no matter what policies we design and implement and no matter at what cost.

We live in a world with scarce resources. People have different interests, which lead to competition and conflict. People can profit from harming others. So while protection of human lives and their

values is at the heart of security, it is the same people (either individual or organised groups) that are simultaneously the main threat to other people. It is not possible to control the intentions and deeds of all people, either in the boundaries of a state and even less so globally.

We can only design policies that create either positive motivation (incentives) or discourage people (deterrent measures) from doing wrong. Such policies are intended to provide security by lowering the probability that some kind of attack or aggression will occur.

There are also other threats, such as natural disasters, which are completely out of our control, and can only be partly predicted. Notwithstanding, we can design and adopt policies (such as building regulations) that can again lower the potential harm.

Security in this sense cannot be absolute and hence is not a binary phenomenon (absolute security versus no security at all). It is better to consider security as a spectrum. This is important when we later discuss the relation of security to other values.

Security is Objective, Subjective and Intersubjective

In the extreme case of war or serious violence, security (or the lack of it) is a very tangible phenomenon: physical injury to people, the infrastructure and Nature is hence objective (existing outside the mind of an observer). Apart from extreme occurrences of violence, security becomes a much more subjective issue. As we have shown above in the Oxford definition – security is commonly understood not only as the protection of values, but also as peace of mind and the absence of fear, all of which are very subjective categories.

Our sense of security is defined by the way we perceive the threats around us. But subjective threats really matter only as long as they are shared and become part of the public discourse. This is the intersubjective dimension, that has been pointed out by constructivist schools in international relations. In their understanding, security is more than a mixture of objective and subjective aspects. The notion of security in daily life is a result of human interaction and is primarily a speech act. It is the way we think about security, the language and metaphors we use, the way we define and describe the threats – all that is occurring in the minds of people. However, since it is shared and subject to constant interpretation, it is by nature intersubjective.

If we want to measure and analyse security, it is necessary to work both with hard facts (such as the occurrence of violent deaths and material damage), as well as with public perceptions and with the public discourse.

The media and political elite play a crucial role in shaping the public discourse. Unfortunately, the dynamics of media reporting (negative news impresses more than positive news) and the rise of populists riding the wave of the politics of fear inevitably lead to a disproportional perception of threats. While the objective and intersubjective dimensions are never binary (no security at all versus absolute security), the subjective perception of security may have such a dynamic. If people feel threatened, they inevitably call for short-term reassuring solutions, which in the final outcome may turn out to be ineffective or counter-productive. It is also important to note that some level of disproportionality holds for the perception of security policies and measures as well, i.e. the perceived efficacy of security

measures is sometimes different from the actual security provided by those measures. The presence of security measures may evoke a sense of security, however false such a feeling might be (subjectively, we may feel more secure while the real effect may be inverse).

Security Dilemma

When analysing security policies, it is helpful to keep in mind that providing security is a typical example of a collective action problem. The problem lies in the mismatch between individual and collective logic and between short-term and long-term thinking.

It is the personal interest of a vast majority of people to live without violence. However, since there is permanent cognitive uncertainty whether everyone has the same intention, or if an individual will not abuse the advantage of being the aggressor among peaceful others, it may lead all individuals independently to acquire a gun to decrease their vulnerability towards a potential aggressor. Such a step may increase their perception of security. That may be very short-lived, if we consider that step from the viewpoint of collective action. If everyone gets a gun, everybody around becomes more dangerous to their own neighbours. That can lead to further armament or building of high fences or many other measures. However, ultimately the security dilemma has not been solved. If everybody follows the same logic, we may end up in a less secure environment compared to the previous (unarmed) state.

As Baldwin writes: “The most rational policies for security in the long run may differ greatly from those for security in the short

run. In the short run, a high fence, a fierce dog, and a big gun may be useful ways to protect oneself from the neighbours. But in the long run, it may be preferable to befriend them.”²

The only solution is a collective agreement. That is actually the basis of why we have state institutions. By designating a third party to be in charge of providing security, we may lower the equilibrium of armament in society and yet increase the objective and perceived security.

The challenge, however, is that the third party may abuse its role. So there must be a high level of trust in society to reach a collective agreement and stick to it. Without trust in our institutions, we may be in an endless suboptimal state of low security. That is exactly the case of the gun control debate in the US. Since there is a long tradition of distrust towards the State (government), which is even enshrined in the 2nd Amendment of the US Constitution, collective action is very difficult to achieve. The suboptimal state is cemented by a highly organised narrow interest group (such as the National Rifle Association) and by the financial dependence of decision makers on money flowing from the arms industry.

The solution to the security dilemma is partly counter-intuitive to voters (who prefer short-term solutions), hence it might be difficult to overturn public opinion. That was precisely the situation in Europe during the refugee crisis, when some states decided to opt for the short-term solution of building a fence around their border,

² Baldwin David (1997): The Concept of Security. Review of International Studies (1997), page 9

which only put more burden on neighbouring countries and led to a domino effect. Despite most politicians knowing that the solution to the problem was on a European level, they fell prey to the domestic demand for quick national measures.

The security dilemma hence does not end at the borders of national states. How should states secure themselves against other national states? Should they invest in armaments? The armament race during the Cold War was another example of an unresolved security dilemma which was later corrected by international treaties.

To overcome the security dilemma, it is important to build institutions that enable mutual contact, exchange of information and mutual understanding. That is why we have diplomacy. That is why the building of the EU institution is crucial for our security in Europe. That is also why trade and any form of voluntary cooperation that builds mutual understanding contribute to peaceful solutions.

International trade, and the mutual interdependencies resulting from it, make international security a non-zero-sum game.

This is also why insisting on the importance of national sovereignty is not the solution, but instead the problem. In the highly interdependent world, it is more appropriate to speak about pooled or shared sovereignty. No state can be secure by bowling alone and without cooperating with others.

Paradox of Security

An old Roman proverb states: *si vis pacem, para bellum* (when you want peace, you prepare for war). In other words, if we want to live without violence, we must be ready to use it ultimately. Such is the brutal logic of this world. That follows from the realistic assumption that there might be people, organisations and states with evil intentions, ready to use violence. People and their values are the most important assets to be protected, yet at the same time, they also pose a threat.

The other paradox is the following: there is no permanent solution to the security dilemma. No matter how we try to overcome it, the solutions (be it technologies or institutions) may turn into future problems and threats. The military is here to protect us, it can also abuse its position and use violence for the advancement of its own interests. Artificial intelligence and robots may fight instead of humans, but they can ultimately also be used against mankind.

That is why a world without arms, conflict and war is not realistic in the foreseeable future. This is also why liberals, no matter how much we loathe violence and coercion, have to deal with the security policies that are based on them.

Are We Getting Increasingly Secure?

The really difficult question – given that security has both an objective and subjective dimension – is whether our world is getting increasingly secure. There have been no major wars among great powers and developed states since 1945 and, even if we witnessed the bloody conflict in the Balkans in 1990, the fact that no army has crossed the Rhine since WWII is a great achievement for Europe and attests to the success of European integration.

How much of a conclusion we can draw from the ‘long peace’? Was it not just a matter of luck that the Cold War did not end up in the Nuclear Armageddon? In his book, *The Better Angels of Our Nature*, Steven Pinker delivers comprehensive statistical data on the overall decline of violence over the centuries. Tribal raiding and feuding, violent personal crime, barbaric practices such as slavery and torture-executions, and violence on smaller scales such as lynching, rape, spousal abuse, beating, hate crimes, and cruelty to animals – these are not only morally absolutely unacceptable (which was not always the case), but also relatively rare in today’s world. But even if this development might be very flattering to liberals, since Pinker comes up with the hypothesis that it is the influence of enlightenment, international trade, evolution of democracy and respect of human rights – all of which are dear to liberals – we cannot draw any conclusion about the improbability of any mass scale conflict in the future. Weapons of mass destruction are still around and that will not change any time soon. That is another reason why it is important to devote our time to thinking about security and the values we want to protect.

Security and Liberal Values

There is no doubt that most politicians, regardless of the political ideology, would agree that providing security is a priority of the State, especially if imminent threats are looming. Liberals are no different. It is rather the more nuanced relationship of security to other values that reveals some differences among ideologies. After all, except for the very extreme case of war, providing security is not an absolute value which always has priority over all other values under all circumstances and at all costs. In real political life, resources are limited and providing security is just one of many political goals. Politicians instead are confronted with questions such as:

“How much should we spend on defence, given that the budget is tight and voters rather appreciate spending on welfare policies?”

and

“How much does it increase our security to allow for more surveillance of our citizens, given that security is ultimately not only a physical protection of our life, but also equally a protection of our values, and freedom and privacy are core values in our liberal democracies?”

and there is a host of other dilemmas in international relations related to security, such as:

“How much risk and instability can we afford when we pursue and defend human rights abroad? Is it better to bear with

a dictator who is predictable and guarantees a certain level of stability, or do we support opposition efforts that in the long term can align better with our values, but in the short term lead to more instability?”

These are some of the questions that arise from the fact that security has many aspects and is always in a tight relationship with other values. Let us explore this relationship of security, specifically with values, concepts and institutions based on such values which are crucial for liberals: individual freedom, freedom of speech, freedom of association, freedom of movement, human rights, liberal democracy and rule of law, and free markets.

Individual Freedom

The fact that every person has the right to make decisions about himself/herself and is free to pursue own happiness is at the very heart of liberal ideology. John Stuart Mill defined the borders of personal freedom in his famous ‘harm principle’. It defines precisely when (and only when) it is legitimate to use physical force or moral coercion to limit personal freedom. “That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others.”³ It follows then that if someone’s freedom is grossly violated by force (an aggressive person is beating another person in the street), it is justifiable that someone else might use adequate coercion to defend the right of the attacked person. For practical reasons,

to prevent a tit-for-tat spiral of violence, it is better to designate a higher agent (a third party) to ensure that the realm of personal freedom is not breached. So if all individuals should refrain from violence and coercion and only this higher agent has the right to use violence under strictly defined circumstances to defend the rights of individuals, we can overcome the security dilemma.

That is the legitimate reason for a government (in classical liberal thinking, it is known as a minimal state) to be primarily obliged to protect individual rights. Classic liberal thinkers usually also add national defence as a form of protection against foreign invasion and the enforcement of rule of law as the core tasks of a minimal state.

However, it is a matter of dispute, especially between classic liberals and libertarians, whether a government is necessary to defend individual rights, or if the voluntary cooperation of citizens and free markets can provide a stable solution to provide security (such as private police). Some libertarians (such as David Freedman) would argue that free markets can provide for that. However, most liberals argue that the role of free markets is very limited and cannot overcome the security dilemma (a market of competing private police agencies could lead to less security for all).

Nevertheless, the need for protection of individual freedom constitutes the case for the legitimate existence of the military and police force. There is also a good reason why it is deep in liberal instincts to be wary of both institutions. The police and military can abuse the monopoly of violence – either for personal motives or perhaps even for higher political goals (such as military coup d’états). It is crucial then that a society of free individuals has the tools of control and oversight. One of the most legitimate control

³ John Stuart Mill (1859). *On Liberty*. Oxford University. pp. 21–22

mechanisms is parliamentary oversight and a strong system of justice that will ensure that individuals are not on the weaker side.

Other Limits of Personal Freedom

The need to designate higher agents with a monopoly on violence (police and military) posits another dilemma for liberals. Should work in such institutions be fully voluntary, or is there a legitimate case for the government to limit personal freedom in the name of some higher collective interest?

Specifically, is there a legitimate case for conscription? Does the legitimate existence of a government with its coercive institutions constitute the duty of citizens to serve in them? Serving in the military can lead to physical injury, ultimately even to the loss of life. Alternatively, the individual may stay alive himself, but may be coerced to kill another person and hence suffer serious psychological damage.

Technological progress and the end of the Cold War led to the downscaling of most armies. Conscription was abolished in a growing number of states. Professionalisation of armies was on the increase. However, the downscaling was based on the hopeful assumption that territorial defence would no longer be needed. This assumption has changed dramatically over the past few years, especially in the light of the Russian aggression in Ukraine.

This may cause liberal parties to be confronted with the question of conscription. Is there a moral obligation to serve the State of which I am citizen as a kind of reciprocation for the service of the State in defending my liberties? Is such a duty superior to any religious belief or conscientious objection? Is the willingness to defend

liberal democracy and its values (with freedom at the forefront) the ultimate confession to the liberal creed?

Should only men be obliged to serve, or women as well? Is the equality of duties the most important thing? Or should it primarily be a pragmatic decision led by the functionality of an army? Can smart technologies (such as of robotics and artificial intelligence) in the future help us again to scale back the need for general conscription? Or will sheer numbers still matter for the deterrence of other possible aggressors? Last but not least, does general conscription or some other form of organised reserve duties lead to the increased resilience of a society?

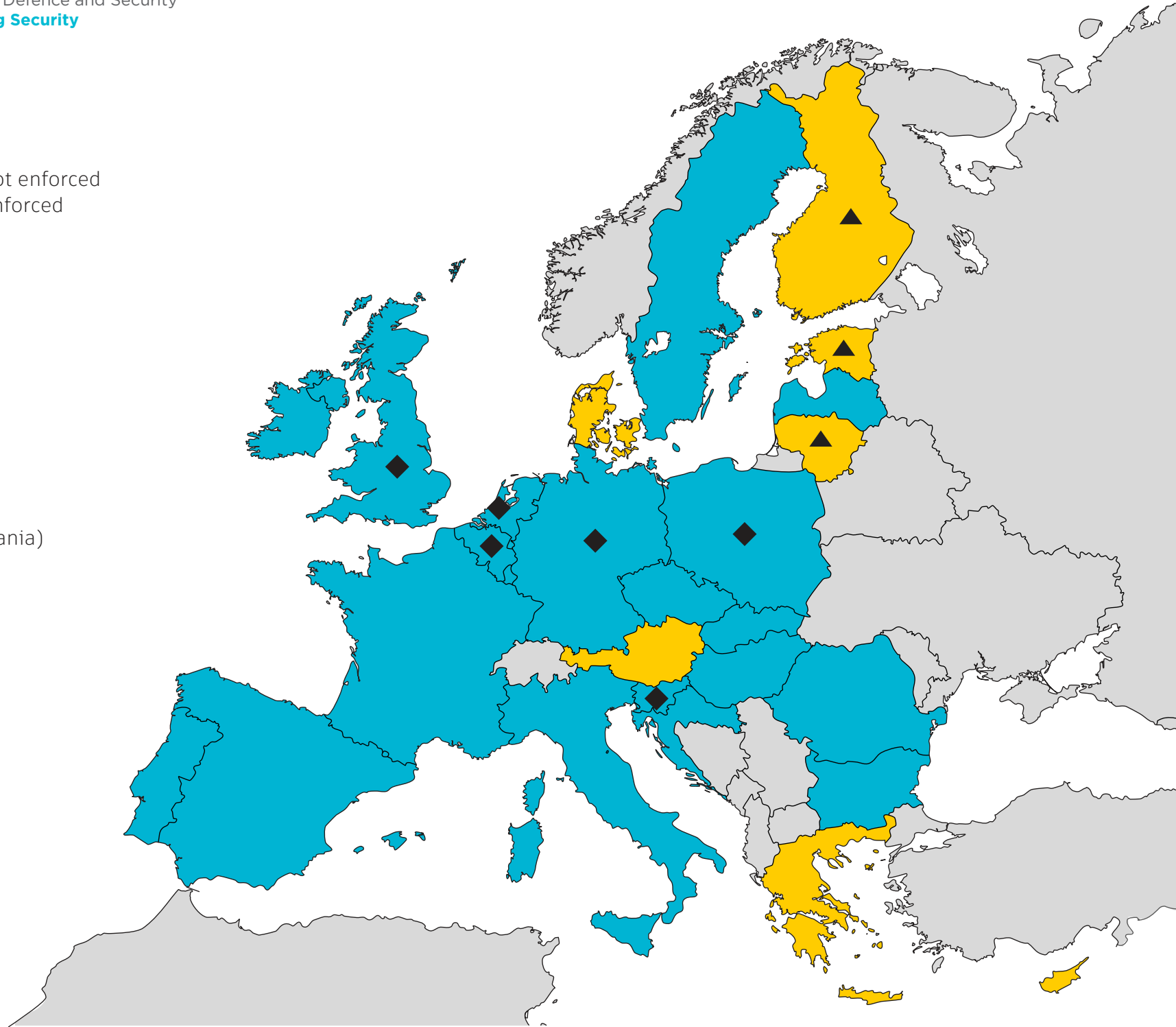
These dilemmas may shape some of the policy choices. These issues might be very divisive for society as a whole, and even more so for liberal politicians and voters.

Conscription in the EU:

- Conscription currently not enforced
- Conscription currently enforced

Position of Liberal Parties:

- ◆ **Opposing conscription**
 - Liberal Democrats (UK)
 - OpenVLD (Belgium)
 - D66 (the Netherlands)
 - FDP (Germany)
 - SMC (Slovenia)
 - Nowoczesna (Poland)
- ▲ **Supporting conscription**
 - Liberal Movement (Lithuania)
 - Reform Party (Estonia)
 - Swedish People's Party of Finland (Finland)



Freedom of Speech and Security

Freedom to think and speak freely is the core fundamental of western civilisation and one of the main drivers of our progress and wealth creation. The fact that anybody can speak out and criticise any idea, any person, especially those who are in power, is of one of the main control mechanisms in a functioning liberal democracy. Free and independent media play the unofficial role of fourth power in modern democracies.

There is, however, also a flip side: free speech can be used with ill intentions and abused as an effective tool to undermine security. Individuals, organisations and states can spread lies, disinformation and hatred. In democratic societies, where the media is free from government control, this can feed internal conflicts and chaos (and hence increase the overall vulnerability of a society).

Propaganda, fake news and hatred are very dangerous. However, we should be cautious not to fall into the trap of criminalising them. Historically, there were many specific cases and disputes that shaped the borders of freedom of speech. With the exception of a few states where the denial of the Holocaust is a criminal act, it is only libel, defamation and incitement towards violence which are defined as violations of law in liberal democracies. All other speech acts, no matter how scandalous, sacrilegious or outrageous, no matter how many people are offended, de jure cannot be criminalised.

The Danish caricature of the Prophet Muhammad and the massacre of the Charlie Hebdo editors have shown, however, that freedom of speech can be a very divisive issue across cultures and religions. In the aftermath of violent acts, we face a new dilemma whether

contents should not be published that might potentially be offensive and hence lead to violence.

We already saw this in the cases when some publishers and newspapers refused to re-publish some of the Charlie Hebdo caricatures for security reasons. The same thing happened with some social media content that was withdrawn, not due to a court decision or as a consequence of some editorial decision due to non-compliance with internal rules, but as a consequence of the occurrence of violence. However, this may set a dangerous precedent. We create new incentives for violent behaviour: if you are offended by an act of free speech, which is legal in Europe, just cause violent riots and you can stop the proliferation of such contents. This is called an 'assassin's veto' and we should be careful not to succumb to that, as it leads to different forms of auto-censorship.

As it is clear in the case of rape: the victim must never be blamed regardless of her behaviour, the same must hold for violence as a reaction to the freedom of speech: no matter how offensive such a speech act is, we must never tolerate this type of violence.

As the totalitarian experience from the 20th century teaches us, we also must not allow the government to be the ultimate arbiter in deciding what is dangerous speech and what is not. Such a system could easily be abused for silencing critics of a specific political regime.

Freedom of Association

The right to associate publicly and to demonstrate, protest or strike is very important in liberal democracies. It serves ultimately as a protection against despotism – without the possibility to associate, societies may become atomised and hence more prone to control and oppression.

Today, however, with the growing threat of terrorism, any large group of people is potentially a soft target (a hard target is usually the critical infrastructure). For that reason, there might be legitimate cases where the freedom of assembly can be limited due to security concerns. Nevertheless, it is important that such a limit must be well justified: there must be a clear definition of the threat – the likelihood and imminence must be defined. This is of course a matter of interpretation, and at times the public authorities may have incomplete information from intelligence sources and act under enormous pressure. It is important then that any disputed decision can be ex post subject to court examination. Special attention must be paid to cases in which the authorities may have political motives to prevent a demonstration and use only vaguely defined security concerns.

Individual Right to Privacy (and the Limits of State Secrecy)

Personal privacy is an important condition for individual freedom and dignity. Without privacy, individuals cannot really freely explore what they think and feel. People tend to behave differently and to succumb to restraints (self-censorship) which do not serve any higher purpose in liberal democracies.

There is always a certain level of risk that privacy and personal freedom can be used for malicious intentions. We live in the age of asymmetric threats, when an individual empowered by the use of modern technologies can cause a great deal of harm to a vast number of other people, their assets and values. It is possible to plot, prepare and organise a terrorist attack from a living room, just by using the Internet.

There is hence a legitimate case for a state institution to perform targeted intelligence operations that can gather crucial information to assist in the prevention of terrorist attacks or other threats in the early phases. However, it is not easy to find the right balance between the privacy of citizens and the need of the State for accurate and timely information about the hostile intentions of different actors.

States cannot disclose all their information on intelligence operations, or they would prove to be ineffective. So the crucial question is the following: How can we control the agents who do the surveillance? That can be further broken down into several more questions: To whom should the intelligence community be accountable (to an individual, to the government, or to the legislature)? And what specifically should it be accountable for (for expenditures only, for policy, or directly for specific operations)? When should they be accountable (before or after their actions)? Can we limit their operations in a way that maintains their operability, but prevents them from seeing more than is necessary (such as allowing only reading of the metadata, but not the content of communications)?

Due to our ever increasing digital footprint, intelligence can gather information in a scope that was previously unimaginable.

But there is also the unprecedented exponential growth of the global data flow that makes the operation of intelligence increasingly demanding. It may be easier to tap into and intercept, but it is increasingly difficult to gain meaningful information from the abundance of the collected data. Intelligence services may struggle to keep up with the information boom and become partly deaf if we do not allow them to develop new tools. The participation of private companies and their know-how might be needed.

The recent Snowden case that leaked the secret information on the domestic and international operation of the NSA should draw attention to a further three aspects: there is a wide knowledge awareness gap between the intelligence community on one hand and political representatives and the general public. That can lead to overreactions on the side of the public who feels threatened by any kind of surveillance. Further, there is a limit to the rule of law applied to intelligence operations: domestic citizens enjoy a certain level of protection against abuse of interceptions and other practices, but foreign citizens are left without any protection. That is why the NSA operations in Europe could be much more intrusive than in the US. For liberals, the protection of privacy and human rights should not stop at the border of their national state though. So there is a challenge in amending international law and treaties to assure a similar level of protection across borders. Finally, we should think ahead about how we treat whistle-blowers who may breach state secrets, but perhaps draw attention to the fact that the balance between privacy and surveillance has been shifted too far in one or the other direction.

Freedom of Movement. Security and Migration

Technological progress and globalisation result in shrinking spaces – it is easier and cheaper to move and travel across borders and even across continents. Mobility is important to liberals. Mobility increases human possibilities, opens up new horizons and presents more life choices, such as job seeking and education abroad. It is hence important for the development of the full potential of human beings. On the other hand, migration, especially of people with different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, is often perceived as a threat. While there are clear economic costs related to the need for integration policies, there is not much evidence for increased security threats in terms of criminality or terrorism. The threat is rather subjective than objective and much more related to the psychological aspects of in-group versus out-group dynamics (humans tend to be less afraid of unknown humans if they look and behave the same). Such a dynamic can be negatively affected by populist rhetoric and by biased media coverage (public discourse).

There is no doubt that large-scale migration, which substantially increases the diversity and heterogeneity of a society, can be linked to many challenges, including security ones, if integration policies fail. Segregated communities or parallel societies may indeed breed internal conflicts and lead to violence. This is why good integration policies are absolutely crucial.

The wave of refugees and migrants flowing into Europe in 2014 and 2015 has shown that people want states to be in control of migration. In Europe, this might be more difficult than in other states with a migration history (such as USA or Australia). The EU physical borders are more difficult to guard and the EU is not

a unitary or federal state where the migration and asylum policy can be determined by a higher authority.

For a long time, the EU member states did not want to find a responsible solution to share the burden of migration equally across states on the borders (such as Italy and Greece) with countries inside the EU with no direct flood of migrants or refugees. The refugee crisis highlighted the loopholes in the current policy design.

There is a political agreement that much more thorough border controls will have to be established in Europe. Other steps may prove to be much harder to achieve. Harmonising asylum and migration policies in the EU will be extremely challenging. Some member states resorted to national rhetoric and built barbed wire fences, which were a classic example of the unresolved security dilemma: by building a fence around my borders, the problem is not solved but only shifted to the neighbour state. Collective action is needed, but the public mood in many EU member states is now not in favour of rational solutions. Also the new mantra of “tackling root causes of migration” is increasingly difficult in a globalised world with extreme differences in wealth.

Human Rights

Inalienable human rights stand at the core of the liberal creed and ideology. The universalism of human rights is an important aspect: it enables the creation of a basis for an international order. However imperfect such an order is due to the regional differences in interpreting human rights and complying with them, it is the only way of filling the norm vacuum in international relations and of

departing from the logic of sheer power and national interests. In such a world, national security prevails over human security.

Since there is no higher authority and the action of international intergovernmental organisations (such as the UN) can be vetoed by a single power nation, there is a question mark on how to enforce compliance with human rights. International pressure for the respect of human rights can increase international security. It can legitimise the action of local human rights activists, as was the case in the Soviet bloc, when dissidents could refer to the obligation of Soviet countries to the OSCE Helsinki Accords in 1975. The discrepancy between the provision of the treaties and the real gross violation of human rights gave an impetus to many protest movements that helped to undermine the legitimacy and popular support for the oppressive regimes.

If human rights somewhere are severely violated and if other political and diplomatic tools and pressure fail to change the situation, a military intervention might be necessary. This is reflected in the UN Responsibility to Protect Doctrine adopted in 2005. Engaging in military conflict is politically risky and costly, it can entail casualties – both of soldiers and civilians. There is a host of difficult questions for liberal democracies related to this: Is military intervention legitimate without a UN mandate? Do we have the responsibility to protect, even without larger consensus among NATO allies? Should we prevent human rights violations only in our region, or globally? And an even more difficult question: Is it worthwhile to defend human rights if the post-intervention situation can lead to protracted instability and a potentially even worse situation than before the intervention?

Security and Democracy and Rule of Law

Liberal democracies are the best political regimes to grant internal and international security. Democracies are able to cooperate with other democracies peacefully. Mutual trade enables the world to be viewed from the win-win perspective. Democracies are the most effective in handling internal conflicts: by granting equal rights to all citizens, by defending human rights, encouraging their active participation in the decision making, by sticking to the rule of law, by protecting minorities and by a fair wealth redistribution. Democracies also have the most elaborate tools of oversight and control over institutions that can impair individual rights: transparency and accountability of the military, police, intelligence community is nowhere higher than in liberal democracies.

Liberals should always insist on playing by the rules. We respect the principle of the presumption of innocence. We deal fairly, even with our supposed enemies. We grant them the right to due process. When in conflict, we do not apply double standards. In a conflict situation, sticking to the rule of law may make us look like weaklings, because our enemies do not have to bother with the rule of law (despotic nations, organised crime, etc.) and hence can act more quickly with a wider variety of tools. But it is exactly the adherence to the rule of law, even in situations that are difficult and unpopular, which makes our democracies unique and worthwhile.

Security and Free Markets

Security has the typical attributes of a public good (like fresh air, roads, street lighting, etc.). Once provided, it is there for all – it is almost impossible to exclude some people from enjoying it (non-excludability attribute). At the same time, enjoying (consuming)

security does not diminish it or eat it away. It remains there for others to enjoy (non-rivalry attribute). Goods with non-rivalry and non-excludability attributes are often subject to market failure, i.e. it is difficult or even simply impossible to generate security on national and international levels only through market forces. There is no efficient way of preventing people from enjoying security if they do not pay for it. This phenomenon is known as black-riding and leads to negative side effects (negative externalities). If left to market forces only, such a good would be underproduced and overused. Hence it is most effective to delegate the provision of security to the State and to pay for it from taxation.

This does not mean, however, that markets and business do not play a role. While the State has the ultimate role of deciding what kind of equipment and tools are needed, it is the private companies that provide the solutions. But since the provision of security has long been perceived as a strategic and non-economic objective, the role of markets is rather limited in terms of who is allowed to enter the competition. There has always been the tendency to prefer domestic producers. The main argument is the security of the supply. In the case of a conflict, it is supposedly risky to buy arms from other nations, since they could potentially turn into enemies or run short of their supplies as they could be involved in war. Such a dependence can be a strategic weakness. In similar logic, the export bans on some arms or some kind of limiting regulation is applied to prevent the loss of technological superiority.

This practice has led (in Europe) to a highly fragmented market with many local producers. These local champions can scarcely compete on the global level and hence do not scale up, lacking the capital for research and development. Nevertheless, defence industry

lobbyists and politicians often protect these local producers, since the creation of a genuine European market would inevitably lead to competition, which would force many smaller companies to shut down their operations or merge with bigger players. Politicians shy away from the prospect of losing jobs in their own country. It is also easier to create close links to local business and to profit from corruption on local tenders rather than in a pan-European procurement.

It is also increasingly questionable whether the argument of the security of supply should also hold for trade (or procurement) among allies. Due to the international supply chains, a state is in any case not independent of other states.

A Very Special Market

The European Defence Market suffers from inefficiency. While European NATO allies spent half as much on defence equipment as the United States, they only generate around a quarter of capability output. One cause for this shortcoming is the high rate of national procurement. According to the European Commission, 80 % of military equipment in Europe is still being purchased domestically. As a consequence, there are, for example, 16 different main battle tank systems in Europe as opposed to only one in the United States. Defence companies usually have to produce small batches of tanks, frigates or helicopters at high costs per unit. According to the European Commission, this results in annual opportunity costs of €25-100 billion, which is roughly 25 % of overall spending on defence. Security of supply and the security of jobs in the industry are mostly given as arguments for national purchases. However, military experts point to the fact that the security of supply has become an obsolete concept in times of increasing interdependence. No European country would be able to fight a war on its own today. Jobs in the defence industry would certainly be lost as businesses would have to merge internationally or shut down their defence operations. This negative effect of market liberalisation needs to be weighed against the positive impact that more efficient procurement would have on the capabilities and interoperability of European armed forces. According to the Defence and Security Directive 2009/81/EC, member states of the EU are already compelled to award purchasing contracts on the European market in a non-discriminatory manner. However, they can circumvent this Directive if they refer to their national interest. Thus legislative efforts to enhance European cooperation on the defence market have not yet brought about significant change. It therefore seems as if real progress can only be achieved if member states commit to it themselves.

Summary

- Security can be defined negatively as an absence of threat, or positively as a protection of human freedom. The latter understanding is important for liberal thinking, as it assists in the rethinking of the relationship of security with basic liberal values.
- In the post-Cold War world, there is a shift from the narrowly defined 'national security' to the broader term of 'human security'. This implies that the individual and his values are of equal importance as collective interest, state territoriality and international order, and that threats do not come only from military, but also from societal, economic and ecological spheres.
- When considering security policies, it is important to think in terms of the security (collective action) dilemma. A long-term and collective (international) perspective may lead to a much higher state of security than short-term policies driven by local or national interests. Achieving a functional European defence market might be an example where such thinking is useful.
- Security has objective, subjective and intersubjective dimensions. Under peaceful conditions, the subjective and intersubjective aspects are more important. Perception of threats define our sense of security. But these perceptions are mostly based on media reportage and political discourse. This gives these institutions a high level of responsibility in contributing to our security.
- Absolute security does not exist. Humans are the subject of protection and at the same time also pose threats to each other. That is the main argument for some personal freedoms to possibly be limited under very strictly defined circumstances. The protection of individual freedom lies at the core of why liberals agree in theory on a state monopoly of legitimate violence and coercion.
- Liberal values do not only deserve to be protected because they contribute to human dignity but also because they on their own contribute to the strengthening of security. Democracy based on the principles of rule of law, political participation and human rights set important limits to the abuse of political power. Free markets and international trade foster interdependence and hence turn security into a non-zero game. These values have significantly contributed to the decrease of political and individual violence throughout the world.

Part 2

Public Attitudes towards Security Policies

Péter Krekó and Csaba Molnár



Exploring Public Attitudes

When formulating security political arguments for programmes or campaigns, parties should be aware of public opinion in general and prevalent attitudes among potential voters in particular. Public opinion is particularly interesting in Europe, where countries are historically and culturally diverse and political debates are still played out on a purely national level. During our research, we were therefore not only interested in e.g. the general level of support for NATO and the EU, but also in country-specific issues that might reveal differences among member states.

We started filtering security-politically relevant data out of openly available Eurobarometer and European Social Survey statistics. This initial study provided us with some basic data on public attitudes within all 28 countries. We learnt, for example, that there is widespread support for European defence cooperation, but also a very different threat perception among EU member states. These insights were the basis of our further research and provided a useful framework for the more specific data that we gathered ourselves.

We picked a selection of countries that would provide for an interesting basis for discussion: Belgium, Hungary and Lithuania. One western European, one central European and one eastern European country implies geographical and cultural diversity. Furthermore, they are politically very different with liberal parties

in government (Belgium), a liberal party in opposition (Lithuania) and a liberal party that was only recently founded and is not yet represented in parliament (Hungary).

The online interviews were carried out in September 2017 by iVOX in Belgium and Solid Data in Lithuania and Hungary. In each country, 1000 respondents participated in this survey. Though the samples were not perfectly representative for the respective adult populations, quotas were applied in order to reach maximum extensiveness. Generalisations can be made, but it should be mentioned that the online interviewing method discriminated against people without Internet access. Younger population groups might therefore be slightly overrepresented.

Overview: European Public Opinion on Defence & Security Issues

We started our investigation with the overview of existing research on the attitudes of Europeans, and European liberals on security issues. We summarised our findings in five statements:

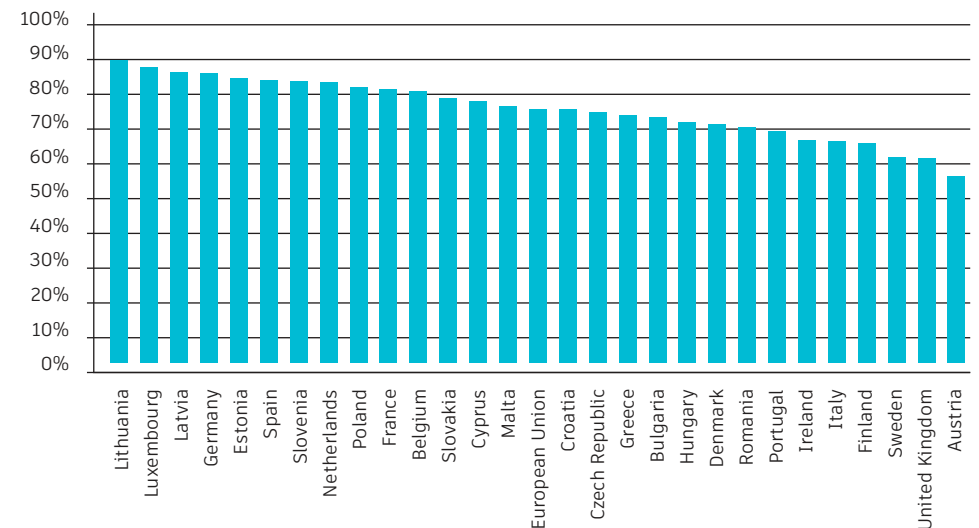
1.

Contrary to the general assumption that Euroscepticism prevails in all policy areas, we found stable and significant support for a common defence security policy among EU citizens – in almost all member states.

2.

For most people, it is important to live in secure surroundings. Liberal voters are no different in this respect: for them, security is equally important as for voters of other parties; the need for security is rather a uniting than a divisive issue.

Figure 1.
SUPPORT FOR A COMMON DEFENCE SECURITY POLICY AMONG THE EU MEMBER STATES (PERCENTAGE OF ANSWERS 'FOR' IN NOVEMBER 2016)



Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Source of Data: European Commission, Standard Eurobarometer Survey, Autumn 2016.
 Available online: <http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Chart/getChart/themeKy/29/groupKy/181>

3.

We also found that **immigration and terrorism are still important concerns EU-wide** as a result of the refugee crisis and terrorist attacks – even if their importance is decreasing in most EU Member States. Voters expect political solutions to these issues by their leaders.

4.

The EU has an ambivalent perception when it comes to maintaining security. In general, it is still widely seen as a guarantor of peace. Also, there is a strong perception of security at both national and EU levels; security fears are far from being dominant within the EU. Nevertheless, some important challenges remain to be tackled: the EU is seen as highly incompetent in defending its borders, handling the refugee crisis, and handling immigration-related threats.

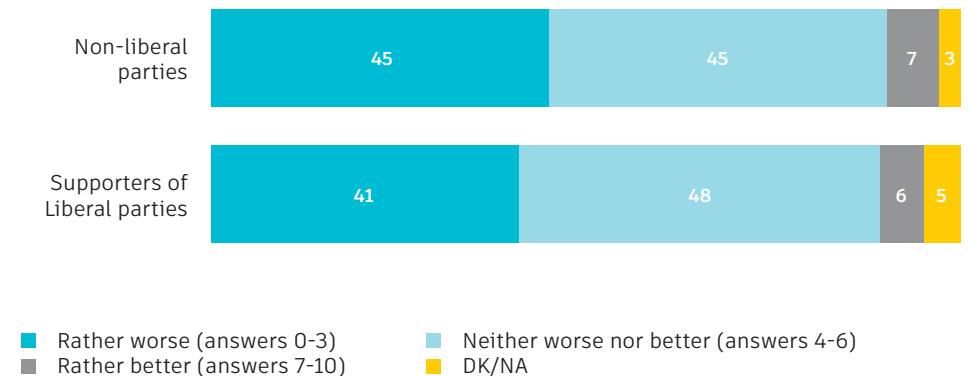
5.

Liberal voters seem to be less concerned about immigration – but they are also concerned. A relatively large proportion, 41% of voters of liberal parties, tend to agree¹ with the statement: crime problems in their country were made worse by immigrants. Slightly

more supporters of non-liberal parties tend to agree (45%). People rather associate the worsening of crime problems with migration. Respondents who either voted for or feel close to a liberal party tend to agree less; this attitude is quite dominant among them, too.

Figure 2.

ARE THE COUNTRY'S CRIME PROBLEMS MADE WORSE OR BETTER BY PEOPLE COMING TO LIVE HERE FROM OTHER COUNTRIES? (PERCENTAGE OF ANSWERS ON A SCALE OF 0: 'CRIME PROBLEMS MADE WORSE' – 10: 'CRIME PROBLEMS MADE BETTER' SCALE).



Source Of Data: European Social Survey Round 7, Autumn 2014 – Spring 2015)

¹ Sum of answers 0-3 on the scale - 0: Crime problems made worse - 10: Crime problems made better. The following question was asked: Are [a country's] crime problems made worse or better by people coming to live here from other countries?

Survey Results: Belgium

Opinions on Military Organisations

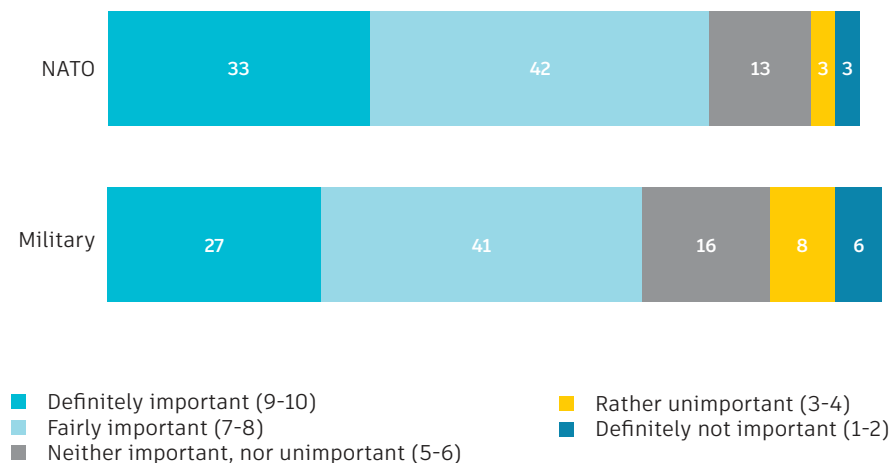
There is massive support for the military and an even stronger support for NATO in Belgium. Two-thirds of the respondents tend to think that the military is important for Belgium in the 21st century. Regarding NATO, 75% think the same. The ratio of those who see NATO as rather unimportant is only 7% (replies were 1 to 4 on a 1-10 level of importance scale). There are clear distinctions between supporters of different political parties. Sympathisers of the Green Party find both the military and NATO the least important. **While in the case of the military it is MR², regarding NATO it is OpenVLD³, whose voters are the most supportive.** Comparing opinions on the military and NATO, the latter is seen as more important by every voter group, irrespective of the preferred party.

On average, respondents see a 46% chance that Belgium will be directly involved in a large-scale international military conflict within the next ten years. This is a rather high number, indicating that, despite several decades of peace, people are not so convinced that peace can be securely maintained. This also resonates with the high level of the perceived importance of the military/NATO, as discussed above.

² Mouvement Réformateur, the Walloon liberal party

³ Open Vlaamse Liberalen en Democraten, the Flemish liberal party

Figure 3.
 HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU THINK THE MILITARY/NATO IS FOR BELGIUM IN THE 21ST CENTURY?

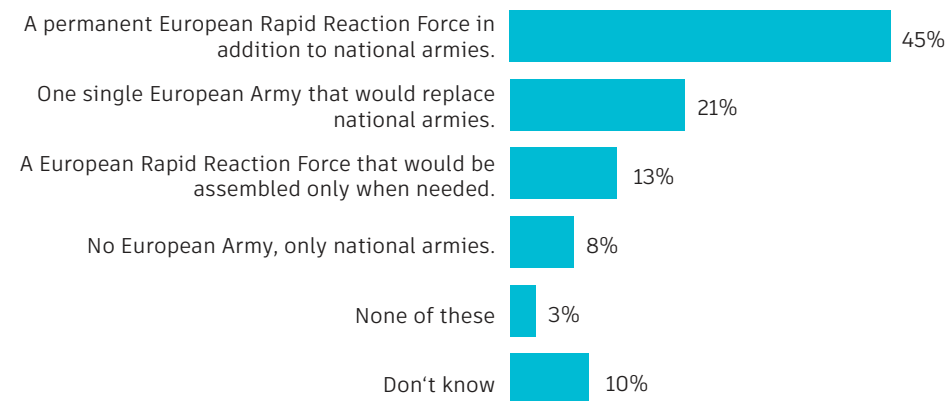


It is already known from Eurobarometer (EB) surveys that Belgians are overwhelmingly supportive of the common defence and security policy among member states. In the May 2017 EB [survey](#) 88% of respondents supported this idea and only 10% were against it. In our research, we tried to obtain a more detailed view of this issue. When asked about the role of national armies and a European army in the context of a common European security and defence policy, **the relative majority (45%) of respondents would opt for a permanent European rapid reaction force in addition to national armies.** The second most supported option represents the biggest step towards a European Army. Every fifth Belgian respondent prefers a single European Army to replace national armies. Rejection of a European Army is quite low, as only 8% chose this

option. Voters of CD&V⁴ support the dual military model the most (61%). Similar views are held by an above-average proportion of MR and OpenVLD voters (53–54%). However, a clear distinction between these two groups is that many more OpenVLD voters than MR voters support a one-and-only single European army.

Figure 4.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS WOULD YOU PREFER IN THE CONTEXT OF A COMMON EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY?



Once the European Armed Forces is established, it will definitely have an effect on the role of NATO in the European Union. Two-thirds of the respondents favour Belgium joining the European

Army and, at the same time, remaining a NATO member. They think that this is the only way of Belgium defending itself the best against external military threats. Support for single membership is equally low in both cases: 6 and 6% would go for exclusive membership of the European Army and NATO. MR and OpenVLD voters support dual membership the most (82 and 87%, respectively).

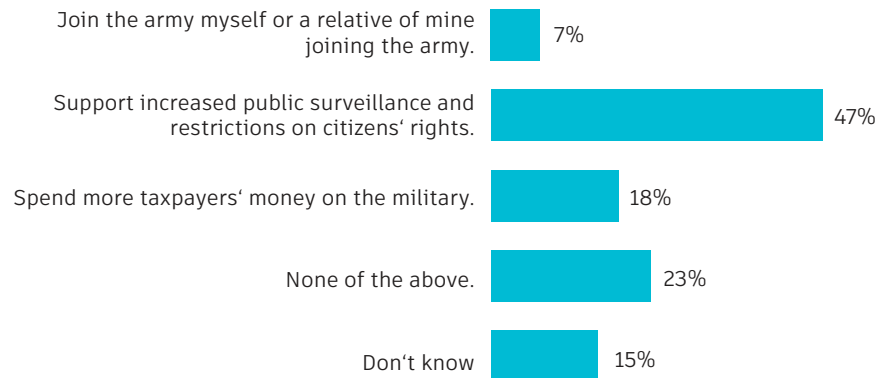
Terrorism

According to the most recent Eurobarometer [survey](#) conducted in May 2017, **Belgians perceive terrorism and immigration as the two most important issues their country is currently facing.** These results clearly reveal how serious the issue of terrorism is for Belgians.

Since the terror attacks, there have been more soldiers on the streets of Belgium to protect citizens and to make them feel safer. Participants in our survey are rather divided on the effects. While 46% feel safer now, for 40% the military presence has not changed their perceived personal security. Regarding the issue of terrorism, we asked respondents which personal sacrifices they would accept in the fight against this kind of violence. **Almost every second respondent supports increased public surveillance and the restriction of citizens' rights that accompany it. A much lower number, 18%, endorse spending more taxpayers' money on the military.** Even fewer people (7%) would accept joining the army themselves or a relative enlisting. Voters of the N-VA party support public surveillance the most (72%). The acceptance level is fairly strong among MR voters (66%) and slightly above-average in the group of OpenVLD voters (52%).

⁴ Christen-Democratisch en Vlaams, the Flemish Christian Democratic party

Figure 5.

WHICH OF THESE PERSONAL SACRIFICES WOULD YOU ACCEPT IN THE FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM?**Foreign Security Threats**

We asked respondents about the risks that different countries pose to the security of Belgium. Seven nations were evaluated on a 1-10 scale⁵: China, Iran, Israel, North Korea, Russia, Saudi Arabia and the United States. **North Korea ranked first** with the mean of 6.6, **well ahead of the other countries. Iran and Russia came in second with the same score** of 5.4. Saudi Arabia follows them, its perceived level of threat is only slightly less than that of Russia and Iran. China, the US and Israel are in the last three places, posing significantly less risk to the security of Belgium.

Voter groups of the two liberal parties show different patterns.

While for both of them it is Russia which poses the highest threat, OpenVLD rank Russia in second place, clearly ahead of Iran, but MR voters do not see Russia as a source of such a high threat. On their list, Russia is in fourth place, after Iran and Saudi Arabia. Moreover, the average of **Russia's threat level is the lowest among the MR voters when compared to the other voter groups.**

Engagement in International Military Conflicts/Missions

The relative majority of respondents think that the current engagement level should be maintained when it comes to **Belgium's participation in international military missions.** However, a significant group (23%) would like less involvement. The smallest subgroup is of those who opt for more contribution. One in every five respondents did not have an opinion. This indicates that this is a fairly difficult issue for many people.

When it comes to the **reasons that could justify an involvement in a military conflict, massive human rights violations and supporting terrorism are the two most accepted ones** (for 47 and 42% of respondents, respectively). On average, 38% think that an attack against a NATO member country by Russia is a justifiable reason for Belgium to take part in a conflict. This is rather a low rate, considering that this is an obligation for every NATO member state. Voters of MR and OpenVLD think differently about the justifiable goals. Regarding MR, supporting terrorism is in first place, while OpenVLD voters consider human rights violations and an attack against a NATO member the most acceptable.

⁵ With '1' meaning it poses no threat at all, and '10' meaning the highest level of threat.

Figure 6.

WHICH OF THESE DO YOU THINK ARE JUSTIFIABLE REASONS FOR BELGIUM TO TAKE PART IN A MILITARY CONFLICT?

To those respondents who found military involvement justifiable, we presented **some potential consequences of such an engagement**. Our aim was to test whether they still supported it or not. In all cases, **the backing of involvement eroded significantly**. Only half of these people remained supportive, if the involvement in a military conflict would mean the re-introduction of conscription in Belgium. Approval became even weaker for all other consequences: 33% if respondents or their relatives had to fight in the conflict; 31% if it would lead to more Belgian soldiers losing their lives; 29% if Belgium would have to spend more on military and less on social benefits, school, healthcare and 26% if the intervention had no UN mandate.

Military Spending

In the context of NATO obligation for military spending (i.e. at least 2% of GDP), **almost every second respondent opts for more spending, in order to get closer to the 2% threshold from the current spending level of 0.91%**. Only 10% would like to spend even less, while three in every ten prefer not to change the current level of military spending. OpenVLD voters support expenditure increase the most (63%), well above the average. Voters of MR are rather divided, 47% opt for more spending, while 43% favour the current level.

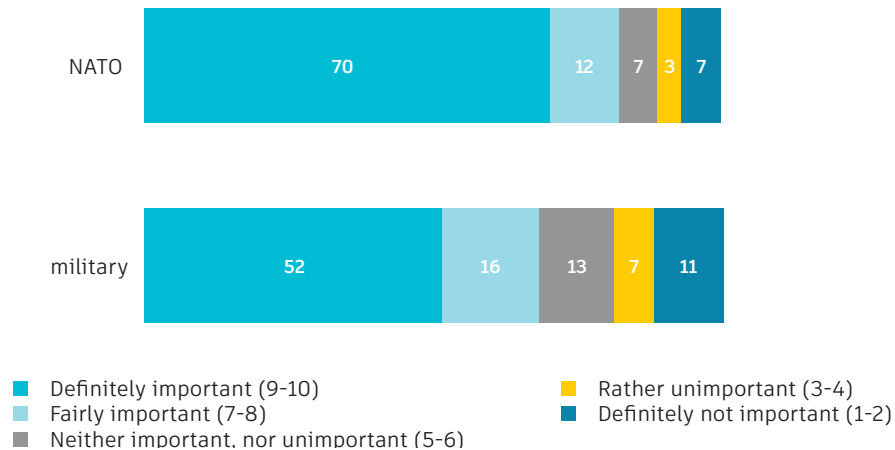
When asked about which policy areas the State should spend more on, respondents do not put the military among the top priorities.

Healthcare, education, infrastructure, the environment and R&D are all ahead of the military.

Survey Results: Lithuania**Opinions on Military Organisations**

There is a huge support for the military and an even stronger support for NATO. 68% of Lithuanian respondents think that the military is fairly important for Lithuania in the 21st century. When asked about NATO, the vast majority, 82% has the same opinion. Six out of every 10 respondents not just 'tend' to see NATO as important, but mark it as 'very' important by selecting the highest number on the 1-10 importance scale. Voters of the Homeland Union perceive the highest importance levels of both the military and NATO. The average scores of the Liberal Movement's voters are also above average, while supporters of the Social Democratic Party and the Farmers and Greens Union do not see it as of such high importance.

Figure 7.

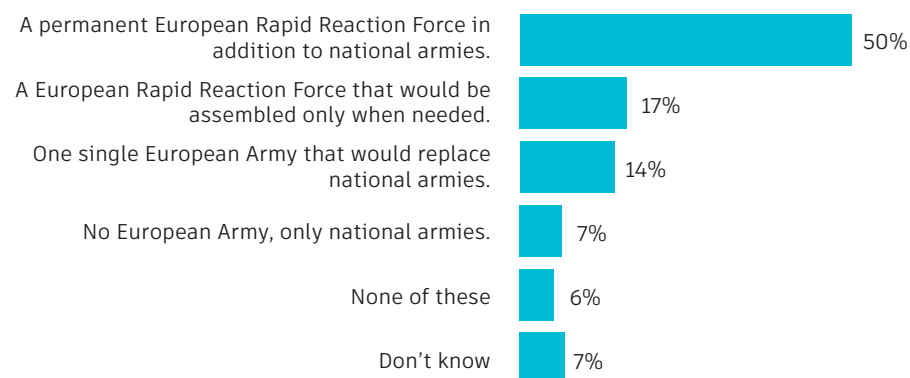
HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU THINK THE MILITARY/NATO IS FOR LITHUANIA IN THE 21ST CENTURY?

On average, respondents see a 48% chance that Lithuania will be directly involved in a large-scale international military conflict in the next ten years. Similar to the results in Belgium, this is rather a high number, indicating that despite several decades of peace, people are not so convinced that peace can be securely maintained. The patterns of different voter groups are comparable to the importance of the military/NATO, as discussed above. Homeland Union and Liberal Movement voters perceive a higher risk of military conflict.

It is already known from Eurobarometer (EB) surveys that, just like Belgians, Lithuanians are also overwhelmingly supportive of the common defence and security policy among member states. In the May 2017 EB [survey](#) 88% of respondents supported this idea and only 7% were against it. When we asked about the role of national armies and a European army in the context of a common European security and defence policy, **every second Lithuanian respondent opted for a permanent European Rapid Reaction Force in addition to national armies.** The second most supported option is the temporary version of ERRF, selected by 17% of respondents. 14% would prefer it if national armies were replaced by a single European army. Rejection of a European Army is quite low, as only 7% chose the option of having only national armies. Voters of the Liberal Movement party are more likely to support the dual military model (57%). However, 9% of this group endorse the 'national armies only' option, which is higher than measured among supporters of the other three larger parties.

Figure 8.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS WOULD YOU PREFER IN THE CONTEXT OF A COMMON EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY?



Once the European Armed Forces is established, it will definitely have an effect on the role of NATO in the European Union.

Two-thirds of respondents favour Lithuania joining the European Army and, at the same time, remaining a NATO member. They think that only in this way could Lithuania defend itself the best from external military threats. Support for single membership is low in both cases, but not on the same level. While 13% would prefer an exclusive NATO membership, only 4% prefer leaving NATO and joining the European Army. This indicates how strong NATO's image is in Lithuania. **Liberal Movement voters support dual membership the most**, compared to other voter groups.

The perceived role of NATO within the country is fairly strong.

When asked about what makes them feel safe in Lithuania, 58% of participants selected the option "deployment of NATO troops and equipment in Lithuania". Safe borders and a strong military do not seem to be sufficient, as it was mentioned by only 15%. NATO's approval is also validated by the replies to another question. 62% disagreed with the statement that "permanent presence of NATO troops has increased Lithuania's vulnerability". Only 17% agreed with it to some extent.

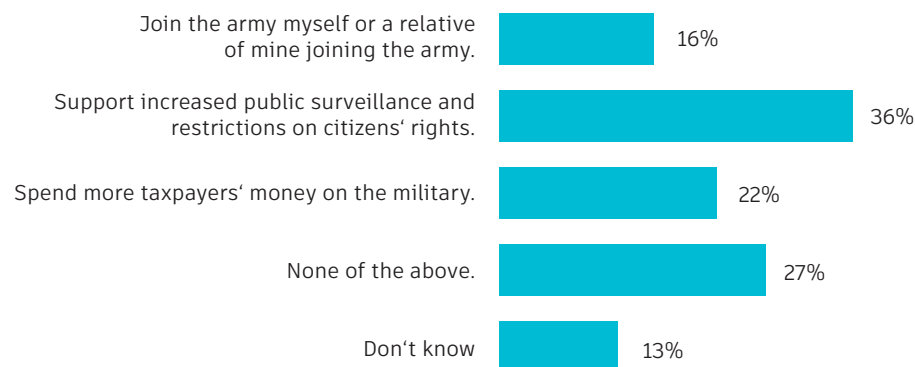
Terrorism

According to the most recent Eurobarometer [survey](#), conducted in May 2017, Lithuanians do not perceive terrorism among the most important issues their country is currently facing. However, when it comes to the European Union's perspective, the picture is just the opposite. 60% of Lithuanian respondents of this EB survey mentioned terrorism among the two most important issues the EU is facing. Thus it is the topmost issue, followed by immigration with a selection rate of 39%. These results reveal that terrorism is not a domestic topic for Lithuanians, but indeed an extremely serious one in the European context.

In our research regarding the issue of terrorism, we asked respondents which personal sacrifices they would accept in the fight against this kind of violence. **A little more than one-third of respondents support increased public surveillance and the restriction of citizens' rights that come with it. 22% endorse spending more taxpayers' money on the military.** Personal involvement is not really popular, as 16% would accept joining the army themselves or a relative enlisting. One in every four

respondents rejects all three sacrifices we listed to them. Voters of the Liberal Movement support public surveillance the least, well below the average (25%). However, they would be ready to join the army the most (25%).

Figure 9.
WHICH OF THESE PERSONAL SACRIFICES WOULD YOU ACCEPT IN THE FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM?



Foreign Security Threats

We asked respondents about the risks that different countries pose to the security of Lithuania. Seven nations were evaluated on a 1-10 scale⁶: China, Iran, Israel, North Korea, Russia, Saudi Arabia and the

United States. **Russia ranked first** with the mean of 6.8, **well ahead of the other countries. North Korea came in second place with an average score of 4.7.** Iran, ranked third, represented a significantly lower threat level than North Korea. Russia represented the highest threat in all voter groups. Homeland Union supporters feel most threatened by Russia, followed by supporters of the Liberal Movement.

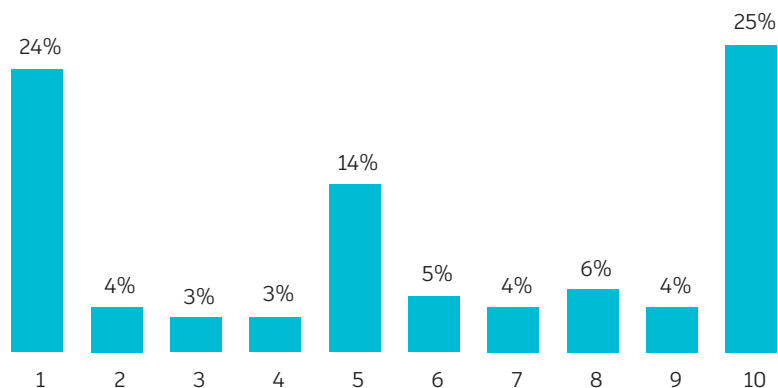
Military Service

The 2015 reintroduction of compulsory military service is widely supported. 63% of respondents find it a good thing. The proportion of oppositionists is 28%. Still, when it comes to the extension of conscription, **neither extension of the duration nor the inclusion of women is endorsed.** Only 31% support the former and 28% the latter. We also asked respondents if they would want their child to serve in the Lithuanian Armed Forces or not. Interestingly, the distribution of answers shows a W-shape. While one-quarter completely agrees with it (i.e. they marked their opinion as 10 on the 1-10 scale), another quarter completely disagrees. Furthermore, 14% of respondents have a fairly neutral opinion (they scored 5).

⁶ With '1' meaning it poses no threat at all, and '10' meaning the highest level of threat.

Figure 10.

I WANT, OR WOULD WANT MY CHILD TO SERVE IN THE LITHUANIAN ARMED FORCES. (DISTRIBUTION OF ANSWERS ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 10, WITH '1' MEANING COMPLETE DISAGREEMENT, AND '10' MEANING COMPLETE AGREEMENT)

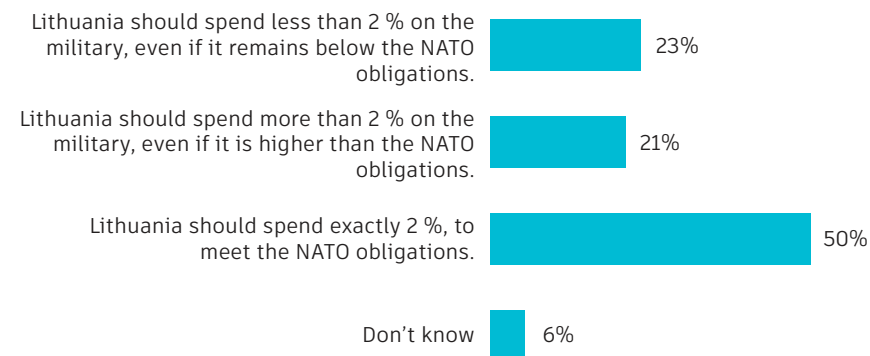


Military Spending

Lithuania is currently spending 1.8% of its GDP on the military, almost meeting the NATO obligations of 2%. **The vast majority of the survey participants supports the expected level of military expenditure.** One in every second respondent would opt for spending exactly 2% and a further 21% would expend even more. Only 23% would like to spend less than the NATO obligations.

Figure 11.

LITHUANIA IS CURRENTLY SPENDING 1.8% OF ITS GDP ON THE MILITARY, ALMOST MEETING THE NATO OBLIGATIONS OF 2%. HOWEVER, SOME SAY WE SHOULD NOT STOP THERE AND SPEND EVEN MORE ON THE MILITARY. WHAT DO YOU THINK?



When asked about military expenditure, in comparison to the other two Baltic States, the majority opinion (56%) is that **Lithuania should spend the same share of its GDP as is spent by Estonia and Latvia.** A further 13% would like to expend more than the neighbouring countries and a subgroup, similar in size (15%), prefers a lower spending level.

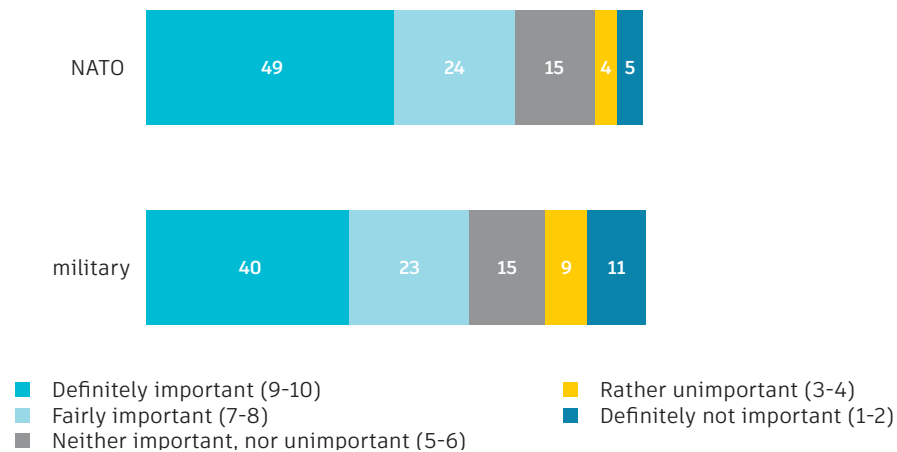
Survey Results: Hungary

Importance of NATO and Military

In Hungary, NATO is regarded as popular and important. 73% of respondents think that NATO is definitely important or fairly important in the 21st century, while only 9% consider that it is not important. In addition, in Hungary 63% think that the military is important as well. It suggests that Hungarians do not regard defence issues or NATO as 'obsolete'.

Figure 12.

HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU THINK NATO/THE MILITARY IS FOR HUNGARY IN THE 21ST CENTURY?

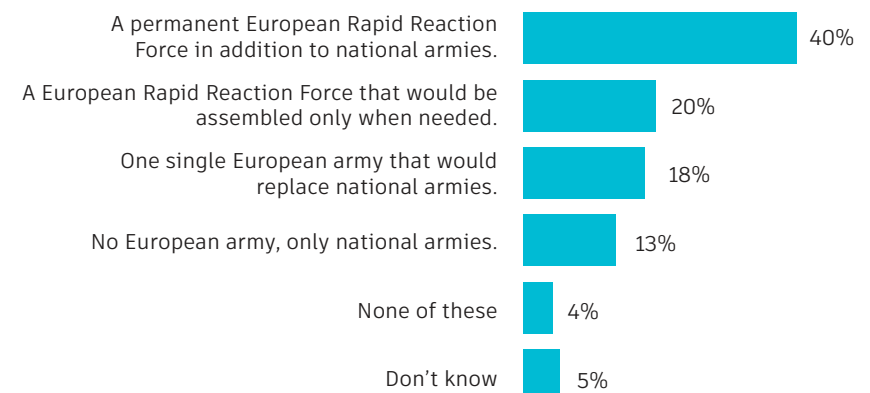


European Defence

When it comes to the issue of European Defence, we find a combination of pro-European and sovereigntist positions. The most popular position in Hungary is that a permanent European Rapid Reaction Force is needed in addition to national armies (40%), and the second most popular opinion is that this body is needed to assemble only when needed (20%). Only 18% believe in a 'federalist' defence, saying that a single European army would replace national armies, and 13% think the opposite: that only a national army is needed. An independent Hungarian military continues to be regarded as important, and increased military spending seems to be justified. Indeed, there is strong support in Hungarian public opinion for reaching the 2% NATO target. In general, the role of the EU – in border protection, as well as in defence in general – enjoys positive support across the board.

Figure 13.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS WOULD YOU PREFER IN THE CONTEXT OF A COMMON EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY?

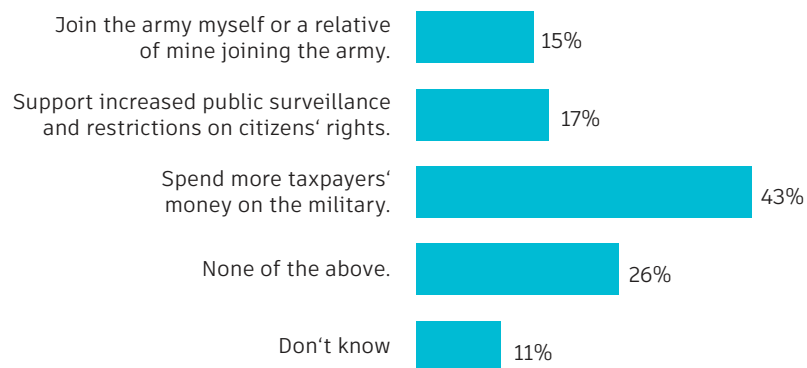


Personal Involvement in Defence Activities

Nevertheless, most Hungarians regard defence and security as an issue that primarily the State should take care of. The fact that the abolition of conscription in the early 21st century was a highly popular move comes as no surprise. When it comes to personal participation in defence, only 15% state that that they themselves or a relative should join the army in the fight against terrorism. 17% would support increased public surveillance and restrictions on citizens' rights, and 43% state that more taxpayers' money should be spent on the military. However, 37% could not choose among these options or were hesitant to state an opinion.

Figure 14.

WHICH OF THESE PERSONAL SACRIFICES WOULD YOU ACCEPT IN THE FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM?

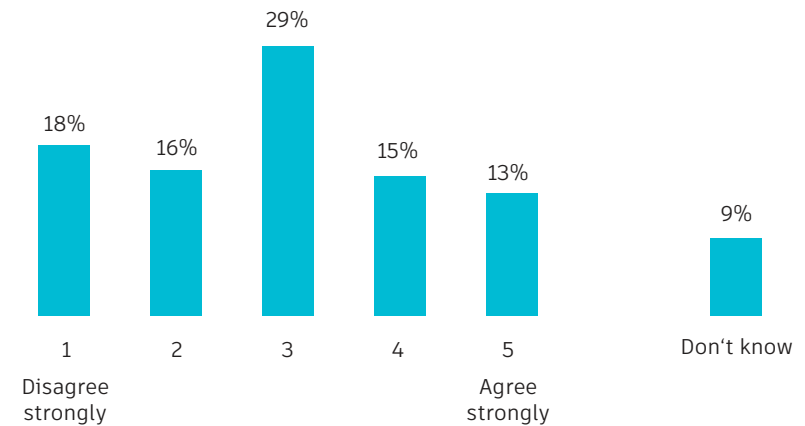


Activity in NATO

Hungarian respondents are also cautious when considering whether their country should play a more active role within NATO. While 28% agree that Hungary should play a more active role within NATO, 34% disagree, and 38% do not have a clear opinion on the question. Hungarian public opinion is not at all supportive towards any involvement in the Ukrainian conflict, certainly not among Fidesz and Jobbik voters. This is surprising, as Hungary borders Ukraine and a Hungarian minority lives across the border.

Figure 15.

SHOULD HUNGARY PLAY A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN NATO?



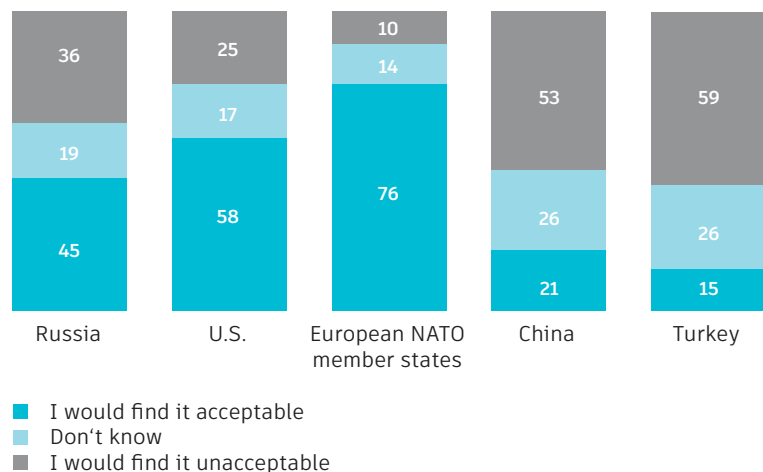
Arms Trade

When it comes to buying arms from another country, the Western orientation is dominant: 76% would find it acceptable to buy arms from European NATO member states (compared to only 14% that disagree), and 58% from the United States (versus 17% that

disagree). There is no absolute majority for the support of arms trade between Russia and Hungary, but more respondents find it acceptable (45%) than those opposing it (26%). Only a small minority of respondents find arms trade acceptable with China and Turkey (21 and 15%, respectively). These figures also reflect the general attitudes of respondents towards these countries, as known from other research: the more trust people tend to have in a country, the more support they give to arms trade with that specific country.

Figure 16.

IF HUNGARY PURCHASED ARMS, FROM WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING COUNTRIES DO YOU THINK IT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO BUY ARMS?



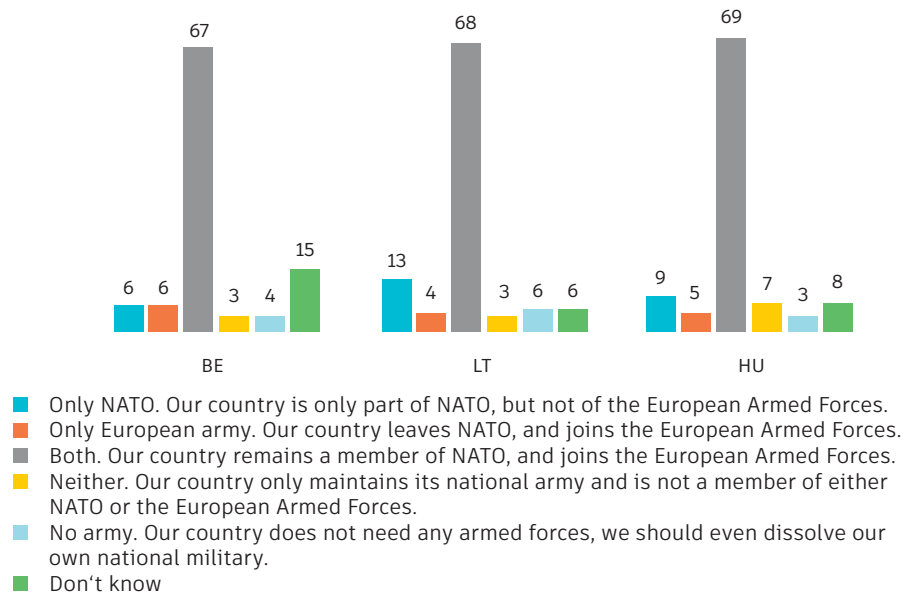
With regard to the party preferences, Fidesz voters are the most supportive towards arms trade with Russia. They are also the most pessimistic about the future of international politics, and the least enthusiastic about NATO and the EU.

Country Comparison

Support of International Alliances

There is equally strong support for NATO and EU across all three countries. Slightly more than two-thirds of respondents state that their country should be a member of both international organisations. More Belgians than Hungarians and Lithuanians would support the idea to have no army at all. While it is important to note that the level of trust in NATO and the EU is relatively high, this does not necessarily imply a strong support for the countries' own military. It might well suggest that people would like the alliance partners to defend their countries.

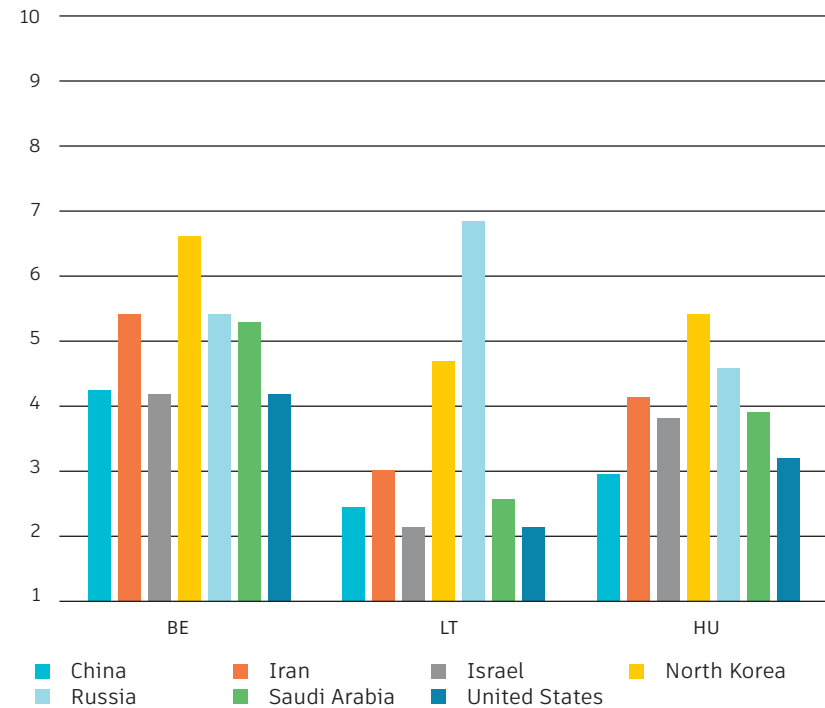
Figure 17.
THERE ARE CURRENTLY MANY POSSIBILITIES DISCUSSED ABOUT HOW YOUR COUNTRY COULD BEST DEFEND ITSELF FROM EXTERNAL MILITARY THREATS. WHICH OPTION DO YOU THINK WOULD SERVE YOUR COUNTRY'S INTERESTS BEST OUT OF THE FOLLOWING FIVE OPTIONS?



Threat Perception

The threat perception among countries differs greatly. Lithuanians rate a potential threat from Russia significantly higher than Belgians and Hungarians. The latter two nationalities in turn are more aware of the threat that North Korea, Iran and Saudi Arabia pose to them. This supports the general impression that eastern European countries tend to be much more aware of a threat from Russia, while western and southern European countries fear terrorism and the consequences of instability in the MENA region.

Figure 18.
HOW MUCH OF A THREAT DO YOU THINK THE SEVEN COUNTRIES LISTED ABOVE POSE TO THE SECURITY OF YOUR COUNTRY? PLEASE USE A SCALE FROM 1 TO 10, WITH '1' MEANING IT POSES NO THREAT AT ALL, AND '10' MEANING THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF THREAT.

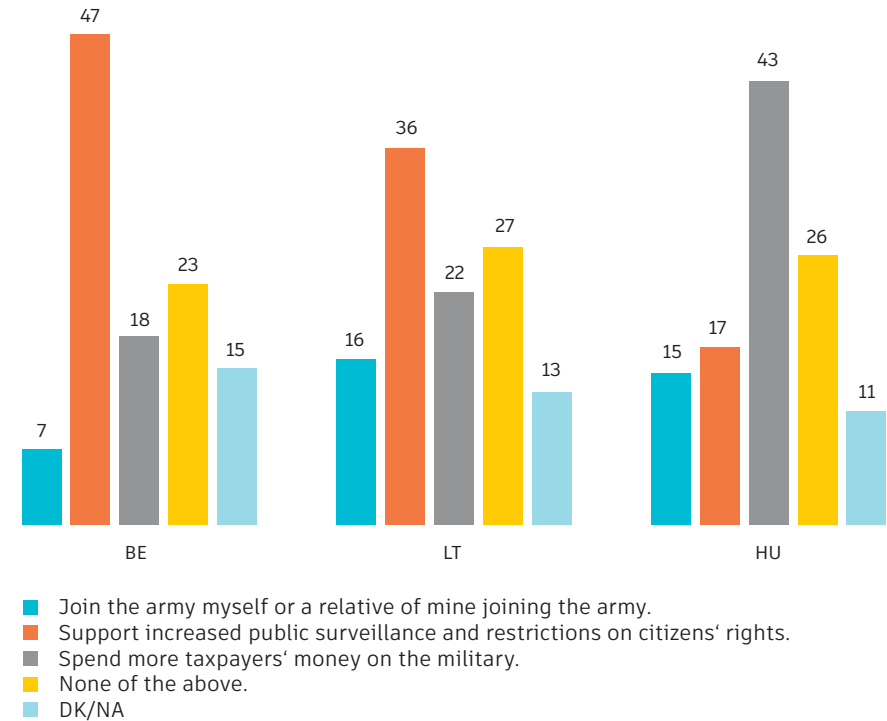


Restriction of Citizens' Rights

People are willing to make very different sacrifices to combat terrorism. Belgians are the most tolerant when it comes to increased surveillance. 47% approve such measures. The relatively high frequency of terrorist attacks might be an explanation for this. Only 17% of Hungarians would agree to more surveillance. They have only experienced minor incidents. Contrary to this, Hungarians are most willing to spend more tax money on defence. Lithuanians are most willing to serve in the army themselves or to have a member of their family serving.

Figure 19.

WHICH OF THESE PERSONAL SACRIFICES WOULD YOU ACCEPT IN THE FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM?



Summary: Seven Conclusions from the Surveys

- **The EU is still seen as a secure place and a guarantor of peace** – but unable to defend its borders, curb the refugee crisis or handle immigration-related security threats.
- **There is widespread support for more EU integration in security policy.**
- **Liberals are no different.** When it comes to security-related issues in Europe, liberal voters think pretty similarly to the overall population: they regard security as crucially important, and they also fear (even if slightly less) immigration-related security concerns: terrorism and crime.
- **There is a general tendency that citizens expect the State and international actors to provide their security,** and only a small minority seems to be willing to make personal sacrifices for their country's security, beyond paying taxes.
- **In Belgium, there is massive support for both EU and NATO as security actors.** Immigration and crime are among the greatest concerns. Healthcare, education, infrastructure, the environment and R&D are all priorities ahead of the military, in terms of the willingness for public spending. Interestingly, while OpenVLD voters are really concerned about Russia, MR voters seem totally unconcerned.
- **In Lithuania, there is also widespread support for NATO and EU involvement in the provision of security.** At the same time, most Lithuanians want to keep their country's military spending on the 2% level of GDP without increasing it. The 2015 reintroduction of compulsory military service is widely supported, while its extension (in duration, or in terms of gender: women's conscription) is not supported. Not surprisingly, Russia is perceived as the biggest security threat in Lithuania.
- **Hungarian public opinion is also supportive of the EU and NATO for the provision of their security.** In addition, Hungarians mostly support arms trade with EU and NATO allies – but also do not see a major problem of arms trade with Russia. **Fidesz governing party** voters seem to be the **least concerned about Russia**, and are also the most critical of the EU and NATO.

Part 3

When Security Policies Become Important to Everyone: the Example of the Baltic States

Sebastian Vagt



How Security Policies Matter

Liberal arguments in security and defence matter most to parties in order to shape their programmes and pursue their political agendas. In most European countries, security and defence policies have less importance than healthcare, social security and education and do not normally play a crucial role in electoral campaigns. This is in principle a very positive situation, as it can be considered as an indicator for objective and subjective security within a country. Security and defence politics are therefore very often an elite project and key issues are being debated among experts.

However, the example of the Baltic States demonstrates that this matter can rapidly change when the security situation deteriorates. In 2014, Russia annexed Crimea and inflicted war on eastern Ukraine. Since then, many fear that the next target of Russian aggression could be the Baltic States. Within a few months, citizens of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania started to concern themselves much more about security and defence than about the welfare-related policies which had mattered more to them before. Most political parties, except the Conservatives, were ill-prepared for this change. But the examples of the Estonian Reform Party and the Lithuanian Liberal Movement illustrate how even liberal parties can successfully manage to deal with a very concrete threat situation:



“Lithuania will defend itself and NATO’s military bases”



“We will promote voluntary military service for the youth”

A Story from Lithuania

A series of events changed our perception of security: the annexation of Crimea in 2014, the eruption of military conflict in Eastern Ukraine in 2015 and the relocation of nuclear-capable rockets in the Kaliningrad region in 2016. All these developments required our party to take an active stance on security and defence issues. The new programme of the party focused on the appeal to society to become a resistant society. A society that does not give up and in which every member knows his role and contributes something. The Liberal Movement revised its position on conscription, supporting its reintroduction in 2015. It supported the cross-party political agreement to reach 2% of GDP for defence by 2018. It strongly supported voluntary engagement with the military and the Lithuanian Riflemen’s Union. The tangible result was a change of the perception of our party. The Liberal Movement was previously considered mediocre on security and defence issues. However, after the campaign, we scored much more strongly on this subject and managed to infuse trust among our electorate during the October 2016 parliamentary elections.

Renaldas Vaisbrodas,
Liberal Movement of Lithuania, International Officer



1. Advert “We have something to protect” Campaign
2. Facebook images of the “Defence Tour”
3. YouTube clip with the then Prime Minister Taavi Rõivas at an Air Force base

A Story from Estonia

About a year before the 2015 national elections, we were planning a campaign focusing on the economy – higher salaries, pensions, etc. This changed overnight because of the annexation of Crimea by Russia. Due to our historical background, this affected us Estonians a great deal – defence and security became the number one topic at home and in the media. We realised that money didn’t matter if our freedom was in danger. That’s how Estonians felt – in danger.

So we focused on defence. Our party prepared a special manifesto called “National Defence Strategy” and invited some former Generals of the Estonian Army to join the party and run for parliament. We communicated that manifesto at every step of the way and undertook a national defence tour throughout the country. We prepared a TV ad with our Prime Minister, where we emphasised the importance of NATO and national defence. We analysed the data and found a way of also making military defence important to women. All our activities and messages were focused on defence.

The Reform Party was not in people’s minds when discussing defence in April 2014. We were seen as experts on the economy, but not on security. Due to systematic planning and campaigning, nine months later we were seen as the party with the defence solutions. We won the elections in March 2015. Defence was the main issue of these elections and we made it ours.

Annika Arras,
Estonian Reform Party, Former Campaign Director

Summary: Three Conclusions from the Case of the Baltics

Both examples need to be considered within the historical and cultural context of their respective countries. Similar images and messages are hardly imaginable in some other member states of the European Union. Nevertheless, some insights can be drawn from these stories which might serve as a reference point for further discussion among liberals in other countries.

- **Security and defence policies became important to everyone**
While they usually do not play an important role in the political debate of most countries, this may quickly change after a terrorist attack or a crisis in a neighbouring country. In this scenario, liberal arguments might even become important in the running of an electoral campaign and in shaping the overall image of a party.
- **Both parties revised their security political positions.**
Both parties did not stick to their peacetime principles, but adapted their arguments in order to cope with the newly arisen threat. They came to support conscription after having opposed it before. Their success in subsequent elections suggests that voters appreciated their ability to adapt their policies to the situation.
- **Liberals generated credibility on security and defence issues**
Although both presented parties had no security political profile or track record in defence policies, they managed to convince their voters that they would be able to provide security. However, they remained genuinely liberal, defending social cohesion by protecting minority and citizens' rights and encouraging voluntary military service.



The **European Liberal Forum (ELF)** is the foundation of the European Liberal Democrats, the ALDE Party. A core aspect of our work consists in issuing publications on Liberalism and European public policy issues. We also provide a space for the discussion of European politics, and offer training for liberal-minded citizens. Our aim is to promote active citizenship in all of this.

ELF – European Liberal Forum, asbl Brussels, Belgium
www.liberalforum.eu



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