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Change of neutrality: The case of Sweden and Finland

Master's Thesis

Olomouc 2023

I hereby declare that this Master's Thesis on the topic of Change of neutrality. The case of Sweden and Finland is my original work and I have acknowledged all sources used. I further declare that the text of this thesis including footnotes has 118 974 characters with spaces.

In Olomouc 30. November 2023

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List of abbreviations

NATO   North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

EU   European Union

IR   International relations

USSR   Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

FCMA   Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance

CFSP   Common Foreign and Security Policy

UN   United Nations

USA   United States of America

TEU   Treaty on European Union

PfP   Partnership for Peace

EOP   Enhanced Opportunities Partner

EFTA   European Free Trade Association

EEC   European Economic Community

NACC   North Atlantic Cooperation Council

Introduction

Finland and Sweden have decided to revise their long-standing neutral status and have applied to join NATO. However, this historical moment is a result of a long-term process, which requires analysis and re-assessment considering the new situation as it raises many questions regarding the concept of neutrality. Both Sweden and Finland pursued minimal defence cooperation during the Cold War. After the end of the Cold War, both countries decided to join the European integration. They have been members of the European Union since 1995 and, for many years, have worked closely with NATO to strengthen the European military security community. The war in the Ukraine has forced NATO allies to rethink their relationships and identity.

During the Cold War, the concept of neutrality was a strategy both countries pursued in their foreign and security policies. Finland and Sweden are geopolitically close to Russia, and the policy of neutrality has ensured their independence and survival. However, after the end of the Cold War, the security situation in Europe changed. Sweden and Finland have joined Western structures, but neither country has applied to join NATO, even though Finland, in particular, has had unpleasant experiences with Russian expansionism. The reasons why the countries did not become a part of the Alliance after the Cold War are interesting from the perspective of neutrality and international relations.

This topic was chosen because Sweden and Finland are Nordic countries that have been choosing neutrality as their security strategy for many years, but they have had different historical developments and have some common features that allow a comparison. Sweden and Finland are European Union states located on the European continent but have not yet been members of NATO. However, they have decided to leave the status of neutral countries, and both countries have applied to join NATO. They are countries with a specific geographical location, i.e., close to the Russian Federation, and both countries have had different historical developments. Therefore, the thesis tries to answer the question of what factors had led them to accept the status of neutral countries but especially what factors have led them to leave it, which will be interpreted in the context of the international relations theory; therefore, theoretically, the work is based on the concepts of neutrality and explores the theories of international relation which are applied on both countries.

The thesis deals with the concept of neutrality from the international relations point of view and also from the point of view of the historical development. The thesis analyses the issue of the Swedish and Finnish neutrality from its inception to its demise. Attention is also paid to the

geopolitical position of the states, the change in the international environment, and the transformation of security threats. The most important milestones since the emergence of state neutrality are analysed, while attention will also be paid to the events that had preceded and followed the Russian aggression in the Ukraine. In this period, the political steps taken by both states towards security and defence cooperation in Europe will be analysed.

The main aim of this thesis is to analyse what factors changed the states' view of neutrality and led to their application to NATO. The thesis maps the changes in their neutral status in the context of the main theories dealing with international relations and security. There are three research questions. In this thesis, I ask the following research questions:

1. How can neutrality be understood in terms of conceptualization and operationalization within the context of theories dealing with international relations and security?

2. How did neutrality (including incentives and factors behind it) develop in the case of Sweden and Finland? To what extent did Finland and Sweden fulfill the behavioural characteristics of neutral states, and was it even possible to still call them neutral before applying to NATO?

3. Why did both states depart from the concept of neutrality, and how these steps may be understood in the context of IR/IS theories?

The thesis compares the neutrality of the two states from the emergence of neutrality to the application of NATO. The thesis might be considered a theoretically based comparative analysis, which uses the theory to identify areas (absence of membership in any military alliances, absence of direct participation in a military conflict, absence of support parties to a conflict with military material, defence capabilities to protect its territory, impartiality in foreign policy) suitable for analysis dedicated to the development of the neutrality concept in between two countries: Sweden and Finland. The comparison will focus on the birth of neutrality in both states and the changes over time. A descriptive-analytical method was chosen to test the research questions addressed in the thesis. The two countries were chosen because of historical and geographical similarities and because the countries have applied this concept for a long time. The temporal focus of the analysis is in the case of Sweden since 1814 and Finland since 1935 when the countries adopted resolutions proclaiming the adoption of neutrality; in both cases, here reflect the practical emergence of neutrality of both countries. The second milestone can be defined in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war in general or the date of the NATO application. The primary data collection method was a content analysis of documents in the field of foreign security policy of both states and sources and literature dealing with the subject matter.

The structure of the work is divided into four chapters. The first chapter deals with the concept of neutrality and its theoretical aspects, intending to define it from the perspectives of legal and political science. The chapter presents selected definitions of international relations experts, outlines the legislative anchorage of this concept, and introduces different types of neutrality. Based on the definitions and conceptual features, definitional elements are established to answer the research questions. The second chapter aims to analyse the approaches of the fundamental theories of international relations, such as realism, liberalism, or constructivism, and their views on neutrality. In addition, this chapter analyses the balance and bandwagoning theories based on the realistic balance of power approach, the liberal democratic peace theory and constructivism's view of state identity. The first and second chapters focus on the search for the answer to the first question.

The third chapter analysed the development of the politics of neutrality in Sweden and Finland from the origin of neutrality to the end of the Cold War. It also charts the development after the Cold War and the involvement in Western structures. The aim is to compare the neutrality of the two states since the emergence of neutrality and to analyse the development of neutrality based on the defining elements as specified in the first chapter and to answer the question of whether, before the filing of the application, it was still possible to speak of neutral States. The fourth chapter of the thesis analyses the factors that led the two originally neutral countries to redefine their strictly neutral status first as military non-alignment and finally to apply for NATO membership to answer the third research question.

The main data source is a review of primary and secondary documents which explore theories of international relations and the concept of neutrality as a security strategy. The theoretical foundations of the concept of neutrality are explored in the work *Neutrality, A really dead concept?* by Laurent Goetschel. In this 1999 article where he examined whether neutrality is really an outdated concept, he noted that it can still contribute to the European security. In the article, he distinguishes between the legal and political core of neutrality, giving importance to the state's national identity. In particular, the paper drew on the definitions of neutrality and the typical characteristics of neutral states. The report aptly guessed that neutrality would benefit European cooperation, as Sweden and Finland maintained this status twenty years after its publication. The article no longer reflects the current form of neutrality and its evolution, so the concept needs further analysis.

The definition of neutrality is given in *Black's Law Dictionary* by Henry Campbell Black. For the international legal regulation of neutrality, the documents of the 1907 *Hague Conventions* were used, the only norms anchoring the concept of neutrality to date. For this

reason, the thesis draws on customary law and common features of conduct to define the rights and obligations of neutral states. In determining the basic types of neutrality, the monograph by Peter Rosputinsky, *Neutralita v medzinárodných vzťahoch (Neutrality in international relations)* was used. This monograph provides a theoretical-analytical critique of the concept of neutrality and offers a breakdown of the different types of neutrality. This work explores the issue of neutrality in depth but does not reflect current developments and specific countries such as Sweden and Finland.

The work further outlines the fundamental theories of international relations, i.e., realism, liberalism, and constructivism. The basic principles of international relations theory are presented in Kenneth Waltz's *Theory of International Politics*, one of the first works of neorealism that no longer supports the idea of classical realism, i.e., the anarchy in international relations. In the book, Kenneth Waltz focuses on polarity, i.e., the powers, and considers bipolarity the most stable system. However, this work does not explain why the bipolar world has fallen apart. Furthermore, the thesis draws on Hans Morgenthau's *Politics Among Nations: the Struggle for Power and Peace*, which is based on the theory that war occurs because of power. It was also drawn from the work of Robert Keohane's *International Institutions: Two Approaches* and *Alexander Wendt's Anarchy is What States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics*. These authors are leading experts on international relations, and their theoretical insights have contributed significantly to this thesis. An article on the role of national identity in international relations, *Národní identita v mezinárodních vztazích: Mezi konstruktivismem a poststrukturalismem* by Michal Kolmas contributed to the thesis as well. In the piece, he argues that according to social constructivists, the most firmly rooted identities subsequently manifest as forms of culture. Identity can influence the state positively, i.e., promote change, or negatively, i.e., hinder it.

The third chapter drew on works focusing on the historical development of the two countries, particularly those publications dealing with the Finnish and Swedish neutrality and examining its change in the context of historical development. A contribution was made by Jakob Gustavsson, *The Politics of Foreign Policy Change: Explaining the Swedish Reorientation on EC Membership*, which addresses the issue of Sweden's changing foreign policy. The study is based on the idea that states change foreign policy approaches when conditions change, such as the presence of a crisis and a change in political leadership. Another publication dealing with Finnish and Swedish neutrality is Forsberg and Vaahtorant's *Inside the EU, Outside NATO: Paradoxes of Finland's and Sweden's Post-neutrality*, which examines and compares Finnish and Swedish neutrality, explores the two countries' attitudes towards the EU

and NATO, and highlights the role of geopolitics. It argues that the primary motive for Finland's entry into the EU was a security issue, while for Sweden, it was more economic and political motives. On the other hand, the thesis does not sufficiently reflect the threat of national identity, which reduces the article's value. In addition to the titles mentioned above, the following have been used official *NATO* websites but also Ministries of individual countries.

In addition to specialist literature, information and data have been drawn from internet sources and databases, such as government websites, foreign ministries, ministries of defence. The websites of both countries contain a large amount of accessible data. A large amount of publicly available data was drawn from the *Finnish websites of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, the Finnish Government, the Ministry of Defence of Finland and the Finnish Institute of International Affairs.* The quality articles from the journal *Cooperation and Conflict,* one of the leading journals on international relations in Europe, were also very useful.

1. The Concept of Neutrality in International Relations

The thesis discusses the transformation of neutrality in two Nordic countries, thus it is important to introduce and explain this concept. There is no single definition of neutrality and therefore it can be perceived in different ways. This chapter will introduce the linguistic meaning of the term neutrality, the definition of experts and the legal understanding of this term. For the purpose of this thesis, different types of neutrality have been selected to help us characterise and compare the aspects of neutrality in Finland and Sweden in the following chapters. The differentiation of neutrality into several types is not uniform, so neutrality will be divided in this chapter mainly based on duration (temporary/permanent) and legal status (de jure/de facto). Last but not least, the notion of non-alignment and neutralisation will be analysed, reflecting the more political aspect of neutrality.

For the purposes of this thesis, neutrality will be examined in the field of international relations and the international law, with special attention to the foreign policy of states. It should be borne in mind that it is a very broad concept, the boundaries of which cannot be defined with certainty. This is due to the fact that the content of neutrality varies and changes according to con-current developments. As the former Finnish President Urho Kekkonen pointed out, there can be as many neutralities as there are neutral states in Europe.[1] This means that each country may implement and interpret its neutrality policy differently in practice.

Etymologists agree that the term neutrality comes from the Latin word "*ne-utro*", which translates as "on neither side". There are other opinions about the origin of the word, with some experts suggesting it comes from the word *"neuter"*, meaning "neither of the two". Another opinion tends towards the word *"neutralis"*, meaning "belonging to no one".[2] If we look up the definition of this word, we find rather different definitions. Black's Law Dictionary characterises neutrality as the state of a state which does not take part in a war between two or more other states.[3] One of the leading writers on the subject, Goetschel, believes that *"being neutral means not taking part in a military conflict between third-party states."*[4] The author Goetschel points out that neutrality has changed over time. During the Cold War, for example,

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[1] ROSPUTINSKÝ, P. *Neutralita v medzinárodných vzťahoch.* Kolin: Nezávislé centrum pro studium politiky, 2010, p. 35.
[2] ADAMOVÁ, K., KŘÍŽKOVSKÝ, L., ŠOUŠA, J. and J. ŠOUŠOVÁ. *Politologický slovník.* Prague: C. H. Beck, 2001, p. 141
[3] BLACK, H. C., NOLAN, J. R. and J. M. HALEY. *Black's Law Dictionary.* J - Z. Prague: Victoria Publishing, 1993, p. 958
[4] GOETSCHEL, L. Neutrality, a Really Dead Concept*?. Cooperation and Conflict* [online]. 1999, 34 (2) [viewed 12 October 2023], p 119. Available from: http://www.jstor.org/stable/45083993.

the legal dimension of neutrality was more often emphasised than a country's political values. He also mentions that neutrality, as a security and political concept, emerged along with the concept of state sovereignty as the authority of the Church began to wane in the Middle Ages. As Goetschel continues *"sovereignty meant authority over all matters, and foremost the right of states to wage war whenever they thought this would fit their interests."*[5] Neutrality, according to Goetschel, was chosen by militarily weaker countries as a means of maintain their sovereignty in the international environment and was seen as a legal instrument.

Neutrality can be seen as an institution of public international law, but also as a security policy strategy. A distinction can be made between the legal and political dimensions of neutrality. In the international law, the term neutrality refers to the position of a state that does not participate in war with other states. According to the political meaning, neutrality can be defined as the position of a state that has not joined any military-political grouping.[6] These two approaches should be distinguished from each other, with some authors, such as Majer, using the terms neutrality law (Neutralitätsrecht) and neutrality policy (Neutralitätspolitik)[7] For centuries, the neutrality has been seen as an alternative to membership of military alliances and seen as an insurance policy in the event of collective security failures. Traditionally, the term has been interpreted as the neutral position of a state in a particular conflict vis-à-vis the belligerents.[8] In general, states choose this security strategy to ensure their own security.

In general terms, neutrality can be understood as non-participation in a war or a conflict. Neutrality is based on a country's commitment to stay out of armed conflicts, to remain impartial, and not to host or transit belligerent troops on its territory. The concept of neutrality was first codified in the international law at the Hague Conference in 1907. It regulated the rules of war and defined the rights and obligations of neutral and belligerent states during a war. In a war, belligerents must respect the inviolability of the territory of neutral states, and neutral states must guarantee their impartiality during a war.[9] By convention, neutrals should not participate in war, directly or indirectly furthermore, according to Goetschel, they should not *"support or favor war parties with military forces. Nor should they make their territory available to them, supply them with weapons or credits, or restrict private arms exports in a*

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[5] GOETSCHEL, L. Neutrality, a Really Dead Concept?. *Cooperation and Conflict* [online]. 1999, 34 (2) [viewed 12 October 2023], p 119. Available from: http://www.jstor.org/stable/45083993.
[6] KRAUS, J. *Nový akademický slovník cizích slov A-Ž.* 1. ed. Prague: Academia, 2009, p. 554.
[7] MAJER, D. *Neutralitätsrecht und Neutralitätspolitik am Beispiel Österreichs und der Schweiz.* Heidelberg: R. v. Decker & C. F. Müller, 1987
[8] GOETSCHEL, L. Neutrality…., p. 119.
[9] Convention respecting the Rights and Duties of Neutral Powers and Persons in Case of War on Land. 1907, Art. 16

one-sided way. "[10] In practice, however, being neutral in security policy is not an easy task for states. It is not always easy (or possible) for neutral states to comply with the prohibited steps.

The two Hague Conventions Respecting the Rights and Duties of Neutral Powers and Persons in Case of War on Land (HC V) and of Neutral Powers in Naval War regulate the rights and duties of neutral States, which can be of three kinds. The first is the duty of a neutral state not to take military part in armed conflicts between states. Second, a state claiming neutrality cannot provide military assistance to parties at a war. This means weapons, its own armed forces, or its territory. Finally, and also crucially, a neutral state is obliged to treat belligerents equally. In return for its neutral stance, the state has the right to expect other countries to respect its neutrality.[11]

The Hague Conventions provide definitions of neutrality only in terms of the wartime neutrality, i.e., temporary neutrality, not permanent neutrality, which also applies even in peacetime. It is important to distinguish between de facto neutrality and permanent neutrality, as well as between a policy of neutrality and a policy of non-alignment, as will be explained below.

1.1. Occasional/Military neutrality

Military or occasional neutrality, which might also be called ordinary or temporary neutrality, is the basic type of neutrality, while the second type is permanent neutrality, which will be discussed in the next chapter. This type of neutrality has its basis in the international law of an armed conflict. When applying occasional neutrality, a state commits itself to non-participation in a particular military conflict. This depends on the development of the particular conflict and ends with its termination or with the entry of the neutral state into the war. The prerequisite for the emergence of a military conflict is therefore the unilateral declaration of neutrality by the state. There is no need for multilateral treaties or legal acts confirming neutrality.[12] There are different opinions on the form of the declaration; according to another opinion, recognition or acceptance by the belligerent states is also necessary, in the form of official proclamations or diplomatic notes.[13] The duration of the neutral status depends on the

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[10] GOETSCHEL, L. Neutrality…., p. 118.
[11] SEGER, P. The Law of Neutrality. In: CLAPHAM, A and P. GAETA, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of International Law in Armed Conflict.* Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 249.
[12] ROSPUTINSKÝ, P. *Neutralita v medzinárodných vzťahoch.* Kolin: Nezávislé centrum pro studium politiky, 2010, p. 40
[13] ČEPELKA, Č. and P. ŠTURMA. *Mezinárodní právo veřejné.* Prague: EUROLEX BOHEMIA, 2003, p. 749.

length of the conflict. In general, neutrality is temporary, and the Hague Conventions were designed for just such situations.

1.2. Permanent neutrality

The institution of permanent neutrality is enshrined in the Law of Peace. Permanent neutrality requires a commitment by a state to remain neutral in any future conflict. In addition to the same rights and obligations as a temporarily neutral state, a permanently neutral state has additional obligations in the peacetime. However, the status of permanent neutrality, which is consistent with the sovereignty and independence of the State, imposes certain limitations on the freedom of action in foreign relations. Permanent neutrality can be established by a bilateral or multilateral international treaty. Switzerland is a typical case of permanent neutrality, its neutrality having been recognised by the great powers at the Paris and Vienna Conferences in 1815. However, this declaration does not contain the obligations or the content of Switzerland's permanent neutrality.[14] Permanent neutrality can also be established in a simplified form by the means of an international treaty, as in the case of Austria, which unilaterally declared permanent neutrality by means of a constitutional act, which was notified to and accepted by other states. Neutrality can also be declared by a declaration, which must then be recognised by the other states. If a state declares neutrality at the political level, but has no legal obligation to observe neutrality, or if this unilaterally declared permanent neutrality is not recognised by other states, it is not permanent neutrality and its effects under international law, but de facto neutrality or neutral policy.[15] In the case of Sweden, it is not permanent neutrality because it was only a declaration on a political level.

Unlike a temporarily neutral state, which can choose to be neutral or not, permanently neutral state has decided not to participate in an ongoing or future military conflict. Permanent peacetime neutrality also has legal implications arising from the principle of good faith or pacta sunt servanda. A state should not be a member of an international community in peacetime. The most significant limitation is therefore that a permanently neutral state cannot become a

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[14] ŠTURMA, P. Posouzení smyslu neutrality v Evropě (obecný přehled vývoje trvalé neutrality na pozadí porovnání příkladu Švýcarska a Rakouska). In: ŠTURMA, P. (ed.). Sborník z konference Smysl neutrality v dnešní Evropě. Příklad Rakousko. Praha: Ediční středisko Právnické fakulty Univerzity Karlovy Praha v nakladatelství VODNÁŘ. 1998, s. 16-18.
[15] ROSPUTINSKÝ, P. Neutralita v medzinárodných vzťahoch. Kolin: Nezávislé centrum pro studium politiky, 2010, p. 40.

member of a military or defence alliance such as NATO (mainly because of Article 5, which states that an attack on one member is an attack against all NATO members). [16]

However, there are different views in literature on membership of international organisations. According to Rosputinsky, a permanently neutral state should not allow the presence of foreign troops on its territory and should not enter into international military and defence alliances.[17] According to Seger, agreements with allied states on military training, joint exercises, or the sale of arms or ammunition are consistent with permanent neutrality.[18] A permanently neutral state has the right to unilaterally terminate its policy of neutrality, but the principle of good faith principle requires that a neutral state does not immediately change its status and informs other states accordingly. Termination is also possible by a multilateral agreement. As another possibility of termination, the authors M. A. Reiterer and S. Wittich mention the invocation of a substantial change in the circumstances under which the permanent neutrality was established or the repeal of the law establishing neutrality (as in the case of Austria).[19] Since permanent neutrality is not enshrined anywhere in law, it is mainly based on the qualified practice of states.

1.3.   Neutrality de facto vs de iure/neutralisation

De facto neutrality (de facto neutrality, also known as voluntary neutrality) is applied by a state when it decides to apply this principle in its foreign policy without having an international treaty in place. In the case of de facto neutrality, no international legal obligation is created for the state, as there is no international agreement or guarantee attached to it. In other words, de facto neutrality is characterised by the persistence of a neutral policy and the absence of an international legal anchor. A state can change its strategy at any time, as long as other states are informed in a time and no treaty obligations are undermined.[20] The advantage of de facto neutrality is that it can be abandoned immediately, therefore it is an easier option to end neutrality, but the disadvantage may be lack of credibility in the eyes of foreign partners (in the

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[16] SEGER, P. The Law of Neutrality. In: CLAPHAM, A and P. GAETA, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of International Law in Armed Conflict*. Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 260.
[17] ROSPUTINSKÝ, P. *Neutralita...*, p. 44.
[18] SEGER, P. The Law of Neutrality..., p. 260.
[19] REITERER, M. A., WITTICH, S. The Permanent Discussion on Austria's Neutrality. In: Sborník z konference Smysl neutrality v dnešní Evropě. Příklad Rakousko. Praha: Ediční středisko Právnické fakulty Univerzity Karlovy Praha v nakladatelství VODNÁŘ. 1998, p. 85.
[20] SUBEDI, S. Neutrality in a Changing World: European Neutral States and the European Community. *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly* [online]. 1993, 42 (2) [viewed 13 October 2023]. p. 242 Available from: http://www.jstor.org/stable/761099

case of Sweden we can mention the USSR's mistrust of Sweden's neutrality during the Cold War).

A neutral policy with the aim of achieving permanent neutrality can also be deliberately pursued by a state that does not yet have legal guarantees of its neutrality. This was precisely the case with Finland, whose policy of neutrality was based on legal guarantees and to ensure its neutrality, at least de facto, it was essential to convince the USSR of its willingness to declare neutrality in the event of an East-West conflict. Finland unilaterally declared neutrality in 1956, while Sweden had already declared its neutrality in 1815.

Neutrality de iure is the opposite of neutrality de facto; it applies to states that are formally committed to neutrality by a legal document, most often an international treaty. This type of neutrality, which is based on international law, is typical of Switzerland or Austria. At the same time, any de jure neutrality is a permanent neutrality.[21] A country adopts this type of neutrality most often under pressure from the international system, which is why it is sometimes referred to as imposed neutrality. A typical example is Austria, which adopted neutrality in 1955 through coercive measures under pressure from the Soviet Union and the pressure from the international environment.

Another term used in international relations that can be confused with the term neutrality is neutralisation. A brief analysis of this terms will provide a better understanding of the concept of neutrality. The term neutralism usually refers to the political stance of a country that has chosen to exercise de facto neutrality.[22] Neutralisation is based on an international treaty between other states without the participation of the state in question. It is a strict and very formal type of neutrality.[23] The aim of neutralisation of states is to maintain peace by making special agreements on the territory that may be in dispute. Although neutralisation is of a long-term in nature, it is not a permanent neutrality. The sovereignty of a neutralised state is secured by an international treaty between one or more states. This status is valid in times of war and peace and can only be terminated with the consent of all parties to the treaty. An example of a part of a neutralised territory is the autonomous part of Finland, the Åland Islands, located in the Baltic Sea.[24]

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[21] OJANEN, H., HEROLF, G. and R. LINDAHL. *Non-Alignment and European Security Policy. Ambiguity at Work*. Kauhava: The Finnish Institute of International Affairs & Institut für Europäische Politik, 2000, p. 12.

[22] JOHNSON, P. *Neutrality, A Policy for Britain*. London: Temple Smith, 1985, p. 60.

[23] ANDISHA, N. A. *Neutrality in Afghanistan's Foreign Policy*. Washington: US Institute of Peace, 2015. p. 15.

[24] SUBEDI, S. Neutrality in a Changing World: European Neutral States and the European Community. *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly* [online]. 1993, 42 (2) [viewed 13 October 2023]. p 242. Available from: http://www.jstor.org/stable/761099

In this context, it is worth mentioning the neutrality of Finland after World War II, which had the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance (FCMA) with the USSR. This influenced the shape of Finnish foreign policy and did not allow the state to pursue any other policy than neutrality. This topic is further analysed in the chapter on Finnish neutrality during the Cold War.

1.4. Military non-alignment

As it is the case of de facto neutrality, non-alignment is not regulated by the international law. Non-alignment or non-participation (non-commitment, more commonly non-alignment) and neutralism are terms that emerged during the Cold War. Some authors refer to the policy of non-alignment as a policy of neutrality, in other contexts as a type of neutrality.[25] However, non-alignment does not constitute an institution of international law, nor does it create any legal obligations consisting of rights and duties. It is a specific form of foreign policy. The most prominent manifestation of the non-alignment policy was the Non-Aligned Movement, which emerged during the Cold War in the 1980s. It was a political initiative whose main objective was to reject the political and military confrontation between the two blocs, East and West, and the conviction not to align with either side. It was a movement of mainly developing countries, without any European democratic country. The priority of the movement was to avert a major war and to settle minor wars between the West and the East.[26]

Non-alignment is seen as a more active policy than neutrality. After the end of the Cold War, the term is used again by Sweden and Finland, this time in the form of military non-alignment. During the Cold War, the term neutrality was preferred mainly to emphasise that the primary goal was to stay out of the bipolar world order, and to remain neutral in any future war.[27] Both Nordic countries (but especially Finland) used the term to indicate that they did not want to become members of any military alliance. They wanted to emphasise that the concept of neutrality no longer reflected reality, as it was an outdated term. To distinguish the term from the Non-Aligned Movement, the Finns use the term "*liitoutumattomuus*" in government texts, which is translated as military non-alliance.[28] The aforementioned author Nasir Andish, in his article Neutrality in Afghanistan's Foreign Policy, in which he briefly characterises types of

[25] OGLEY, R. *The Theory and Practice of Neutrality in the Twentieth Century.* London: Rotledge & Kegan Paul, 1970, p. 4
[26] Ibid.
[27] ANDRÉN, N. Sweden's Security Policy. *Cooperation and Conflict* [online]. 1972, 7(3/4) [viewed 12 October 2023], pp. 259-285. Available from: http://www.jstor.org/stable/45083993.
[28] HIMANEN H. From neutrality to engagement. In: OJANEN H. (ed). *Neutrality and non-alignment in Europe today.* Helsinki: The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 2003, pp. 25-26.

neutrality, defines militarily non-aligned as "*this category includes states that prefer to remain neutral after cessation of war and that declare their peacetime neutrality in internal legislation without seeking international recognition or guarantee.*"[29] He mentions that in addition to Sweden and Finland, Ireland was also considered to be such a neutral state.

Given the current situation, where Sweden and Finland are both members of the EU, both countries support the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), are involved in NATO's cooperation structures, and both have applied to join this military grouping, military non-alignment is becoming less relevant.

1.5. Defining elements of neutrality

As mentioned above, there is no single definition of a neutral state, and experts do not even agree on how a neutral state should behave in the international arena. According to some authors, the fact that a neutral state has its own army is controversial. An example of a country that does not have an army is Iceland, which is one of the founding members of NATO. However, the army can be used for civilian and humanitarian missions in addition to protecting its own territory. Membership of or cooperation with international organisations, especially the EU and NATO, may also be controversial.[30] According to the author of this theses, being neutral means not participating in a military conflict, not being a member of a military organisation and pursuing a neutral foreign policy so as to maintain credibility in the eyes of other countries.

However, there are definitional elements inherent to in neutral states on which experts agree. In order to examine the transformation of neutrality for Sweden and Finland, it is necessary to have a clear idea of what it means to be a neutral state. The definitional elements can be derived from a view of the legal anchoring of neutrality in international law, and the characteristics of a neutral state according to the expert interpretations mentioned above. We can follow these definitional elements:

1. A neutral state is not a member of any military alliances, nor does it enter into agreements that would commit it to a military intervention or otherwise threaten the independence of its foreign policy.
2. No direct participation in an armed conflict between third parties.
3. A neutral state cannot directly or indirectly support parties to a conflict with military material, nor will it make its territory available to them.

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[29] ANDISHA, N. A. *Neutrality in Afghanistan's Foreign Policy.* Washington: US Institute of Peace, 2015. p. 3.
[30] DRULÁK P. and R. DRULÁKOVÁ. *Tvorba a analýza zahraniční politiky.* Prague: Oeconomica, 2007, p. 173.

4. A neutral state can only maintain defence capabilities to protect its territory.

5. Impartiality in its foreign policy in times of peace.

Although it is possible to identify five areas typical of neutral states based on the theoretical literature, in practice, it is challenging to assess their fulfillment, as each element can be interpreted differently. For example, defence capabilities are also possessed by countries that are not neutral, and it is impossible to distinguish between defensive and offensive armies. Also, impartiality in its foreign policy is difficult to identify. In practice, it may also be problematic whether there is direct participation in an armed conflict between third parties if a neutral state supplies, for example, so-called non-lethal equipment, helmets, and similar equipment.

2. Neutrality from the perspective of the Main theories of international relations

To better understand neutrality in international relations, the problems of international relations theories and their view of neutrality as a security concept are outlined. The aim of the following chapter is to analyse how selected theories of international relations approach the concept of neutrality. Particular attention will be paid to realism and the theory of balancing and bandwagoning. These approaches are closely related to the state's efforts to strengthen its own position in the international arena by seeking allies. Realism explains the changing balance of power by balancing the enemy or bandwagoning, i.e., siding with the enemy. It appears that this is still a very relevant theory. Next, liberalism's view of neutral states and the influence of institutionalisation and international organisations will be analysed in order to achieve peace as a desired state. Finally, constructivism and its view of neutral states and on the values and identity of the state will be evaluated.

2.1. Realism: survival, balancing and bandwagoning

Realism is one of the most important theoretical approaches to the problems of international relations and represents the main theoretical framework for their study. Realism is a set of different trends and interpretations that share the same perspective. We distinguish between historical realism, traditional realism and neorealism, which emerged after the Second World War. Realists try to explain the causes of war and peace.[31] Realists see conflict in international relations as a natural state of affairs, with states being the main actors according to realism. The main issue for realists is the problem of power. According to realists, the power has many dimensions, but the most important are material base and military power. For the actors in international relations, rivalry and enmity prevail; lasting peace or cooperation are not possible according to realism. Common features of realism are the centrality of the state (statism, state centric view), survival and self-help.[32]

Structure in international relations is different from domestic politics, which is governed by a hierarchical structure and a set of legal norms. According to classical realism, the international system is anarchic because it lacks a clearly given structure (anarchy in IR means that there is no superior entity over states). Realism accepts the existence of a stronger law, in contrast to utopianism, which recognises universal moral norms. According to Kenneth Waltz,

[31] MÜLLER, D. Realismus. In: PŠEJA, P. (ed). *Přehled teorií mezinárodních vztahů*. Brno: Masaryk University, Mezinárodní politologický ústav, 2005, p. 39.
[32] WAISOVÁ, Š. *Úvod do studia mezinárodních vztahů*. (ed). Plzeň: Aleš Čeněk, p. 109

the systematic study of the causes of war provides a direct way of assessing the conditions for peace.[33] War breaks out when peace is inconvenient and unsustainable for states.[34] Morgenthau points out that universal moral principles cannot be applied to the actions of states because the interest of the state is the survival of the nation.[35] Waltz emphasised that in the anarchic structure of international relations, only the states that are consistently concerned with ensuring their security can survive. He argues that states cooperate when they collectively perceive a threat, and when that threat disappears, the cooperation weakens. He stresses that the main cause of war is due to the inherently selfish and evil nature of human beings.[36] The realism was particularly dominant between the world wars and during the Cold War, but this theory began to decline after the end of the Cold War.

Realists recognise several basic assumptions about the international politics, including the centrality of the state and state sovereignty, the importance of power, and the need for state survival. They acknowledge the existence of neutral states but "*are unable to provide a convincing explanation for the influence of neutrality*".[37] Realism tends to study great powers, hence less attention is paid to small states and their position in the international arena.[38] According to realists, states that choose to remain neutral do so on the grounds that they are better able to protect their national survival interests than if they were to join one of the belligerents.[39] States, according to realists, should be motivated by national interests (including national security) rather than international practices such as neutrality. "*Realism explains a neutral stance as the rational calculation of a small state's interests in the state-centered, unfriendly, self-help environment*".[40] During a conflict, according to these assumptions, a state should seek to balance or bandwagon with the stronger side, but neutrality can be an alternative solution.

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[33] WALTZ, K. N. Structural Realism after the Cold War. *International Security.* 2000, 25 (1), p. 8.
[34] EICHLER, J. *Od Sarajeva po Hirošimu: válka a mír v první polovině 20. století.* Prague: Karolinum Publishing House, 2013, p. 21.
[35] MORGENTHAU, H. *Politics Among Nations: the Struggle for Power and Peace.* New York: Knopf, 1973, p. 4-16.
[36] WALTZ, K. N. *Man, The State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2001, p. 16.
[37] AUSTIN, D. A. Realism, Institutions, and Neutrality: Constraining Conflict Through the Force of Norms. Commonwealth: *A Journal of Political Science,* 1998, 9, p. 39.
[38] SIMPSON, A. W. Realism, Small States and Neutrality. In: ORSI, D. AUGUSTIN J.R., and M. NURNUS. *Realism in Practice: An Appraisal E-IR edited collections.* E-International Relations, 2017, p. 119.
[39] MORRIS, K. and T. WHITE. Neutrality and the European Union: The case of Switzerland. *Journal of Law and Conflict Resolution,* 3(7), 104-111. p. 105.
[40] JESSE, N. Choosing to Go It Alone: Irish Neutrality in Theoretical and Comparative Perspective. *International Political Science Review*, 2006, 27(1), p. 7.

Since neutral states are not a part of any alliance, they must defend themselves against potential threats and equip themselves accordingly to be able to ensure their independence in the international environment. Neutral states have chosen this strategy mainly for geostrategic and pragmatic reasons, depending on the current situation of the international balance of power.[41] According to the realists, neutrality is a strategy especially for small states that have to rely mainly on themselves. The realists are mostly concerned with large states and great powers; small states are often not the main object of their attention, unless these states have important geostrategic significance or play a significant role in a particular conflict.[42] Therefore, from a realist perspective, neutrality is an institution created to serve the needs of small states.

This is mainly because neutral states pursue a policy of non-interference between hostile blocs. However, since the bipolar world of the post-Cold War era has been replaced by a unipolar world, realist argue that neutrality is meaningless because the international system lacks the structures to enforce this security strategy.[43] Thus, the realists point out that since the end of the Cold War, the neutrality that states chose as a security strategy has become obsolete.

In an anarchic environment, the realists argue, the basic goal of the state is to survive. One way for a state to ensure its security in the international environment is to find allies. Balancing is a strategy whereby a threatened state forms or joins an alliance to counter an aggressive superpower. The aim is to use collective force primarily to protect itself and, ideally, also to dominate a party that could threaten the security stability of the state in question. According to Walt, states form alliances primarily to balance threats, not for power per se. Another option is bandwagoning, but Walt argues that this is only used by states that are very weak in relation to the source.[44] Walt provides empirical evidence that small states often prefer a balancing strategy. According to Reiter, however, the main motivation for alliances is not an external threat but past historical experience. According to him, small states form alliances even in situations where they are not directly threatened, in order to strengthen their defences and have better tools to prevent outbreak and escalation of conflicts.[45] Wivel and Oest identify another

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[41]JESSE, N. Choosing to Go It Alone: Irish Neutrality in Theoretical and Comparative Perspective. *International Political Science Review*, 2006, 27(1), p. 7.

[42] SIMPSON, A. W. Realism, Small States and Neutrality. In: ORSI, D. AUGUSTIN, J.R., and M. NURNUS. *Realism in Practice: An Appraisal E-IR edited collections.* E-International Relations, 2017, p. 46.

[43] GÉMES, A. and R. GUDRUN. Austria's Neutrality and European Integration: A Conflict between International and National Spheres of Law. In: ISAACS, A. K. HIEBL, E. and L. TRINDADE. (ed). *Perspectives on European integration and European Union history.* Pisa: Pisa University Press, 2008, p. 190.

[44] WALT, S. M. *Origins of Alliances.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987, pp. 147-180.

[45] REITER, D. Learning, Realism, and Alliances: the Weight of the Shadow of the Past. *World Politics*, 1994, 46 (4), pp. 490-526.

motive, namely to gain additional resources for security resources or economic benefits from a stronger state.[46]

A state can choose to balance externally, i.e. through alliances or other membership of a military or economic organisation, or internally, by relying on its own capabilities and its own capacities to improve its defence posture. Elements of internal balancing can be seen in all conflicts, and can take the form of preventive rearmament, reducing economic dependence, or preparing for potential conflicts, especially military ones. This strategy may not always be the path to peace, as it can increase international tensions if misinterpreted. [47] Neutrality can be seen as a form of balance power in the international arena; if collective security fails, the neutral state acts as a mediator. In practice, neutral states lean towards and cooperate with one side or the other. An example is Sweden, which cooperated with the Germans during World War II in order to continue to benefit from economic cooperation. A similar example is Switzerland, whose banks accepted Nazi money.

Bandwagoning is a strategy that states may adopt in order to deflect a threat to a stronger alliance member or to share in the benefits of ultimate triumph. Seeking to preserve one's independence is seen as a defensive move; seeking a share of the spoils of victory is seen as an offensive strategy. Is this a strategy that states voluntarily choose? Waltz argues that weaker states will voluntarily join the winning side because they believe it is best for them. A similar situation is the surrender of a state to a stronger opponent. The fact that there is a voluntariness factor between bandwagoning and capitulation is crucial, he argues.[48] For weaker states, bandwagoning is a strategic choice, as can be seen, for example, in the relations between Russia and the states of the former Soviet Union. Geographical proximity to Russia makes these states more vulnerable to its influence. Sometimes states even have no choice but to submit to a stronger neighbour, especially if they share a direct border between them. In international politics, smaller states that are geographically closer to major powers are more susceptible to bandwagoning, but weaker states can also pose a threat to stronger ones if they choose a balancing strategy.[49] An example of bandwagoning is the Winter War between Finland and the USSR, where Finland successfully asserted its sovereignty over a much larger and more powerful neighboring. Neutrality can carry elements of balance power, where most often small

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[46] WIVEL, A. and K. J. N. OEST. Security, profit or shadow of the past? Explaining the security strategies of microstates. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 2010, 23(3), pp. 429-453.
[47] WALTZ, K. N. *Theory of International Politics*. Canada: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co., 1979. pp. 126-128.
[48] Ibid.
[49] SCHWELLER, R. L. Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back. *International Security*, 1994, 19(1), pp. 72 -107.

states try to balance power in the international environment by not joining either side (Cold War - East and West). It can also contain elements of bandwagoning, as in the case of Finland, which maintained enforced neutrality through the FCMA, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

2.2. Liberalism/Idealism and democratic peace

Liberalism is a grouping of many heterogeneous currents, and like the various forms of realism, these currents share common assumptions. It is a very broad concept, that is internally diverse and applied and further developed by a large group of thinkers - it includes economic liberals and various branches of institutionalism. Liberalists, unlike realists, believe that with the growth of knowledge, humanity is able to reflect on and avoid the mistakes of the past in the form of violence and war. According to liberalists, states are not the most important actors in the international relations, and they also relativise the strict distinction between foreign and domestic policy.[50] Liberals believe that we do not live in an anarchic environment that is constantly threatened by a war, but in an environment with a degree of institutionalisation that fundamentally influences the behaviour of actors in the international arena. In contrast to the realists, they attach great importance to institutions that influence the interactions of political actors in the international arena.[51] They argue that it is through these means that brute force can be replaced by a dialogue, research and reason in international relations, rather than the use of armies.

Liberalism stresses the importance of the moral position of free individuals within a social contract with a government that is representative, benevolent, and underpinned by democratic and open institutions. There is an expectation that there will be no arbitrary rule and that freedom of speech, free media and legal equality will be guaranteed. All this should influence international relations towards peaceful coexistence.[52] This goal, according to the liberalists, can be achieved through international cooperation, integration and economic cooperation leading to interdependence. This integration would strengthen peaceful relations between states.[53] Some proponents of neoliberal institutionalism argue that "*Without institutions there will be little cooperation. And without a knowledge of how institutions work-and what*

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[50] DRULÁK, P. Úvod do mezinárodních vztahů. In: NOVÁK, M. and L. BROKL (ed.) *Úvod do studia politiky.* Prague: Sociologické nakladatelství (SLON), 2011, p. 36.
[51] KEOHANE, R. O. and NYE, J. *Power and Interdependence.* 3rd ed. New York: Longman, 2001, p. 263.
[52] RICHMOND, O. *Peace in International Relations.* 2nd ed. New York: Routledge. 2008, p. 23.
[53] WALTZ, K. N. Structural Realism after the Cold War. *International Security*, 2000, 25 (1), pp. 5-41.

makes them work well."[54] Liberal advocates underline the importance of their view by pointing to the still strong position of NATO and the European Union after the end of the Cold War.[55]

Liberal writers argue that, in the context of liberal principles, nothing binds the liberal state to neutrality. The concept of neutrality according to the liberal principles means denying that the state can legitimately use its power.[56] Liberals claim that the states *"choose neutrality based on domestic factors or international normative considerations"* and *"contribute to international institutions that create collective security with or without increasing directly the neutral's own security"*.[57] Liberals believe that the main motivation that could lead historically neutral states to abandon their neutral status is the expected economic benefits from the trade, financial and labour ties that follow from membership in regional institutions such as the EU.[58] Thus, liberalism cannot explain the concept of neutrality, because it is inconsistent with the benefits that the liberal view of international integration claims it brings. Within liberal theories, there is a model of interdependence that emphasises the importance of the interconnectedness and interdependence of nations in cooperation. This model also evaluates neutrality as an outdated concept, arguing that the economic and political integration brings security and makes war between participating nations become unlikely. In this context, neutrality appears outdated and may prevent small states from integrating, which may ultimately mean less security.[59] Thus, according to these arguments, neutrality, which was a popular security strategy in the past, is now obsolete.

One of the theories of the liberal-idealist tradition is the theory of democratic peace, which is an anomaly in the realist conception of international relations. This thesis argues that democratic states do not go to war with each other because they seek to resolve disputes peacefully. According to the realist approach, this hypothesis is an accidental phenomenon because it is not clear from the theoretical framework of realism why a group of democratic countries should not be at war with each other.[60] The theory assumes that if states secure the

[54] KEOHANE, R. O. International Institutions: Two Approaches. *International Studies Quarterly*, 1988, 32(4). p. 393.
[55] GHECIU, A. NATO, liberal internationalism, and the politics of imagining the Western security community. *International Journal*, 2019, 74(1), pp. 32-46.
[56] RAZ, J. *The Morality of Freedom*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1986, pp. 110-111.
[57] JESSE, N. Choosing to Go It Alone..., p. 14.
[58] GASTEGYER, C. Swiss Neutrality: Obsolete or Obstinate? - The Challenges of the Future. In: MILIVOJEVIC, M. and P. MAURER (eds.). *Swiss Neutrality and Security: Armed Forces, National Defense and Foreign Policy*, New York: Berg Pub Ltd, 1990, pp. 201-203.
[59] GÉMES, A. GUDRUN, R. Austria's Neutrality and European Integration: A Conflict between International and National Spheres of Law. In: ISAACS, A. K. HIEBL, E. and L. TRINDADE. (ed). *Perspectives on European integration and European Union history.* Pisa: Pisa University Press, 2008, p. 190.
[60] CHAN, S. In Search of Democratic Peace: Problems and Promise. *Mershon International Studies Review*, 41(1), 1997, p. 59-91.

basic liberal-democratic rights of their citizens, then society will function without internal and external military conflict. In particular, it promotes democratic values such as freedom of expression and association, equality under the law, the right to own property, equal suffrage and a constitutionally guaranteed democratic electoral process, among others.[61] The theory has inspired much research, and its dyadic form, which argues that there is little chance of an armed conflict breaking out between two democratic states, is accepted by politicians and academics alike.

The neoliberals were convinced that the promotion of world peace required active building through international organizations to eliminate anarchy in the international system. The power balancing system was to be replaced by collective security. The interest of the actors determined whether an alliance would emerge. In case of interest to form an organization, actors are willing to limit a part of their sovereignty. The aim is not only to address specific threats, the membership in an alliance is, in their view, beneficial, as organisations can be expected to become more institutionalised and dedicated to security risk management and security cooperation between member states during their existence.[62] In contrast to realism, neoliberalism focuses more on other models used in microeconomics (market failure, collective action) in addition to game theory. They are based on the thesis that institutions are used by states to solve problems associated with a collective action. According to the theory, the institutions have a regulative influence that leads to efforts to solve problems associated with collective action and to promote cooperation. [63]

In neutral countries such as Sweden and Finland we can observe a high level of participation in peacekeeping missions, but at the same time 'reluctance to engage in military intervention. Neutrality implies a strong commitment to self-defence, without which it would lose its credibility, in line with the pacifist type of liberal democracy. It leads a neutral country to mediate between conflicting parties, to be open to democratic and authoritarian regimes, and to maintain a willingness to cooperate with all partners. Neutral states are often strong supporters of arms control and disarmament initiatives.[64]

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[61] DOPITA, T. The Study of International Peace Initiatives and International Relations Theories: Towards Critical Constructivism? *Czech Journal of International Relations*, 2012, 47 (3), p. 80.

[62] WALLANDER, A. C. and R. O. KEOHANE. Risk, Threat and Security Institutions. In: HAFTENDORN, H. KEOHANE. R. O. and WALLANDER, A. C. (eds.). *Imperfect Unions: Security Institutions over Time and Space.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 20-22.

[63] HAGGARD, S, and B. SIMMONS. Theories of International Regimes. *International Organization*, 1987, 41(3), p. 499.

[64] MÜLLER, H. The Antinomy of Democratic Peace. *International Politics.* 2004, 41(4), p. 510.

2.3. Constructivism, values and identity

It is a theoretical approach that began to emerge in the late 1980s, particularly with the end of the Cold War and bipolarity, for which traditional theories such as realism and liberalism could not explain. Constructivism is not based on material factors, unlike realism (military power) and liberalism (economic power). Constructivism is based on two basic principles, namely *"(1) that the structures of human association are determined primarily by shared ideas rather than material forces, and (2) that the identities and interests of purposive actors are constructed by these shared ideas rather than given by nature"*[65] Constructivism is therefore based on theoretical arguments and ideas. its main criticism is not directly directed at the claims of realists or liberalists, but at what these theorists neglect, which according to constructivists is the social dimension of international relations.[66]

In international relations, the constructivist approach is closer to disciplines such as sociology and psychology. Constructivists see the state as a social construct whose interests can change and whose actions are not based solely on rational decision-making.[67] Since realism and liberalism share many ideas and premises, the debate between them has become limited mainly to the question of whether states are more likely to pursue relative rather than absolute gains.[68] According to constructivism, actors in international relations deal with other actors in according to the established norms and patterns of behaviour. According to constructivism, the international environment is not anarchic, as realists believe, but it is shaped by interactions between among actors.[69] Constructivists emphasize the importance of studying transnational actors who can significantly influence state behaviour and shape international norms and values.[70]

The constructivist interpretation of neutrality focuses on the values and norms associated with neutrality in the historical context. They emphasize that in specific situations and cases, these specificities then determine state policy.[71] According to them, neutrality is not a static concept but it is reflected in how states interpret and apply it. Some may see it as isolation from

[65] WENDT, A. Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics. *International Organization,*1992, 46(2), p. 391.
[66] CHECKEL, J. T. The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory. *World Politics,* 1998, 50(2), p. 324.
[67]WENDT, A. Collective Identity Formation and the International State. *American Political Science Review.* 1994, 88(02), p. 385.
[68] WENDT, A. Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics. *International Organization,*1992, 46(2), p. 391-393.
[69] HOPF, T. The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory. *International Security,* 1998, 23(1), p. 173.
[70] SNYDER, J. One World, Rival Theories. *Foreign Policy.* 2004, (145), p. 52-62.
[71] MORRIS, K. and T. White. Neutrality and the European Union: The case of Switzerland. *Journal of Law and Conflict Resolution.* 2011, 3(7), p. 106.

world conflicts, others may see it as an active stance in promoting peace and change in the international order. One example is Sweden, which sees its long-standing neutrality as a protection of its interests, but also as a tool to promote peace initiatives and solidarity. Instead of isolation, Sweden tries to be an active player, promoting the equality of the system and criticising the power politics of the superpowers. This interpretation thus links neutrality with domestic politics and the perception of itself in the world.[72]

Some proponents of constructivism argue that states' choices regarding foreign alliances are influenced not only by material power but also by shared ideological views and attitudes of leaders. According to the dominant ideological orientation of the state, like-minded elites seek to form an international ideological group.[73] Elites play a crucial role in the emergence of foreign policy, especially in countries in transition and where new social structures emerging. Although public opinion is strongly influenced by the attitudes of elites, public opinion has the final say on what is considered acceptable.[74]

Debates over the interpretation of national identity in international relations began in the 1990s and early 21st century. Unlike realists who emphasize power, these debates have focused on culture and the cultural determinants of the formation of national interests. A state's foreign policy is shaped domestically, independent of the pressures and structures of the international system, providing support for the claim that identity can be actively constructed and subsequently used to influence actors in the international system, as well as the norms, rules and structures of the system itself.[75] Wendt saw the state's interest as intersubjectively constituted, where intersubjective structures emerge through collective perception. This collective identity subsequently forms the basis of state behaviour, which in turn establishes state preferences. In the case of positive identification between states, they are more likely to be willing to accede to collective security systems, thus transforming an anarchic system into a more peaceful form.[76] From a constructivist perspective, identity plays a key role in the analysis and understanding of foreign policy pursued and implemented by state actors.

Along with neutrality, there is also the question of the country's ethical values and identity. One of the important features of a neutral state is impartiality in foreign policy in peacetime.

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[72] AGIUS, C. Social Constructivism. In: COLLINS, A. (ed.). *Contemporary Security Studies*. London: Oxford University Press, 2013, p.78.
[73] OWEN, J. M. Transnational Liberalism and U.S. Primacy. *International Security*, 2002, 26 (3), pp. 117-152.
[74] GVALIA, G., SIROKY, D., LEBANIDZE, B., and Z. IASHVILI. Thinking Outside the Bloc: Explaining the Foreign Policies of Small States. *Security Studies*, 2013, 22, pp. 98-131
[75] KOWERT, P. A. Foreign Policy and the Social Construction of State Identity. In: DENEMARK, R. A. (ed). *The International Studies Encyclopedia*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010, pp. 2479-2498.
[76] KOLMAŠ, M. Národní identita v mezinárodních vztazích: Mezi konstruktivismem a poststrukturalismem. *Mezinárodní vztahy*, 2017, 52(1), pp. 53-56.

It is an important feature that reflects the perception of the role of the state by other actors. Neutrality is a construct that is only functional when other actors recognize it. As will be discussed in the following chapter, neutrality has not always been respected by neutral states. An example of a violation of values is the Sweden's economic and political cooperation with the Nazis, allowing the transport of German soldiers through Swedish territory.

3. The evolution of neutrality policy in Sweden and Finland

Finnish and Swedish security policies are not entirely identical, but there are common features. This chapter will outline the development from the birth of neutrality to the accession of both countries to the EU and the emergence of partnership with NATO. The aim of this chapter is to outline the most important milestones in history that have influenced the foreign policy of Finland and Sweden. Before the establishment of the independent state in 1917, the territory of Finland had been an important area between Russia and Sweden. Sweden remained neutral despite the two world wars. Finland had a different fate, fighting for its independence in the Winter War and the Continuation War during World War II. Both countries were referred to as neutral countries during the Cold War and after the Cold War ended, neutrality became obsolete and both countries decided to join the EU, where they supported a stronger EU role in international security issues.

3.1. Sweden

First, the country that has had experience with neutrality since 1814 will be introduced. Thanks to this security policy, Sweden has not been involved in any war for more than 200 years. The country has not maintained a completely unequivocal neutrality. During the First World War, for example, Sweden's affection for Germany, which was an important trading partner at the time, was already evident. During the Second World War, Sweden helped the Nazis to move across its territory or also provided aid in the form of arms and volunteers to neighbouring Finland. During the Cold War, it undertook covert cooperation with NATO and the West. Yet neutrality has become part of Sweden's identity, and joining NATO represents an important milestone in the security map of Europe.

3.1.1. Sweden's policy of neutrality until the end of the Cold War

Sweden has a long experience of neutrality, not having been at war for more than two hundred years. The country has not been involved in an armed conflict since 1814. Since the reign of Charles XIV. Johan, the then King of Sweden, we see elements of neutrality in the lack of interest in rivalry with the neighbouring powers and involvement in wars. Sweden was defined as independent, but this neutrality was not codified or guaranteed by other powers.[77] It is important to note that neighbouring Finland was under Russian rule from 1809 to 1917, so

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[77] GUSTAVSSON, J. *The Politics of Foreign Policy Change: Explaining the Swedish Reorientation on EC Membership.* Lund: Lund University Press, 1998, pp. 72 -73

Sweden sought to defend its sovereignty and independence. It was through Finnish territory that Russia threatened to invade. The loss of all the countries around the Baltic Sea also brought about a fundamental change, and the country lost its position as a great power in Europe. It lost its territory and its influence on the international stage. This led to a change of approach in foreign and security policy and the adoption of the concept of Swedish neutrality. In 1834, King Charles XIV sent a memorandum to the British and Russian governments declaring neutrality in the Middle East crisis.[78] This action by the Swedish monarch is considered by historians to be the birth of Swedish neutrality, which, however, has been undergoing constant change in its development.

At the beginning of the First World War, Swedish neutrality was widely accepted. During the First World War, Sweden remained neutral, and this neutrality was enforced according to the Hague Conventions. However, Sweden's affection for Germany, which was an important trading partner, and for Russia was evident. After the First World War, the attitude towards the concept of neutrality was reconsidered, and Sweden joined the League of Nations (the forerunner of the United Nations), which gave Sweden the opportunity to participate actively in the collective security system, while the membership did not exclude the possibility of declaring neutrality in the event of war.[79] Before the Second World War in 1939, the Swedish government declared a strict policy of neutrality. However, Sweden violated one of its principles during the Second World War when it allowed German troops to cross its territory. Sweden practised what is known as active neutrality, relying on a strong military and a modern industrial base for defence, thus becoming essentially a non-warlike (non-belligerent) country.[80]

After the USSR invaded Finland in 1939, Sweden acted as a mediator in negotiating a peace treaty between Finland and the USSR. Sweden maintained its strict neutrality for about half a year. Later in 1940, when Germany invaded Denmark and Norway, the situation forced Sweden to make concessions from its strict neutrality. Sweden was surrounded on its borders by German troops and German allies. Sweden allowed German troops to pass through its territory because of Sweden's dependence on the trade with Germany. German Luftwaffe planes flew freely over Swedish territory, with Swedish air defences ordered to fire only warning shots. Swedish (but also, for example, Swiss) banks accepted the Nazis money, gold and other

[78] LINDSTRÖM, G. Sweden's Security Policy: Engagement -The Middle Way. *Occasional Papers,* 1997, 2, p. 55.
[79] GUSTAVSSON, J. *The Politics of Foreign Policy Change: Explaining the Swedish Reorientation on EC Membership.* Lund: Lund University Press, 1998, pp. 72 -73.
[80] ROLENC, J. Transformace švédské bezpečnostní politiky: od neutrality k neúčasti. *Obrana a strategie.* 2005, 2, p. 136.

valuables stolen in the countries of Europe.[81] Although Sweden was not directly involved in the war, during the Winter War sent almost nine thousand volunteers and a considerable part of its arsenal to help Finland.[82] This was mainly due to Sweden's fear of the USSR. After the Second World War, the country became a member of the United Nations (UN) and participated fully in UN actions in observation or peacekeeping missions.[83] Sweden's participation in the UN further inclined the country towards liberal politics and international cooperation.

After the Second World War, Norway and Denmark, the countries occupied by Germany, celebrated victory, while Finland was defeated. Sweden, however, remained neutral and maintained its neutrality during the Cold War. The idea of integration and the creation of an independent defence alliance to counterbalance the power of the US and the USSR was promoted by Sweden in particular, sparking debates with Denmark and Norway. Norway, however, buried these efforts with its efforts to include US cooperation in the integration. Instead of this cooperation, Denmark and Norway joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in 1949, ending the Scandinavian idea of a security union.[84] In this bipolar environment, Sweden chose to remain a neutral country. During the Cold War, neutrality became not only a security strategy for Sweden, but also part of its national self-confidence.[85] Sweden was motivated by pragmatism: neutrality had a tradition and popular support in the country, including politicians from the still strongest party, the Social Democrats. Politicians from the Western bloc also welcomed Sweden's decision to remain neutral. If Sweden had joined NATO, it would have moved the buffer zone and brought Finland, which had been restricted by its treaty with the USSR, closer to the USSR.[86] Sweden's leading politicians also believed that it was the strategy of neutrality that would work in the event of war.

Sweden declared its neutrality, or "non-alignment in peacetime towards neutrality in wartime" in 1956. This allowed Sweden to use it as a flexible tool. However, in the event of war and open conflict, the country would have resorted to cooperating with NATO, at the very least by providing airspace, which the Soviet Union would have seen as a violation of neutrality. The USSR therefore never regarded Sweden as a fully neutral state. Sweden was not afraid to

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[81] ROLENC, J. Transformace švédské bezpečnostní politiky: od neutrality k neúčasti. *Obrana a strategie*. 2005, 2, p. 136.
[82] ŠTĚPÁN, J. *Švédsko*. Prague: Libri, 2010. p. 112.
[83] LINDSTRÖM, G. Sweden's Security Policy: Engagement -The Middle Way. *Occasional Papers*, 1997, 2. p. 55.
[84] ARTER, D. *Scandinavian politics today*. 2nd ed. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008, pp. 261-263.
[85] BLYDAL, C. J. Foreign-policy discussions in Sweden after 1990: From neutrality to NATO? KAS International Reports, 2012, 5, pp. 19-32.
[86] The Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance of 1948, also known as the YYA Treaty the Soviets sought to deter Western or Allied Powers from attacking the Soviet Union through Finnish territory, and the Finns sought to increase Finland's political independence from the Soviet Union.

criticise both the USA and the USSR. Although it strongly criticised the war in Vietnam, it was considered as a neutral country by the West. NATO saw Sweden as a strategic player, especially because of its geographical location. Direct air paths to strategic Soviet targets passed through the Swedish territory, making it a natural corridor for air missions.[87]

Sweden, a signatory to the Mutual Defence Assistance Act, was buying American weapons. The Swedish government was aware of this situation and in order to maintain its image as a neutral country, it constantly stressed that the military would respond to any aircraft that violated Swedish airspace. In practice, however, NATO obtained diplomatic permission for its flights from Germany to Denmark or Norway. The cooperation with NATO was not easy for Sweden, especially because of its declared policy of neutrality and its aspiration to be truly neutral, even in peacetime.[88] Co-operation with the West brought secrecy into Swedish politics, which made it impossible to explain some of the crises of the Cold War. For example, the attacks by unknown submarines on the Swedish coast, which was of strategic importance to the West and NATO. The Swedish Navy took part in several exercises in this area. Another situation that was only revealed in 2003 was the Catalina affair in 1952. Two Swedish planes were shot down while flying over USSR territory in the Baltic Sea, while they were conducting reconnaissance of British and American flight paths, and all the information was passed on to NATO.[89] During the Cold War we can see Sweden's efforts to remain a neutral country, despite its interests and cooperation with the Western Allies. 1971 is also worth mentioning, when Sweden decided not to join the European Community, arguing that membership would undermine the country's neutrality.

3.1.2. The evolution of Swedish neutrality policy after the Cold War

With the end of the Cold War and the beginning of the 1990s, Sweden became more European. After the 1991 elections, the new government focused on conducting a foreign policy with a European identity. The original concept of neutrality in times of war and non-alignment in times of peace was transformed into military non-alignment with the possibility of declaring neutrality in the event of war in the country. Only the basic principle of non-participation in military alliances remained from the original concept of neutrality. The country continued to

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[87] NILSSON, M. Amber Nine: NATO's Secret Use of a Flight Path over Sweden and the Incorporation of Sweden in NATO's Infrastructure. *Journal of Contemporary History*. 2009, 44(2), pp. 287-307.
[88] BLYDAL, C. J. Foreign-policy discussions in Sweden after 1990: From neutrality to NATO? *KAS International Reports*, 2012, 5, pp. 19-32.
[89] Spy plane shot down in Baltic found: *The Telegraph*. [online]. 20 June 2003 [viewed 18 October 2023]. Available from: https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/sweden/1433596/Spy-plane-shot-down-in-Baltic-found.html

retain its room for manoeuvre in the handling of foreign affairs. Accession negotiations were conducted on the basis of the rules laid down in the Maastricht Treaty, which created the second pillar of the EU - the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). *"The common foreign and security policy shall include all questions related to the security of the Union, including the eventual framing of a common defence policy, which might in time lead to a common defence."*[90]

In 1993, Sweden began negotiations with the EC (later the EU). The EU was wary of Sweden's traditional neutrality, particularly because of its potential reluctance to support the newly emerging Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and common defence initiatives. This issue became a key point of discussion during the accession talks. The then Swedish Prime Minister, Carl Bildt, stressed that Sweden's accession to the EU would increase stability in the Nordic region, especially in the Baltic States, and enhance the EU's crisis management capabilities, as Sweden was an active participant in peacekeeping operations. Sweden's Chief Negotiator Ulf Dinkelspiel said on the CFSP *"As recently stated by the Swedish Parliament, Sweden's policy of non-participation in military alliances remains unchanged. At the same time, we recognize that the eventual framing of a common defence policy, which in time might lead to a common defence, is one of the CFSP goals which is to be further discussed in the context of the 1996 review conference. We will not hamper the development of the European Union as it moves towards this goal."*[91] Upon accession to the EU, the countries should have been ready and able to participate actively in the CFSP as set out in the Treaty on European Union (TEU, Maastricht Treaty) and to take on the obligations and objectives of the provisions of Title V of the CFSP. Ultimately, both sides concluded that the military non-alignment was compatible with EU membership and the CFSP. This consensus was the result of an evolution in Swedish foreign and security policy, but also of the compromising nature of the Maastricht Treaty. Although Parliament confirmed that membership was compatible with military non-alignment, it was a radical departure from the traditional concept of neutrality.[92]

Important factors that have led to the change in Sweden's approach to foreign policy approach have been, in particular: declining confidence in Sweden's adherence to neutrality as a result of (often secret) cooperation with NATO, and the changing strategic environment in the world related to political changes in Central and Eastern Europe. Another important factor is

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[90] Consolidated version of Treaty on European Union C 326 Article J.4(1)
[91] Statement by Ulf Dinkelspiel at the opening of Sweden's negotiations on accession to the EU (1 February 1993) *cvce.eu* [online]. 20 October 2023 [viewed 12 November 2023]. Available from: https://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/2003/11/14/66c2df6a-37d1-449e-aab7-fcbd8a3e3935/publishable_en.pdf
[92] LINDSTRÖM, G. Sweden's Security Policy: Engagement -The Middle Way. *Occasional Papers,* 1997, 2, pp. 146-147.

the changing political environment in Sweden, where a government of pro-European parties without socialists took office after the 1991 elections. Sweden also faced a severe economic crisis between 1991 and 1993, resulting in high unemployment and a decline in foreign direct investment. This situation encouraged accession to the EU, as the membership was seen as a solution to these problems. In 1994 Sweden joined NATO's Partnership for Peace programme and three years later the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, a forum for political dialogue. While Finland saw the PfP as a way to improve its national security, Sweden saw the programme as a way to contribute to the European security architecture. Since then, the countries have gradually deepened their relations. Sweden has been actively involved in international peace support operations. Since 2014, Sweden has had an Enhanced Opportunities Partner (EOP) partnership with NATO and other countries.[93] After joining the EU, Sweden also joined political cooperation to prevent war on the European continent. According to the 2004 Swedish Defence Resolution, it seems highly unlikely that the country will remain "alliance-free in time of peace, neutrality in time of war".[94] From this perspective, the assumption is that other members would take the same solidarity stance in favour of European security.

3.2. Finland

Finland is a country with an important geographical location, as it is situated in the north of Europe and directly adjacent to Russia. Unlike Sweden, Finland does not have such a long history of neutrality, as it was part of the Kingdom of Sweden until 1809, when it came under the Russian Empire for over a century. Finland also has an unfortunate war history with Russia, whether in the Winter War or the Continuation War. Finland and the Soviet Union signed the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance (FCMA) in 1948, because of which Finland's room for manoeuvre was severely restricted. Based on demands forced by the USSR, Finland became a neutral country. The FCMA did not expire until after the Cold War in 1992.

3.2.1. Finland's policy of neutrality until the end of the Cold War

Like Sweden, Finland's neutrality illustrates the nature of the country's national identity. Unlike Sweden, which has lived in peace for almost 200 years, Finland was at war with the

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[93] History of Sweden and NATO, 2023. *Government Offices of Sweden* [online]. 5 April 2023 [viewed 12 November 2023]. Available from: https://www.government.se/government-policy/sweden-and-nato/history-of-sweden-and-nato/.

[94] BENGTSSON, H. A. NATO membership decisions in Sweden and Finland during the Russo-Ukrainian War. In: LÁSZLÓ, A. and U. OPTENHÖGEL. (ed.). *Europe and the War in Ukraine: From Russian Aggression to a New Eastern Policy.* Brussel: Foundation for European Progressive Studies, 2023, pp. 147-156.

Soviet Union during the Second World War. According to Wahlback, Sweden is a "protected country", while Finland, on the other hand, is a "threatened country", mainly because it is a border country, a so-called buffer country. This is the main reason why Finland is more likely than Sweden to see Russia as a potential threat.[95]

Most of Finland´s territory had been part of the Kingdom of Sweden since the 13th century, and this Swedish dominance lasted almost until 1809. Finland was separated from the Kingdom of Sweden after the lost Swedish-Russian War (1808-1809) and became a part of Russia. The then Russian Tsar Alexander I was aware of Finland's uniqueness and promised the Finns autonomy, the preservation of the church and the official language (Swedish). During this period, Finland enjoyed considerable autonomy and had more powers than under the Swedish rule. Towards the end of the 19th century, however, the good relations between the Finns and the Russians began to deteriorate. This was mainly due to Russian concerns about the unity and stability of Russia. Finland gradually became one of the provinces of the Russian Empire, and the process of Russification began in Finland as well.[96]

After centuries of domination by Sweden and the Russian Empire, Finland only gained independence in 1917. The country made this decision after the Great October Revolution in the Tsarist Russia, fearing possible action against the country. Finland was originally intended to be a constitutional monarchy, but after the defeat of Germany in the First World War, Finland became a republic. Finnish independence was sealed by the Treaty of Tartu in 1920, which ended the Finnish Civil War and confirmed the common border with Russia. In the same year, Finland became a member of the League of Nations. Since its inception, the young state sought to avoid international conflicts and has worked within the League of Nations and with other Nordic countries. Finland has acted as a typical buffer state, burdened on both sides by the interests of the great powers.[97]

An important milestone in Finland´s relations with the Soviet Union was the non-aggression treaty of 1932, signed at a time when, paradoxically, anti-Communist sentiment was strong in Finland and when the Communist Party was banned by parliament. Finland, along with other Nordic countries, adopted a policy of neutrality in the second half of the 1930s. The Soviet Union first confronted the Finnish government in 1938 with a proposal to revise its

[95] FORSBERG, T. and T. VAAHTORANTA. Inside the EU, outside NATO: Paradoxes of Finland's and Sweden's post-neutrality. *European Security*. 2001, 10, p. 70.
[96] BURCLÍK, M. HAVLÍK, M. and A. PINKOVÁ. *Skandinávie. Proměny politiky a severských zemí*. Prague: Wolters Kluwer, 2011, p. 53.
[97] JUTIKKALA, E. and K. PIRINEN. *Dějiny Finska. Dějiny států*. 1st ed. Praha: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 2001. pp. 237-250.

borders, and pressure followed a year later. The Winter War began in 1939 as a result of a secret agreement between the USSR and Germany, known as the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, which divided their spheres of influence. Finland (and the Baltic states) fell under the Soviet sphere, but it refused to be supervised by the USSR, thus providing a pretext for the invasion of Soviet troops. Finland resisted for four full months due to the specific climatic conditions, but the better equipped and numerically superior Soviet side won the war. For the Finns, the defeat meant a loss of territory. The country's next conflict was with the USSR in the ongoing war that began in 1941. The Germans attacked the USSR from the strategically located Finnish Lapland, and Finland allowed them to pass through its territory. Finland saw this as an opportunity to regain the territory lost during the Winter War. At the same time, it insisted on its neutrality because, paradoxically, it saw the Continuation War as a separate defensive struggle that had nothing to do with the World War. The Finns refused to engage directly with Germany in the siege of Leningrad but did provide military assistance.[98]

The USSR resisted the fighting but needed to concentrate as many troops as possible against Germany. For Finland, this meant the end of the war, the conclusion of the armistice and the restoration of a situation that roughly confirmed the results of the Winter War. Finland was also forced to pay heavy war reparations to expel German troops from its territory.[99] The withdrawal of the German troops was slow and led to a conflict between the German and Finnish armies, which triggered the Lapland War, which lasted until April 1945. Finland thus became one of the parties fighting against Germany. Finland retained its sovereignty and remained outside the influence of the Eastern Bloc, despite losing the Winter and Continuation Wars.[100] The country formally declared neutrality again at the end of the Second World War, with the signing of the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance (FCMA) between Finland and the USSR. The Soviet Union forced the signing of this treaty in order to prevent the use of Finnish territory by a third party. At the same time, Finland decided not to enter into any alliance against the USSR. However, this treaty was not in accordance with the international rules of neutrality, as it included a commitment to provide military assistance to the USSR in the event of an attack. [101]

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[98] JIREŠ, J. Dědictví finlandizace v éře změn: finská bezpečnostní politika po studené válce. Praha, 2007. Rigorózní práce. Univerzita Karlova, Filozofická fakulta, Ústav politologie. p. 27-29.
[99] JUTIKKALA, E. and K. PIRINEN. *Dějiny Finska. Dějiny států.* 1st ed. Praha: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 2001. pp. 250-262.
[100] HIMANEN H. From neutrality to engagement. In: OJANEN H. ed.: *Neutrality and non-alignment in Europe today.* Helsinki: The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 2003, p. 20.
[101] SUBEDI, S. Neutrality in a Changing World..., pp. 247-248.

During the Cold War, the neutrality of Finland and Sweden differed significantly. Finland, unlike Sweden, avoided criticism from both blocs, and was often perceived by the West as a "Finlandised" country, or Moscow-dominated country. However, it was Finland's policy of neutrality in the war, not Sweden's unofficial cooperation with NATO, that made the difference. Although both declared their neutrality, their security policies were different. The first president was an experienced diplomat, J.K. Paasikivi, who, as a pragmatist, believed that the USSR had security interests in Finland, which Finland had no choice but to respect in the post-war geopolitical situation. In 1956, U. K. Kekkonen became the President of Finland. His policy continued the neutral approach of his predecessor but moved the country closer to its eastern neighbour. The term "Paasikivi-Kekkonen Doctrine" is used in the literature to describe Finnish post-war policy.[102] President Kekkonen refused to participate in international activities that the USSR might consider dangerous. Finland refused to join Nordek and could not become a full member of the EC or EFTA. Finland joined EFTA only as an associate member and concluded a free trade agreement with the EC in 1973 in order to maintain political links with the West. Finland compensated for its relations with the USSR by accepting cooperation within Comecon, the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. The Paasikivi-Kekkonen doctrine follows two approaches, first, the pursuit of friendly relations with Moscow, and second, the refusal to help the enemy USSR.[103]

3.2.2. The evolution of Finland's post-Cold War neutrality policy

The end of the Cold War marked the beginning of a new relationship for both Finland and Sweden that had not been possible during the Cold War. After the collapse of the USSR, the Treaty of Friendship ended making Finland become de jure neutral. However, the country remained de facto neutral, although it was no longer seen as an element of foreign policy rather than part of a traditional national identity. Finland's foreign policy became more pro-European, leading to Finland's application to join the European Union (EU) in November 1992 and its accession to the EEC in 1994. The decision to seek EU membership was preceded by an extensive parliamentary debate. After 1991, there was a conservative party in the governing coalition which was unanimously in favour of EU membership. Finnish foreign policy had to adapt to the new environment. Although neutrality was not as entrenched as in neighbouring Sweden, President Mauno Koivisto did not take advantage of the weakened USSR in the 1980s

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[102] JUTIKKALA, E. and K. PIRINEN. *Dějiny Finska. Dějiny států.* 1st ed. Praha: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 2001. pp. 270-274
[103] Ibid.

and Finland refused to join NATO. This decision was made for historical reasons related to the concept of neutrality, and in particular because it would have been a provocative step towards Russia. On the other hand, The Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance was denounced. For Finland, securing its sovereignty and security was a priority. Like its neighbour Sweden, Finland was hit by the worst economic crisis, the worst since the end of the World War, with the economy shrinking by 15 %, and this was a further impetus for joining the EU. [104]

During the accession negotiations, which began in early 1993, the issue of Finnish neutrality in the context of the CFSP arose. In the same year, Finland issued a declaration confirming its willingness to accept the CFSP without exceptions or conditions, thus confirming that the CFSP did not conflict with Finland's policy of military non-alignment. Following Finland's accession to the EU in 1995, Finnish Prime Minister Paavo Lipponen declared that the country's traditional strict neutrality was no longer sustainable and stressed that maintaining the stability in Northern Europe and the Baltic Sea region was a priority.[105] Nevertheless, Finland decided to stay out of military alliances and maintain independent defence. It was the end of the Cold War and the bipolar world order that led to a change in the concept of strict neutrality and its application to the EU.

NATO has been working with non-member countries since the end of the Cold War. At the end of 1991, a new strategic concept for the Alliance was issued, which, following the Cold War and the optimistic mood in Europe, placed greater emphasis on shared values to ensure the security and freedom of its members by working with partner countries through dialogue and cooperation.[106] To facilitate discussions with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (i.e. the former Warsaw Pact countries), The North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) was created.[107] Finland and Sweden considered attending the NACC meeting in Oslo, but in the end only Finland decided to attend as an observer. There, Finland was able to participate in security discussions where practical issues such as the withdrawal of Russian troops from the Baltic States, defence measures, arms control, as well as building defence reforms, transparency and

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[104] ELIASSON, J. Traditions, Identity and Security: the Legacy of Neutrality in Finnish and Swedish Security Policies in Light of European Integration. *European Integration online Papers* [online]. 2004, 8(6) [viewed 25 October 2023], pp. 1-24. Available from: http://aei.pitt.edu/7171/.

[105] SUBEDI, S. Neutrality in a Changing World,…, pp. 247-248.

[106] YYKÖNEN, J. Nordic Partners of NATO. How similar are Finland and Sweden within NATO cooperation? *Finnish Institute of International Affairs* [online]. 2016. [viewed 15 October 2023]. p. 26. Available from: https://storage.googleapis.com/upi-live/2017/04/report48_finland_sweden_nato.pdf

[107] NATO. North Atlantic Cooperation Council (1991-1997). *North Atlantic Treaty Organization* [online]. 9 September 2022. [viewed 20 October 2023]. Available from: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_69344.htm

trust were discussed. As a country directly neighbouring Russia and close to the post-Soviet countries, Finland has been able to follow developments in these areas. However, the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs has pointed out that observer status in the NACC does not imply that this pursuit of closer relations with NATO implies membership ambitions.[108]

At the same time, Finland began to cooperate with NATO during this period, through the Partnership for Peace programme.[109] This programme does not lead to a full NATO membership, but allows countries to participate in joint military exercises, exchange programmes and consultations in the field of defence and security. In doing so, the country signalled its openness to greater cooperation on security and defence in the international arena without formally joining a military alliance. This is an opportunity to participate in security and defence cooperation within NATO while maintaining military non-alignment.If left out of security initiatives, a Finland could find itself in an isolated position with limited influence. The country also became a member of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in 1997, through which it participates in dialogue and consultation on current security and political challenges. [110] Since 2014, Finland has been actively cooperating in the Enhanced Opportunities Partners (EOP) programme. [111]

While Finland became a member of the North Atlantic Alliance on 4 April 2023, Sweden is still waiting to join (at the time of writing). Both countries, however, have extensive and long-standing cooperation with NATO in alliance exercises or training activities. The partnership is beneficial for both sides as it supports the country's defence and allows for joint solutions to security problems. Finland's cooperation with NATO began as early as 1994, when it became a member of the Partnership for Peace programme. Following the interest of non-member countries in cooperating with the Alliance and Finland's interest in participating in practical activities rather than just observing events, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation launched the Partnership for Peace programme in 1994.

Another point of contention is the solidarity clause in the Lisbon Treaty. This provision was already included in the draft Constitutional Treaty, according to which the Member States are to act together in a spirit of solidarity and in the event of a terrorist attack, natural or man-

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[108] YYKÖNEN, J. Nordic Partners of NATO. How similar are Finland and Sweden within NATO cooperation? *Finnish Institute of International Affairs* [online]. 2016. [viewed 18 October 2023]. p. 26. Available from: https://storage.googleapis.com/upi-live/2017/04/report48_finland_sweden_nato.pdf

[109] Partnership for Peace programme. *North Atlantic Treaty Organization* [online]. 13 October 2023 [viewed 18 October 2023]. Available from: http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_50349.htm

[110] Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. *North Atlantic Treaty Organization* [online].4 April 2023. [viewed 18 October 2023]. Available from: http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_49276.htm

[111] Finland's membership in NATO. *MINISTRY OF DEFENCE OF FINLAND* [online]. [viewed 1 October 2023]. Available from: https://www.defmin.fi/en/areas_of_expertise/finland_s_membership_in_nato#0281204f

made disaster, and all resources, including military force provided by the Member States, will be used to enable the Union to prevent this. The Finnish position was positive, as the importance of the EU for Finland's security policy is strongly emphasised. The country supports the deepening of competences in EU defence and security policy.[112] The Swedish Government's position was also positive, as long as the clause was not worded in such a way that it could be confused with NATO military security guarantees.[113] Countries thus participated in collective defence, but only to the extent that the specific character of their military non-alignmen policy was not harmed.

3.3. Comparison in the transformation of neutrality

In this subsection, it is necessary to focus on the differences and possible similarities that have occurred in the development of these two neutral countries. This will make it possible to answer the research question of *How did neutrality (including incentives and factors behind it) developed in the case of Sweden and Finland? What similarities and differences may be found in between both countries in the terms of neutrality, as interpreted in the context of IR/IS theories?* Furthermore, it will be evaluated whether Sweden and Finland fulfilled the definitional elements set before applying to NATO. These definitional elements were established in the first chapter on the basis of the definitions of experts in international relations (on the basis of the reported common elements), on the basis of customary law principles, and also from the legal anchoring of neutrality in the sources of international law.

Sweden first declared neutrality as a part of its security policy as early as 1814. However, the twentieth century brought unstable security environment and affected the security and foreign policy of both countries. Finland became a neutral country more than a century after Sweden. In 1935, Finland declared neutrality with the other Scandinavian countries, but this did not prevent Russian expansionism. Finland refused to cede a part of its territory to Russia, and this started the Winter War in 1939. Sweden did not enter this war, but it backed down from its policy of neutrality by providing military aid to Finland. After both the Winter War and the Continuation War, Finland suffered significant territorial losses.

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[112] TILLIKAINEN, T. Annex 2 Finland's constructive approach to TEU Article 42(7). *Clingendael* [online]. [viewed 30 October 2023]. Available from: https://www.clingendael.org/pub/2022/uncharted-and-uncomfortable/annex-2/.

[113] Foreign Ministers of Sweden and Finland: Combating new threats with deeper solidarity. M*inistry for Foreign Affairs of Finland* [online]. 18 December 2002 [viewed 30 October 2023]. Available from: https://um.fi/current-affairs/-/asset_publisher/gc654PySnjTX/content/tuomioja-ja-lindh-syvempaa-solidaarisuutta-uusien-uhkien-torjuntaan.

In addition, after the two wars, Finland's room for manoeuvre was restricted by the conclusion of the FCMA with the USSR in 1948. Finnish neutrality was enforced by the FCMA, unlike Sweden's de-iure neutrality. Finland's neutrality during the Cold War was a strategy enforced to ensure its own sovereignty. According to the realist theory, elements of bandwagoning are encountered here. In contrast, Sweden chose neutrality voluntarily, based on positive experiences, because it repeatedly protected the country from war and was a part of the national identity of the Swedes. After the Cold War, Sweden ceased to be a buffer state, between the two blocs, between NATO member states starting with Norway and Denmark and FCMA-bound Finland. Yet these two countries did not abandon their neutral status after the end of the Cold War. The neutrality of the two countries evolved in similar directions, especially in their long-term character and interest in international activities. States no longer had to balance between two rival superpowers, nor submit to the stronger player, and choose neutrality out of coercion.

Both states soon became interested in EC/EU membership but chose to maintain their neutral status and not to join a military alliance. There was a need to redefine the neutral status, from a policy of neutrality to a policy of military non-alignment, or military non-alignment, even though EC/EU membership is not perceived as a military alliance. Both Sweden and Finland saw membership as a means of strengthening European security, but the states tried to keep their distance from the idea of security commitments within the community. Both countries began to lean towards a less strict form of neutrality with a greater emphasis on military non-alignment and an active foreign policy. The issue of NATO membership remained in the background, but as their neutral stance was redefined and NATO strategy changed, both countries began to engage more with the organization through the Partnership for Peace program.

1.   Absent alliances, a neutral state is not a member of any military alliances, nor does it enter into agreements that would commit it to military intervention or otherwise threaten its foreign policy independence.

Both countries decided after the Cold War to remain neutral, i.e. not to enter into military alliances. They had to narrow the definition of neutrality and redefine it to a policy of non-alignment, mainly because of their accession to the EU. So both countries met this element, as they were not part of any military alliance, nor had they signed an agreement that would have obliged them to intervene militarily. However, the solidarity clause in the Lisbon Treaty is questionable. So by the time they applied to join NATO, they had met this element.

2.   Non-participation in an armed conflict between third parties directly.

Finland participated in an armed conflict during World War II in the Winter, Continuation, and Lapland Wars. Sweden has not participated in any armed conflict since the declaration of the neutral status. Both countries participated only in peacekeeping missions after the Cold War, so both countries also met this criterion.

3.   A neutral state cannot indirectly support parties to a conflict with military material, nor will it provide them with its territory.

Both states have violated this rule in the past. It is important to mention Sweden, which helped its neighbour militarily during the Second World War and also showed its affection for Germany. Sweden, for example, provided its railways and thus enabled the movement of German soldiers and weapons on their way to Norway. During the Cold War we can also observe that Sweden did not behave as a completely neutral country when it cooperated secretly with NATO and Western countries. This criterion can therefore be considered unfulfilled for Sweden. During the ongoing war, Finland helped Germany in its attack on the USSR by allowing passage through Finnish territory. They also took advantage of its German military assistance before the Lapland War. Finland followed the neutrality policy more honestly during the Cold War, especially because of the FCMA, which was enforced by the Soviet Union. Both countries have failed to meet this criterion in the past.

4.   A neutral state may maintain defensive capabilities only to protect its territory.

Both Sweden and Finland have advanced armies, which they keep mainly to protect their territory. Neutral states cannot rely on support from allies, so they must maintain the capacity to defend their own country. For both countries, there is also a noticeable interest in engaging in peacekeeping activities, and other peacekeeping and humanitarian missions, which is consistent with a liberal pacifist type of democracy.

5.   Impartiality in their foreign policy in peacetime.

This defining element is closely related to element 3. Both Sweden and Finland sympathised with Germany during the Second World War, and Sweden cooperated with NATO during the Cold War. Both countries have not been afraid to criticise the actions of other countries in the past. After the Cold War, both countries decided to orient themselves towards the West and joined the EU. Joining the EU can also be seen as a violation of neutrality in foreign policy. Thus, they had also no longer fulfilled this element before joining NATO.

4. Factors leading to Sweden and Finland joining NATO

Both countries decided to apply for NATO membership following Russia's attack on the Ukraine, and there were several factors that influenced this decision, which is the subject of this chapter. Therefore, this chapter aims to analyse selected factors that led Sweden and Finland to apply for NATO. The factors are divided into external and internal. The internal factors that had an impact on the application and the abandonment of the country's neutral status are mainly public opinion, the identity of the country and the state of the military. External factors include geopolitical factors, under which the overall situation of the two countries in the Nordic region is included.

4.1. Internal Factors

After the start of the Russian-Ukrainian war in 2022, we can observe interesting trends in the public opinion in both countries. This subsection analyses two important factors that will help us understand why two military non-aligned states abandoned the concept and decided to apply to NATO. Among other things, the national identity of both countries played an important role in shaping the foreign policy of the state. By studying the state identity and its influence on the state foreign policy, constructivist approaches to international relations explore the new prominent role of identity as a source of state behaviour. Last but not least, the chapter includes the state of the militaries of both countries, which is undoubtedly related to the concept of neutrality and military-non-alignment. The differences in approaches between Sweden and Finland in the field of foreign policy are evident in the public debate. Sweden has placed more emphasis on its role in international missions, while Finland has focused more on strengthening its national security. Both countries had already been cooperating with NATO before the application. However, the Finnish government has shown a more open attitude towards future membership.

Public debate and identity of countries

In both countries, the question of joining NATO has aroused considerable controversy. This subsection will summarize the evolution of public opinion and state identity that have influenced the foreign policy of both countries. Here we encounter the theory of constructivism and its view on the international policy of the state, while according to this theory foreign policy behaviour is influenced and determined at the domestic level. Unlike the traditional theories of realism and liberalism, constructivism attaches importance to the identity of the state, which is the key to understanding a state's foreign policy. Thanks to state identity, we can understand

why Sweden and Finland did not abandon their neutral status after the end of the Cold War, when the reason to pursue a neutral policy fell away. Public attitudes towards a state's neutral policy have evolved over the time, and the aim of this subchapter is to analyse what factors have led to the change in public attitudes towards neutrality.

During the Cold War, neutrality created a legacy in the Finnish mentality and identity, which was reflected in the public opinion even after the end of the Cold War. Finland maintained neutrality for pragmatic reasons, especially because of the 1948 FCMA. According to the article *Neutrality as Identity?* by Aunesluoma and Rainio-Niemi, the choice was not between identity and pragmatism but between legalism and pragmatism, with pragmatism beginning to take on the elements of political identity. During the Cold War, the formation of a policy of neutrality and the strengthening of the credibility of this policy in the international and domestic context was a kind of identity project for the country. The policy of neutrality was highlighted in the narrative of Finland's transformation from a poor and backward country to a developed, peaceful and socially equal Nordic state in the 1970s and 1980s. From an initially enforced policy of neutrality, Finland aimed to emphasize neutrality and democracy as core values of nation and state. [114] Neutrality thus became a part of Finland's national identity, both among the key actors and the general public. Constructivist theory, which views the state as a social construct, was precisely the element of the nation's identity that had a significant influence on the behaviour of the state and the formation of international norms and values.

In Sweden, the policy of neutrality has a longer history; the absence of wars has helped the country become one of the wealthiest and most successful social countries in Europe, and public and political support for the policy of neutrality has grown throughout the twentieth century. During the Cold War, the public was firmly in favour of the policy and strongly opposed to the membership of any military alliance (NATO being the only option). No opposition dared to publicly criticise the policy; it was considered an integral part of Swedish identity. In the 1950s, Sweden opted for a more active interpretation of this policy, acting as a credible mediator who was not afraid to criticise the superpowers. NATO was seen as a fallback option; in case the policy of neutrality was not sufficient. Swedish neutrality as a flexible policy that adapts to the harsh realities of the international politics has contributed to Sweden's avoidance of participation in wars. [115]

[114] AUNESLUOMA, J, and J. RAINIO-NIEMI. Neutrality as Identity?: Finland's Quest for Security in the Cold War. *Journal of Cold War Studies,* 2016, 18(4), p. 65.
[115] BROMMESSON, D. EKENGREN A. and, and A. MICHALSKI. Sweden's Policy of Neutrality: Success Through Flexibility?, In: PORTE, C. and others (eds), S*uccessful Public Policy in the Nordic Countries: Cases, Lessons, Challenges.* Oxford: Oxford Academic, 2022, pp. 284-305.

The end of the Cold War meant major changes in Europe and in the two Nordic countries, and both countries decided to become EU member states, but this meant abandoning the traditional form of neutrality policy and changing their status to a policy of military non-alignment. They participated in cooperation with NATO through the PfP programme. The countries moved away from a traditional identity to a pro-European identity, which forced them to narrow their definition of neutrality. The public opinion, which greatly influences the country's foreign policy and identity, has also undergone a change.

In order to get a comprehensive picture of a country's identity, it is important to know the basic political landscape of both countries in relation to their support for joining NATO. In Sweden, two political parties, the conservative Moderaterna and the liberal Folkpartiet, supported NATO accession. These parties stated that until the Social Democrats supported the idea, joining the Alliance would not be possible. The Social Democrats used to be strong opponents of membership in the past. Political attitudes were similarly divided in Finland, where the liberal Svenska and the conservative Samlingspartiet supported NATO membership, with the Social Democrats and the agrarian Centerpartiet were in opposition. [116]

Since the end of the Cold War, public opinion on the question of joining the Alliance has also changed. We can see how opinion has changed over the years and what factors have influenced it. In the period 1994-2008, Swedes' support for joining NATO was only 15% to 24% (the upper limit of 24% was based on a 2008 poll), while the opposition was 38% to 49%. According to these figures, it can be seen that there are roughly twice as many opponents of NATO membership as there are supporters. [117] In Finland, the results were similar, only slightly more favourable to joining NATO, with support for membership ranging from 16% to 34% in the period 1996-2008 (in 2008 support was 31%), while opposition to NATO membership ranged from 58% to 79%. [118] In this period, we can see that neutrality is perceived as a core part of states' identity, according to public opinion.

A change in public opinion can only be perceived since 2010, when Europe has been facing increasingly frequent threats and attacks on its soil (e.g. terrorism). Another major event that has changed the perception of the security situation and planted seeds of doubt about the identity of countries and their non-alignment policies was Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014. This aggressive act raised concerns and fears in neighbouring countries. In Sweden, the public

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[116] MÖLLER, U. and U. BJERELD. From Nordic Neutrals to Post-Neutral Europeans: Differences in Finnish and Swedish Policy Transformation. *Cooperation and Conflict*, 2010, 45 (4), pp. 335-363.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Finnish Security and Defence Policy 2009: Government Report. *Valtioneuvoston kanslia* [online]. 2009 [viewed 16 November 2023] p. 98. Available from: https://vnk.fi/julkaisu?pubid=3739.

opinion of those opposed to the accession dropped from 56% to 47%.[119] In Finland, the opposition dropped from 58% to 55%, so even the Russian aggression in the Ukraine did not significantly change public opinion in Finland. [120] In Finland in 2014, support for joining was around 35%; just after the Russian invasion, after polls conducted on 25 February (i.e. right after the invasion), up to 53% of Finns would support joining the Alliance. In 2014, only around 20% were in favour of joining NATO.[121]

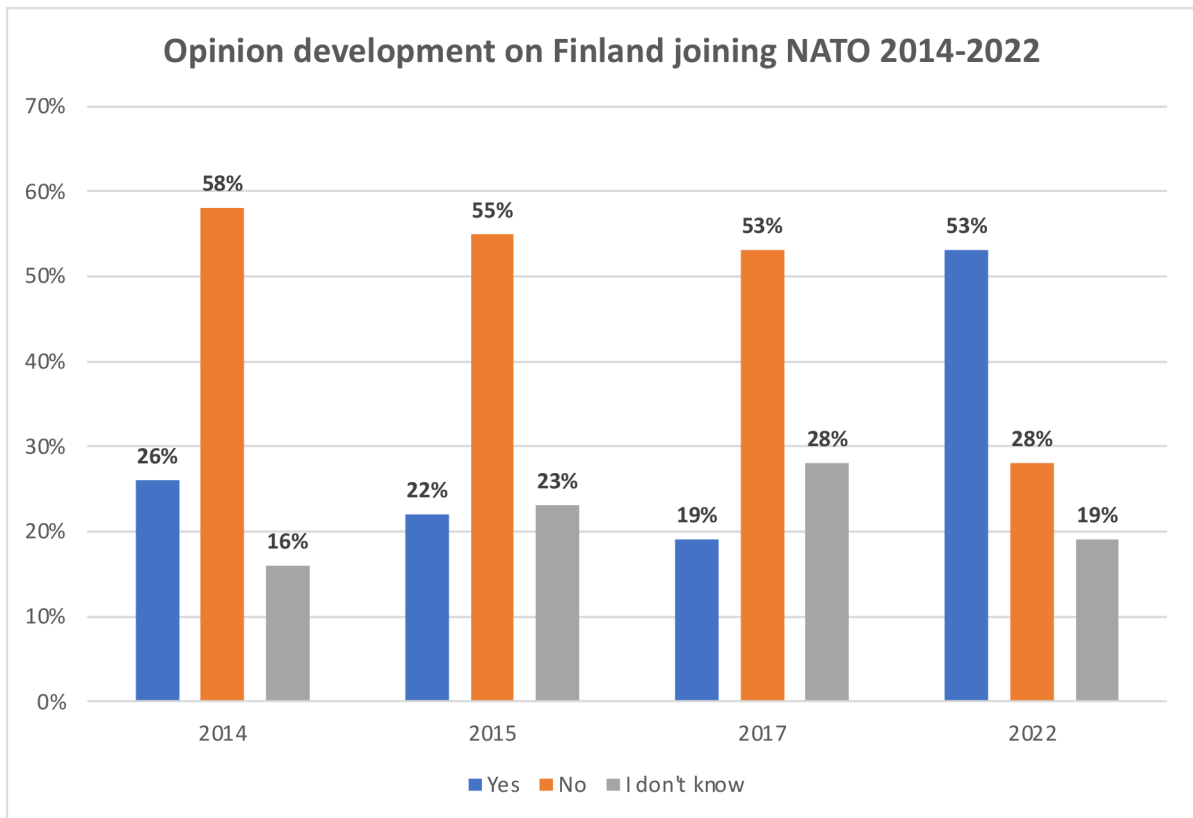*Figure 1: Opinion development on Sweden joining NATO 2014-2022*
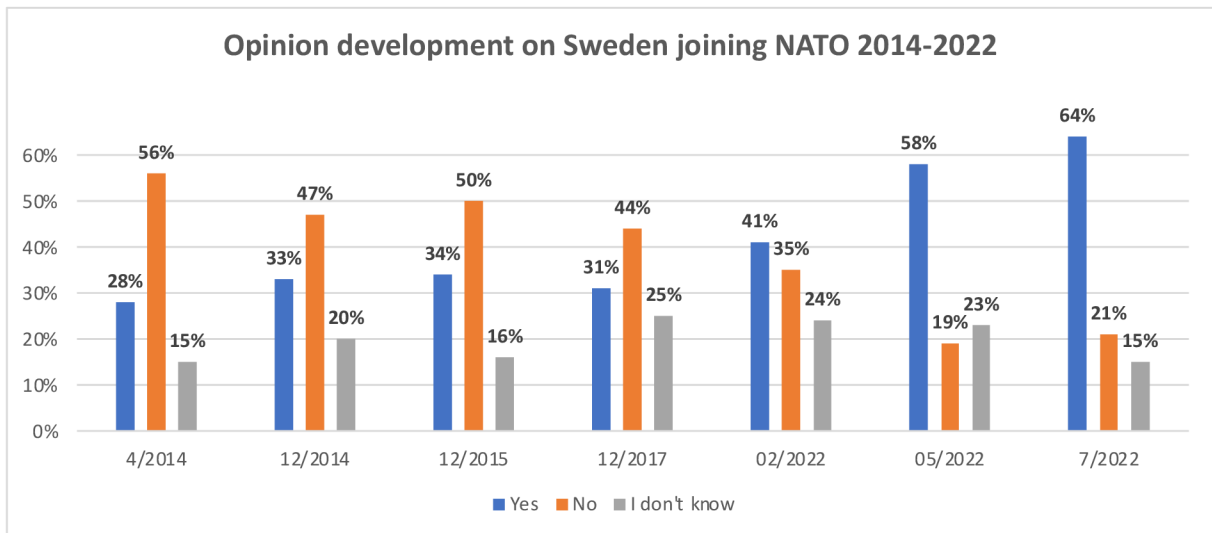
Source: EINAR, H. D. Survey on perception of NATO membership in Sweden 2014-2023. *Statista* [online]. 2023 [viewed 14 November 2023] Available at: https://www.statista.com/aboutus/our-research-commitment/3018/einar-h-dyvik.

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[119] NAGY, D. Swedish neutrality: How long can it last? *danubeinstitute.hu*. [online]. 2022 [viewed 17 November 2023] Available from: https://danubeinstitute.hu/en/research/swedish-neutrality-how-long-can-it-last#_edn26.

[120] MILNE, R. 'It's a radical change': The prospect of Finland joining Nato draws nearer. *Financial Times* [online]. 2022 [viewed 16 November 2023] Available from: https://www.ft.com/content/83b5041b-6bcf-49de-b180-43c354a3302d.

[121] WIESLANDER, A and Ch. SKALUBA. Will Finland and Sweden Join NATO Now? *Institute for Security & Development Policy* [online]. 2022 [viewed 16 November 2023] Available from: https://isdp.eu/publication/will-finland-and-sweden-join-nato-now/.

Figure 2: Opinion development on Finland joining NATO 2014-2022

Source: CLAUSNITZER, J. Opinion development on Finland joining NATO 2014-2022: Should Finland join NATO? *Statista* [online]. 2022 [viewed 14 November 2023] Available from: https://www.statista.com/statistics/1293557/opinion-development-on-joining-nato-finland/.

According to the figure 1 and 2, we can track the change in public opinion from 2014 to 2022, i.e. until the start of the war in the Ukraine. In Sweden, support for accession has gradually increased, while here we do not observe significant changes. Finland shares a common border with Russia as well as a rather conflictual history, but after the war Finland continued to move in a pragmatic direction, trying to maintain good relations with Moscow by keeping military non-alignment. Finns' views on joining the Alliance had been stable for the past 30 years or so, but the 2022 war in the Ukraine changed the public opinion completely. At the same time, the country mentioned the possibility of joining NATO in government statements.

State of the Army

In this subchapter, the status of the armies of the two countries joining NATO will be analysed, which will help us get an idea of the military level. As these are two former neutral states (some authors speak of post-neutral states),[122] for which ensuring their own security was

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[122] MÖLLER, U. and U. BJERELD. From Nordic Neutrals to Post-Neutral Europeans: Differences in Finnish and Swedish Policy Transformation. *Cooperation and Conflict*, 2010, 45(4), pp. 363–86.

very important, especially in terms of internal balance of power. The states could not rely on allies as they were neutral and could not be a part of any alliance. At the same time, both states perceived that the potential threat was close to their borders. Applying for NATO can be seen, according to the realism theory, as an element of external balance power, an attempt to balance the threat of Russian aggression, since neither state is strong enough to defend itself. It was Russia's attack on the Ukraine in early 2022 that forced a change in the European security landscape. Although only one country was attacked, all European states sensed the danger. The entry of these states means the consolidation of the influence of the Alliance states in the immediate vicinity of the northern border with the Russian Federation.

Neutral states cannot rely on any support in the event of an armed attack on their territory (at least not official support). Therefore, they need to ensure their own security through advanced national defence. A great example is Sweden, which has developed a strong and technologically advanced army. The only possible adversary, as can be assessed from a foreign policy stance, was Russia (as clearly demonstrated in WWII). Moreover, Russia is geographically close to Sweden and has (and has had) the resources to attack it if necessary. Even during the Cold War, it is evident how Sweden's policy was more towards the West and cooperated (often secretly) with NATO allies and the alliance itself.

During the Cold War, Sweden adopted a strategy of armed neutrality (active neutrality), which led to heavy investments in its own defence. This was undoubtedly an element of internal balance of power, which was intended to guarantee the credibility of the neutral position in the event of war. The Swedish army was one of the strongest in Europe in the 1950s and 1960s, with an excellent military industry, and excelled particularly in the field of aviation.[123] In the 1990s, Sweden had a strong military force, which was essential to ensure stability in the northern European region. After 1991, Western Europe seemed stable, but the fate of the former Eastern Bloc countries was uncertain.

After the Cold War, we can note the country's efforts in engaging in peace-keeping missions to contribute to the security of the international community and strengthen collective security.

The Swedish government had begun to strengthen its national defense capabilities and rework its plans ahead of 2022 in an effort to respond to current challenges. Sweden's military was one of the most advanced in Europe, but during the 2000s and 2010s Sweden saw a significant reduction in the size of its military forces. The Swedish military capabilities have been reorganised into the newly formed Norrland Dragoon Regiment (K4). The Swedish Air

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[123] NILSSON, M. and M. Wyss. The Armed Neutrality Paradox: Sweden and Switzerland in US Cold War Armaments Policy. *Journal of Contemporary History,* 2016, 51(2), pp. 335-363

Force operates two divisions of JAS Gripen 39 aircraft with appropriate personnel. Sweden already had a very advanced air force during the Cold War.[124] The Swedish Air Force conducts regular exercises with the Finnish and Norwegian air forces. The Swedish Navy has submarines, Visby-class corvettes and five Swedish icebreakers. Experts like Granholm warned in the past (2019) that Sweden should adjust its priorities to better counter Russian actions targeting key strategic infrastructure (transport and data cables on the seabed).[125] Following Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014, Sweden increased military spending and partially reinstated compulsory military service, which it had abolished in 2010.

Finland's defence capability is based on an armed force with approximately 19,000 active soldiers and 3,000 in paramilitary border guards that would be integrated into a mobilised defence force. The Border Guard is responsible for monitoring the Arctic border (approximately 1 340 km long) between Finland and Russia and is an essential part of the Finnish defence and security forces (mainly due to its understanding of local conditions and its permanent presence).[126] The fully mobilised field army has around 280,000 members with an additional reserve. Finland maintains a naval capability as significant as Sweden's, e.g. it has a fleet of eight icebreakers and an industrial base to build more. The Finnish Air Force has its most important operational base at the Arctic Circle in Rovaniemi. Finland plans to have purchased additional fighter aircraft from the US by 2026.[127] Finland has kept emphasis on territorial defence. Both Sweden and Finland have paid attention to amending legislation to allow for the provision and receipt of military assistance and the use of military force abroad for purposes other than crisis management. Finland's national security and defence policy documents also refer to the possibility of seeking NATO membership.[128] This is an important political statement demonstrating that NATO membership is a possible political option for Finland, which gives Finland some room for manoeuvring.

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[124] OJANEN, H. VÄISÄNEN, A. Finnish and Swedish NATO membership: What does it hold for the Arctic?. In: STRAUSS, L. and N. WEGGE (ed). *Defending NATO's Northern Flank*. Routledge. p. 225-249.

[125] GRANHOLM, N. Utvecklingen i Arktis – påverkan på och implikationer för Sverige, *FOI* [online]. 7 November 2019 [viewed 14 November 2023], Available from: https://www.foi.se/rapportsammanfattning?reportNo=FOI%20Memo%206887

[126] OJANEN, H. VÄISÄNEN, A. Finnish and Swedish NATO membership: What does it hold for the Arctic?. In: STRAUSS, L. and N. WEGGE (ed). *Defending NATO's Northern Flank*. Routledge. p. 225-249.

[127] LASSENIUS, O. Pohjoismaiden geopolitiikka arktisella alueella – verkostoituneen puolustuksen polttopiste. *Sotataidon laitos. Julkaisusarja 2: Tutkimusselosteita nro 17*, [online]. 2022, 17 [viewed 11 November 2023], pp. 87–120. Available from: https://www.doria.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/185229/Kettunen%20et%20al._Arktisen%20alueen

[128] BERGQUIST, M. HEISBOURG, F. NYBERG, R. and T. TIILIKAINEN. *The Effects of Finland's Possible NATO Membership: An Assessment*. [online]. Helsinki: Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 2016 [viewed 14 November 2023], p. 36. Available from: https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/79160/IP1601374_UM_Nato-arvio EN_13370%201%201.pdf?sequence=1

Given that both Nordic countries have relatively advanced militaries, their accession to NATO will be a great asset. It is also worth mentioning the possible threat to NATO, as Russia has in the past threatened NATO against the alliance's eastward expansion. Since Finland joined NATO, the border has moved right up to the border with Russia. However, Russia's reactions have so far been restrained, mainly because it is preoccupied with the war in Ukraine. Any further attack by Russia would mean another wave of migration similar to that caused by the war in Ukraine.

4.2. External Factors

The following chapter is devoted to internal factors, which include mainly geopolitical factors. Most attention in this chapter will be paid to the war in the Ukraine, as it has significantly changed the view of the security situation in Europe. After Russia invaded the Ukraine, Sweden and Finland did not hesitate for long and jointly applied to join NATO. In doing so, they abandoned the doctrine of military neutrality, thereby taking a historically significant step and underlining the seriousness of the situation.

Geopolitical factors

At the end of February 2022, the security situation in Europe has changed significantly. Russia's war in the Ukraine triggered a process in Sweden and Finland in which both countries applied for NATO membership, marking a departure from the long-held policy of military non-alignment and bringing an end to the period of neutrality that had been the hard core of both countries' security and defence policies for decades. For both Nordic states, membership in the Alliance means security assurance, through the Alliance's security guarantees. Joining NATO means the final solution to the process of integration into post-Cold War Western structures and the strengthening of ties with Alliance members.

For Finland, joining NATO is of little more importance than for Sweden. Sweden cooperated with NATO during the Cold War, an option Finland did not have, mainly because of the binding FCMA. This enforced agreement made Finland adhere more strictly to neutral status. After the end of the Cold War, the FCMA also expired and both Finland and Sweden changed their status from neutral countries to military non-alignment. For both countries this meant, among other things, better room for manoeuvre, given their interest in European integration. Both countries joined the EU together, started to cooperate with NATO in the Partnership for Peace program, and in 2014 became one of the most active non-member partner countries of NATO through the Enhanced Opportunities Partners (EOP) program. All these

steps suggest that both countries, together, were getting closer to joining NATO. Moreover, Finland has stated in government documents that the country was open to joining NATO.

Other important neighbours of Sweden and Finland are Iceland, Norway and Denmark, which are of strategic importance in the Northern Europe, also due to their geographical location. They were the founding members of NATO after the Second World War. Denmark and Norway have served as strategic points for maritime traffic to Scandinavia and have also been used as air bases for flights to the Warsaw Pact area.[129] Although Iceland does not have its own army, it is an important NATO base due to its location in the Atlantic. It should be noted that during the Cold War, Sweden maintained secret cooperation with NATO, often through Oslo, and allowed Norwegian and Danish reconnaissance flights to fly over its territory.[130]

For both Sweden and Finland, joining NATO is particularly important for reasons of collective defence, as membership of the alliance brings security guarantees. As Finland is directly adjacent to Russia and Sweden is in close proximity, these are important security guarantees for both countries. Membership will bring stability to the countries in the northern region.[131] As mentioned in the thesis, a part of Finnish territory has been neutralised. Finland's accession to NATO will not affect this demilitarised status of the Åland Islands, which are part of Finland's territory. According to the treaties, Finland is responsible for defending the neutrality of this territory, and they are in line with the North Atlantic Treaty obligations.

Concerns about the erratic nature of Eastern policy following Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 have sparked debates in both Nordic countries that have had a significant impact on the direction of Swedish security policy. In addition, that same year, Swedish and Baltic airspace was violated several times and speculations emerged regarding the violation of Sweden's territorial waters, which brought back memories of the 1981 incident. This incident was completely denied by Russia. The Swedish side did not take any official steps to ensure its own security, but the incident nevertheless triggered an internal political debate that led to new measures to strengthen its own defences in the region.[132]

Finland was the first to apply to join NATO, and it did so because of the geopolitical situation, especially since Finland is a state directly neighbouring Russia. Finland had had an

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[129] NILSSON, M. Amber Nine: NATO's Secret Use of a Flight Path over Sweden and the Incorporation of Sweden in NATO's Infrastructure. *Journal of Contemporary History*. 2009, 44(2), pp. 287-307.

[130] Ibid.

[131] FINNISH GOVERNMENT. Finland and NATO. *Finnish Government, valtioneuvosto* [online]. 4 April 2023 [viewed 19. November 2023]. Available from: https://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/finland-and-nato

[132] DEARDEN, L. Full list of incidents involving Russian military and NATO since 2014. *Independent*. [online]. 2014 [viewed 10 November 2023] Available from: https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/full-list-of-incidents-involving-russian-military-and-nato-since-march-2014-9851309.html

unpleasant experience with Russia, and because of its unpredictable behaviour, Finland no longer sees it as a reliable partner. In the context of Russia's attack on the Ukraine, Sweden, and Finland have been forced to reconsider their policy of military non-alignment. Once the conflict broke out, Sweden provided guarantees of humanitarian and military support. The seriousness with which Sweden has approached the situation is also demonstrated by the fact that Sweden has provided military support to the Ukraine during the ongoing conflict. The last time Sweden provided support in arms was during the Soviet invasion in 1939.

At the time of writing this thesis, Finland is a member of the Alliance, but Sweden is still waiting to join. This is due to the blockade by Turkey, which disagrees with Sweden's stance on the Kurdish issue and demands the extradition of alleged terrorists to Turkey.

Conclusion

This thesis dealt with the change in the neutral status of two Nordic countries, Sweden and Finland. It charted these changes in the context of historical developments and the main theories of international relations. The changes in neutrality were examined in the context of significant events such as the Second World War and the context of involvement in Western structures. Based on definitional elements, the thesis verified whether the behaviour of states fulfilled the definitions of neutral countries. At the same time, differences and similarities in the historical development of the two states were observed and compared. Finally, the external and internal factors that had led both countries to leave the neutral status and apply for NATO were analysed. The main aim of the thesis was to analyse the factors that led Sweden and Finland to apply to NATO and to map the changes in their neutral status in the context of the main theories of international relations.

The main objective of the thesis was to answer the research questions. At the beginning of the thesis, the following research questions were identified:

1.   How can neutrality be understood in terms of conceptualization and operationalization within the context of theories dealing with international relations and international security?

2.   How did neutrality (including incentives and factors behind it) develop in the case of Sweden and Finland? To what extent did Finland and Sweden fulfil the behavioural characteristics of neutral states, and was it even possible to still call them neutral before applying to NATO?

3.   Why did both states depart from the concept of neutrality and how these steps may be understood in the context of IR/IS theories?

While searching for answers to the first question, it was necessary to define the concept of neutrality and analyse how the main theories of international relations view neutrality in international relations. Based on the literature analysed, definitional elements typical of this concept were established on which international relations experts who have dealt with neutrality agree. According to the realists, neutrality is a difficult concept to understand, which, according to them, is applied especially by small states to better protect their interests in the international arena. Neutral states are not part of any coalition and thus do not balance power in the global environment; they must defend themselves in the international relations to preserve their sovereignty. After the Cold War and the end of the bipolar world order, according to realists,

neutrality is meaningless and difficult to implement because of the international and economic interconnectedness of states.

One of the realist theories is the balancing theory, elements of which can be seen in the application of Sweden and Finland to NATO. Both states decided to abandon their neutral concept and apply for NATO, mainly because of the concerns about their aggressive and erratic neighbour, Russia, to ensure their security in the international environment. In examining the factors that led countries to accede to and maintain neutral status, it is the author's opinion that neutrality may carry elements of balanced power, as both Sweden and Finland, as small countries, did not align themselves with either side in the international environment, i.e., the West or the East, and thus sought to balance powers in international relations, aware of the powerful and above all neighbouring state of Russia. In the case of Finland's acceptance of neutrality, we can also see elements of bandwagoning, where Finland decided to accede to the FCMA with its powerful neighbour to maintain good relations.

Liberalists believe that humanity can learn from the mistakes made in the past in the form of war and violence. The state is not, in their view, the most crucial actor in international relations, as the modern world is institutionalised and thus influences behaviour at the international level. According to liberalists, the liberal state has no justification in the contemporary world, and they choose this concept because of factors on domestic soil or other international considerations. Elements of liberalism can be seen in both countries' accession to the EU in 1995 and their cooperation with NATO. Because states derive economic and other benefits from membership in these institutions and from international integration, libertarians, therefore, see no benefits for states remaining neutral. According to liberalism, neutrality is a relic and does not bring the security to the state that economic and political integration would. Finland and Sweden are also states where we can observe a higher level of involvement in humanitarian and peacekeeping missions and a reluctance to engage in military interventions.

Constructivism views states as a social construct whose actions are influenced by several factors, with transnational actors seen as necessary. Neutral states, they argue, are a matter of interpretation. Neutrality can be conceptualized as isolation or as a tool for promoting peace and change in the international environment. Constructivists also attach importance to the state's national identity, which influences the shape of foreign policy. According to constructivism, Finland and Sweden chose not to join NATO mainly because ideological views at home influenced them. In Sweden, the concept of neutrality was seen as a practical security element of the foreign policy, as it was associated with a long era of non-warfare, and this helped Sweden to become a developed, prosperous welfare state. Even though neutrality was adopted by

coercion during the Cold War, and unlike in Sweden, it had no such tradition, neutrality during the Cold War was praised both domestically and abroad. Neutrality became a security concept in both states and part of their national identity.

To find the answer to the second research question, it was most important to analyse critical historical milestones, from the birth of neutrality in both countries to the abandonment of this concept and its application to NATO. Sweden declared neutrality in 1814. Finland did not become a neutral country until 1935. Finland lived for many years under the domination of Sweden and later the Russian Empire. In 1917, it gained independence and was able to make its own decisions after years of domination, choosing the neutral status along with the other Scandinavian countries. Neutrality did not protect Finland from its aggressive neighbour, when it refused to cede a part of its territory to it, starting the Winter War in 1939. This marked neutrality's end as the country was in an armed conflict. Finland subsequently fought for its integrity and independence in the Continuation War with the USSR. They also later came into conflict with Germany in the Lapland War. Sweden, unlike its neighbour during the Second World War, was neutral throughout and did not violate the element of non-participation in armed conflict. On closer examination, however, it violated the elements of a neutral state when it provided military aid to Finland and allowed Germany to cross its territory. However, Finland violated this element by allowing the Germans to cross its territory during the Continuation War. This is a violation of the element of impartiality in foreign policy and of the feature of a neutral state according to which it is impossible to support parties to a conflict with military material or grant its territory. Since Sweden only had a de facto declaration of neutrality, this could only mean that this status needed to be more credible in the eyes of other countries. Since Sweden had already accepted this status in 1814, it had established credibility in other countries' eyes.

After the Second World War, Finland adopted the FCMA in 1948 after pressure from the Soviet Union, which limited its room for manoeuvring. By adopting this treaty, Finland was de jure neutral; it also fulfilled the elements of a permanently neutral state, as it had neutrality enshrined in an international treaty. Sweden continued to maintain its neutral status voluntarily. During the Cold War, Sweden again violated the elements of a neutral state, as it was proven that it had conspired with NATO and the Western allies. The Soviet Union never considered Sweden to be a fully neutral country. Finland held on to its neutral status during the Cold War out of fear of powerful neighbouring Russia.

After the Cold War, both countries did not abandon neutral status. Finland ceased to be de jure neutral and became de facto neutral. With the accession to the EU, both countries decided

only to redefine their neutral position, narrowing it to military non-alignment. Both countries decided to follow the path of European integration. This may also violate the defining feature of neutrality in foreign policy in peacetime. However, it should be borne in mind that the definitional elements set out are difficult to interpret in practice and challenging to assess their fulfilment, as they can be interpreted in different ways. Both neutral states maintained advanced militaries to protect their territory as they could not rely on foreign allies. Thus, the countries fulfilled this element. Therefore, Finland and Sweden fulfilled the element of maintaining a defence capability to protect their territory, not participating directly in armed conflict between third parties, and not being members of military alliances. The element of non-participation in an armed conflict was fulfilled in particular by Sweden since Finland had participated in three conflicts during the Second World War; after the declaration of enforced neutrality, Finland would also fulfill this element. The states did not meet the element of supporting the parties to the conflict with military equipment and the impartiality of their foreign policy in peacetime. Thus, they could not be considered neutral states before their application to NATO. Therefore, even though the application of the two former neutrals to NATO may appear to be a mere formality, it is an important milestone that redraws the security map of Europe.

Regarding the answer to the third research question, the thesis revealed that several factors influenced the change in neutrality. Internal and external factors were examined, and internal factors included public opinion and the national identity of states, which are essential factors in shaping a state's foreign policy. Joining NATO after the Cold War aroused considerable controversy in both countries, as neutrality policy became a part of the national identity of both states during the Cold War. According to constructivist theory, a state's foreign policy behaviour is influenced by its national identity. In Sweden, the concept of neutrality was primarily associated with a long era of non-warfare, which helped the country become a highly developed, prosperous welfare state. While neutrality did not have the same tradition in Finland as in Sweden, it was praised at home and abroad during the Cold War, even if it was observed mainly for pragmatic reasons. After the end of the Cold War, neutrality became a concept that inspired pride and confidence in the eyes of the Finnish people and became part of the national identity of both states. National identity and the belief in the functionality of this concept thus caused these states not to apply after the end of the Cold War.

The analysis of public opinion trends, which only changed a little after the Cold War until 2010, when the security situation in Europe began to change, also yielded interesting trends. Before the Russian invasion of the Ukraine, support for joining NATO in Finland was vehemently opposed and was not visibly changed, even by Russia's annexation of Crimea in

2014. The Russian invasion of the Ukraine in 2022 completely changed Finns' views on joining the alliance, and support increased significantly. In the evolution of Swedish public opinion, we could observe a gradual increase in support for entering. This change in opinion can be attributed to Finland's unfortunate past experiences with Russia, with which it shares a 1 340 km long border. The Swedes have also assessed the situation as very serious, which can be seen in public opinion and, ultimately, in the NATO applications. Even though Finland did not have public support to join NATO for many years, it decided to apply before Sweden. Regarding realism, this is a move where a country balances power and seeks allies to ensure its security and survival.

Another essential factor concerning the concept of neutrality was the status of the armies, whereby, as neutral and non-aligned states, Sweden and Finland were not a part of any military organization or alliance. Therefore, they had to ensure their security, which was reflected in the maturity of the armies of both states. According to the theory of realism, survival is the primary goal. At the same time, a neutral state has to ensure its security and survival since, as a neutral, it is not a member of any alliance. Sweden created one of the most modern armies after the Second World War, including an advanced navy and air force, in which we can see elements of the internal balance of power. It began to invest in its defence, building one of the strongest armies in Europe. After the Cold War, the Swedish army started to engage in peacekeeping missions. However, from 2000 until 2010, the country undertook drastic reductions in capacity and disarmament, with increases only occurring after 2010 with the advent of security threats in Europe. Since the end of the Cold War, Finland has maintained greater security capabilities, no doubt also due to the unpleasant historical experience of Russia's expansionism. Internal factors include the geopolitical environment. Russia's war in Ukraine has significantly changed the security environment in Europe. Finland's neighbourhood with Russia and its unpleasant historical experience resulted in its application to join NATO. Together with Sweden, they have applied to the Alliance to obtain security guarantees.

Neutrality and its transformations are an important topic that needs further exploration. Finland and Sweden have joined NATO, and while their entry has essential implications for neutrality status, the entry of these countries into NATO is not the final aspect regarding their neutrality. Although both formerly traditionally neutral countries have joined NATO, they will likely be ranked as more conservative regarding operations, with their post-neutral status reflected in the countries' operations within the international coalition. The countries have crossed a formal landmark with the roots established earlier. The international environment has

been constantly changing and evolving, which needs to be continuously observed and analysed. The concept of neutrality declared in the original text has been surpassed, but these countries need to be observed, especially in terms of their membership in NATO.

Does the concept of neutrality still make sense for foreign policy in the 21st century? Or is it a mere relic of a bipolar world in today's modern interconnected world? To what extent does a state have to be sovereign to be neutral? The extent to which neutrality interferes with a state's sovereign actions could be further explored in relation to neutrality. Another topic to research could be buffer states and their relationship to neutrality.

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Legislation

Consolidated version of Treaty on European Union C 326 Article J.4(1)

Convention respecting the Rights and Duties of Neutral Powers and Persons in Case of War on Land. 1907, Art. 16

Summary

The thesis deals with the concept of neutrality in terms of international relations and historical development. The main aim of the thesis is to analyse what factors changed the view of states on neutrality and led to the application to NATO. The changes since the emergence of neutral status of two selected countries, Sweden and Finland, are analyzed, and special attention will be paid to the events that preceded and followed the Russian aggression in Ukraine. In particular, the changes in the neutral status of these countries are examined in the context of the main theories of international relations. The thesis seeks to answer the question of whether these states can still be considered neutral.

Keywords: Finland, Sweden, Neutrality in international relations, Foreign and defence policy, Security studies, NATO

Abstract

Diplomová práce se zabývá konceptem neutrality z hlediska mezinárodních vztahů a hlediska historického vývoje. Hlavním cílem práce je analyzovat jaké faktory změnily pohled států na nautralitu a vedly k podání přihlášky do NATO. Analyzovány jsou změny od vzniku neutrálního statusu dvou vybraných zemí: Švédska a Finska, a zvláštní pozornost bude věnována událostem, které předcházely a následovali po ruské agresi na Ukrajině. Zkoumány jsou zejména změny v neutrálním statusu těchto zemí a to v kontextu hlavních teorií mezinárodních vztahů. Práce se snaží odpovědět na otázku, zda je tyto státy stale možné považovat za neutrální.

Klíčové slova: Finsko, Švédsko, Neutralita v mezinárodních vztazích, Zahraniční a obranná politika, bezpečnostní studia, NATO

List of figures