The London School of Economics and Political Science

Shared Control: Origins and Consequences of Integrated Military Capabilities

A dissertation on the integrated defence cooperation initiatives of the Netherlands and Germany and their impact on the core state powers of government

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Declaration

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Abstract

The governments of the Netherlands and Germany are paving the way for a new form of defence cooperation in Europe, the integration of parts of their armed forces. Both governments pursue such integrations efforts with multiple partners to address acute capability shortfalls and the degree of integration of these bilateral and multilateral efforts creates serious dependencies between the participating governments. The impact on Dutch and German core state powers goes far beyond the control of the cooperating forces and touches, for example, on the budgetary authorities of their parliaments or the broader foreign policy of each government. Despite these dependencies, the trend to further deepen existing cooperations and initiate new partnerships via G2G agreements continues.

In this dissertation, I examine these integrated defence cooperation efforts of German and Dutch armed forces through the lens of International Relations theory and ask why these two governments have agreed to share their sovereign powers. Some have argued that states pursue defence cooperation to strengthen their unilateral military power in the face of a threat or that the socialisation of elite decision-makers in international organisations preceded government decisions to cooperate. However, my field research shows that the decision to share core state powers is the result of a calculated decision-making process that generates distinct political, economic, and military operational benefits for each government. The benefits are particularly pronounced as regards their contribution to the absolute military capabilities of the EU and NATO and hence the absolute multilateral security of their members. I argue that the decision to share core state powers is theoretically best understood and described in terms of a liberal intergovernmentalist framework rather than as a product of elite socialisation or neorealist threat balancing.

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List of Acronyms

ABNL	Admiralty Benelux
AMB	Air Mobile Brigade
ANZUS	Australia, New Zealand, United States Security Treaty
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASF	African Union Standby Forces
AU	African Union
AWACS	Airborne Warning and Control System
BALDEFCOL	Baltic Defence College
BALTNET	Baltic Air Surveillance Network
BALTRON	Baltic Naval Squadron
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BENESAM	*Belgisch-Nederlandse Samenwerking* (Belgium-Netherlands Defence Cooperation Accord)
BMVG	*Bundesministerium der Verteidigung* (German Ministry of Defence)
CDU	*Christlich Demokratische Union* (Christian Democratic Union of Germany)
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
DW	*Deutsche Welle* (German Public International Broadcaster)
EASF	Eastern African Union Standby Forces
EATC	European Air Transport Command
ECB	European Central Bank
EMU	European Monetary Union
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
EU	European Union
EUTM	European Union Training Mission
FCAS	Future Combat Air System
FRONTEX	European Border and Coast Guard Agency

FULLCOM	Full Command (NATO)
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPS	Global Positioning System
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMO	International Maritime Organisation
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
ISR	Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance
JSS	Joint Logistic Support Ship
KMW	Krauss Maffei Wegmann
KNDS	KMW Nexter Defence Systems
LOI	Letter of Intent
MBDA	European developer and manufacturer of missiles
MEDEVAC	Medical Evacuation
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MMF	Multinational Multi-Role Tanker Transport Fleet
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MRTT	Multi Role Tanker Transport
NASAM	Norwegian Advanced Surface to Air Missile System
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NL	The Netherlands
NLD	The Netherlands
NORAD	North American Aerospace Defense Command
NORDEFCO	Nordic Defence Cooperation
OCCAR	Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation
OPCOM	NATO Operational Command
OPCON	NATO Operational Control
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PESCO	EU Permanent Structured Cooperation
PIS	Law and Justice (Political Party)
POL	Poland
PSC	African Union Peace and Security Council

List of Acronyms

RAND	RAND Corporation
R&D	Research and Development
SAC	NATO Supreme Allied Commander
SHORAD	Short-Range Air Defence
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
STANAG	NATO Standardization Agreement
TACOM	NATO Tactical Command
TACON	NATO Tactical Control
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UN	United Nations
UNASUR	Union of South American Nations
USD	US Dollar
VJTF	NATO Very High Readiness Joint Task Force
VSHORAD	Very Short-Range Air Defence
WTO	World Trade Organization

Part I – Core State Powers and Hypothesised Origins of Defence Cooperation

Introduction

This thesis sets out to explain why governments decide to share core state powers; specifically, why the Dutch and German governments have integrated large parts of their armed forces. The creation of fully integrated combat units, jointly controlled by two governments, represents a notable departure from states' preference to remain in full control over their monopoly on violence. The state's coercive force, together with public finance and administration, is generally considered to be 'constitutive of states in ways that other policy functions of the state are not' and hence referred to as core powers of the state (Genschel and Jachtenfuchs 2014, 9). In this thesis, I examine why governments decide to share their *core state powers,* after these policy areas have for decades been among the least likely to be integrated among allies. Surprisingly though, the Netherlands and Germany are no exception in Europe. Since 2009, several other European governments decided on 11 separate occasions to integrate parts of their armed forces with other states, thus sharing sovereign control with a foreign government; among them are France, Poland, Belgium, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Italy, and the Czech Republic. Their Government-to-Government (G2G) cooperation efforts go far beyond existing EU or NATO defence cooperation initiatives. For example, the Netherlands sold all its main battle tanks and today leases a fleet of 18 tanks from Germany, entirely relying on the German supply chain, maintenance, and training infrastructure (Dagblad Noorden 2016); a leap of faith and commitment that would have been unthinkable in the past. Similarly, the entirety of the Dutch and Belgian navies integrated their command structure in one joint headquarters, the two navies also train together, and jointly procure expensive and highly customised equipment (Sauer 2015, 46).

These cooperations, often based on little more than a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between two or more Ministries, have grown in importance at a time when many multilateral institutions are being reduced to their lowest common denominator (e.g. Miles 2018; Cardwell 2019). Even within the EU, the most prominent example of cross-border integration of sovereignty, multi-track policy negotiations or differentiated integration, has become the new normal, as the supranational pooling of sovereignty has become ever harder to achieve (Hvidsten and Hovi 2015, 4; Bickerton, Hodson, and Puetter 2015, 9). Direct G2G cooperation has re-emerged as a valuable tool for connecting like-minded partners in a wide range of policy

areas. The EU alone maintains 977 bilateral and 289 international agreements with third parties, and this number excludes treaties between its own member states (The European Union 2020c). Acknowledging this trend, I decided to analyse the military cooperation projects of the Netherlands and Germany because they create a high degree of mutual dependency in a policy area that has historically been considered *high politics*, or one of the last sovereign powers to be shared (Menon in Genschel and Jachtenfuchs 2014, 67). The two countries decided in some instances to permanently base their soldiers on joint bases together, procure equipment together, train together, and plan to jointly deploy these integrated forces. Their G2G military integration efforts are among the most advanced in the world and continuously deepen with the political backing of both governments.

Why does the biggest economy in Europe consider it beneficial to partner with a small neighbour, such as the Netherlands? Why would the Dutch government decide to integrate up to two-thirds of its land forces with the German Army, essentially limiting its sovereign control over any future deployment of these integrated force structures (Bentinck 2018)? The increasing number of instances where the Dutch and German government decided to integrate their sovereign powers in the field of security and defence is what initially prompted this research project. I wish to contribute to the contemporary debate on European defence cooperation by explaining why governments decide to share their *core state powers* to cooperate in G2G arrangement that occur for the most part outside of the EU and NATO but nevertheless support the requirements and missions of these two organisations.

The increase of defence cooperation globally, and especially in Europe, has been under extensive review by academics for many years (e.g. Howorth 2014; Posen 2006; Mérand 2008; Giegerich 2006; Weiss 2011). These scholars, among others, helped to develop new or leverage existing International Relations theories to advance our understanding of why European states choose to cooperate in the field of security and defence under the auspices of the EU. My research contributes to this existing body of research by addressing the puzzle of why governments go one step further, beyond just cooperation and alliance formation, and integrate their operational defence capabilities. It differentiates itself from this existing literature on EU defence cooperation as it focuses on the integration of operational defence capabilities through direct G2G agreements rather than on the ‘self-perpetuating’ integration under the supranational auspices of the EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) (Hill and Smith 2005, 136). Furthermore, this dissertation was written against the backdrop of multiple such defence integration projects currently being negotiated and signed in Europe in addition to those

analysed in this dissertation.[1] Therefore, I hope that the findings presented here may serve as a stepping stone for the analysis of the upcoming G2G integration efforts we are about to witness.

To achieve the above, I review the literature on state cooperation from the fields of International Relations and European Studies and explain how other authors have theorised state behaviour. Their discussion of exogenous and endogenous drivers of foreign policy decisions that led to the integration of military capabilities is of particular interest to this dissertation. These theoretical publications related to the integration of core state powers in the EU and defence cooperation among its members form the basis for the development of the three hypotheses of this thesis. Since the goal of this dissertation is to identify why governments share control over their core state powers with foreign partners, I discuss the scope of this concept and how it interrelates with the idea of sovereignty. Particularly, the evolution of sovereignty in the 20th and 21st centuries has had an impact on the perceived value of core state powers. Since the publication of Hobbes' Leviathan, political developments have prompted scholars to reinterpret sovereignty on a regular basis (e.g. Brown 2002; Krasner 1995; Bartelson 2006; Bagwell and Staiger 2004; Hobbes and Macpherson 1988; Philpott 2008).[2] An aspect that I investigate to determine whether a decline in value of core state powers might have led governments to share these with foreign partners.

Most of the evidence presented in the thesis is the result of extensive stakeholder interviews with decision-makers from the Dutch and German governments. I augment these interviews with an in-depth analysis of the relevant defence cooperation agreements to show that while defence cooperation has always been popular, the integration of operational capabilities represents a truly unique trend due to the dependencies created among participants. Here, I place the Dutch-German integration of military capabilities in the context of the two states' NATO and EU membership and review their domestic political, economic, and societal circumstances that impacted the decision to integrate. Furthermore, I examine the impact such cooperation agreements had on the three core state powers mentioned above, *coercive force*, *public finance*, and *public administration* to demonstrate that these cooperation agreements indeed impact the decision-making powers of governments.

Research Question and Definitions

It is puzzling that sovereign governments willingly share decision-making power, let alone integrate in politically-sensitive policy areas such as national defence. As mentioned above,

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[1] On the side lines of a NATO ministerial meeting in February 2017, France, Germany, Romania, the Czech Republic, Norway, and the Netherlands all signed defence cooperation and integration agreements with one or more European states to integrate or join different operational defence capabilities (BMVG 2017)

[2] See Chapter 3 for an in-depth review of the scholarly literature on sovereignty and core state powers

G2G cooperation has benefitted an array of policy areas, but the integration of military capabilities seems the most unlikely to succeed or progress given that national defence is considered a quintessential responsibility of any government and one of its *core state powers* (Genschel and Jachtenfuchs 2016, 43). As the lively debate around the idea of an EU Army has shown, integration of military power is a sensitive topic for many governments and the public alike (e.g. Besch 2016; Kluth 2019).

The examples of the deeply integrated military capabilities of the Dutch and German armed forces evoke a compelling question for this research: *Why do states share their core state powers by integrating their operational defence capabilities?* My dissertation primarily sets out to address this question and these subsidiary ones: What considerations convince governments to share control of military capabilities with other nation-states? What steps are governments taking to manage joint control over integrated military capabilities?

Before reviewing the scholarly literature and empirical evidence associated with my research topic, I will summarise the meaning of *core state powers*, *operational defence capabilities, and defence capability integration* in the following sections.

<u>*Core State Powers*</u>

The functions of government are manifold, but not all powers granted to the executive are of equal value. When analysing the powers of a sovereign state, scholars often differentiate between those that are essential to the functioning of a state or critical to its survival and those that are not. In literature, they are often differentiated as *low* and *high* politics; a rather ambiguous terminology meant to broadly categorize policy areas by their importance to governments (Menon in Genschel and Jachtenfuchs 2014, 67; Hoffmann 1966). For example, early advances in EU integration are often considered to be successful because sovereign powers that were considered at the time to be less relevant were integrated, such as environmental policy or competition law. The general consensus at the time was that the EU would only be ‘in charge of efficiency-oriented, largely technocratic regulatory issues of low political salience’ rather than ‘highly politicized issues of redistribution, ideology and enforcement’ (Genschel and Jachtenfuchs 2014, 3). The reluctance of governments to share such *high* powers became even more obvious when EU member states began serious negotiations on topics like border control (Schengen), immigration (Freedom of Movement), monetary policy (Eurozone), or Foreign and Defence Policy (WEU, ESDP, and then CSDP). Often opt-outs of member states occurred or progress slowed altogether (Tsoukalis 2019). Governments were cautious to protect what they considered to be their core state powers and treat more carefully when sharing control with their foreign partners in these instances.

Rather than relying on the broad concept of *sovereignty* or the *high* and *low* politics differentiation, I adopted Genschel and Jachtenfuchs' definition of core state powers (2014; 2016). A more comprehensive description of government competences and their ability to mobilise resources; Genschel and Jachtenfuchs write that '*coercive force*, *public finance*, and *public administration* are constitutive of states in ways that other policy functions of the state are not' (Genschel and Jachtenfuchs 2014, 9; Kuhn and Nicoli 2020, 9). These three policy areas are representative of multiple subordinated functions of government. For example, *coercive force* incorporates a nation's police force, intelligence services, national guard, armed forces, certain elements of the judicial system, and others. *Public finance* consists mainly of the budgetary authority of the government or legislative bodies, and *public administration* represents a large swath of policy-making powers that are often executed at a ministerial level, such as foreign, defence, healthcare, education, or social welfare policies. As I will demonstrate in the latter half of the thesis, all three core state powers are impacted by a government's decision to integrate military capabilities (Interviews No. 7 and 15). Foreign policy decision-making, as well as the budgetary decision-making processes, are so closely intertwined with national security that truly integrated operational military capabilities do not stop at *coercive force*. Therefore, all three core state powers, as defined by Genschel and Jachtenfuchs, play a role in my analysis of the Dutch and German defence integration initiatives (2014). The definition's categorisation of government functions is more precise than the common *low* vs *high* politics differentiation and describes a tangible set of government powers that is critical to the state's sovereignty (Genschel and Jachtenfuchs 2014, 9). However, it is important to note that Genschel and Jachtenfuchs developed their definition to analyse the extent of EU involvement in core state powers and the causes for such involvement (Genschel and Jachtenfuchs 2014, 43). In this thesis, I leverage their definition to explain why governments share their core state powers in direct G2G arrangements.

Operational Defence Capabilities

Operational defence capabilities describe the personnel and equipment of the armed forces which can be deployed by a government. Whether for territorial defence or power projection, these assets and troops represent the (mostly) physical assets that allow for conventional deterrence of enemies. It includes, for example, a mechanised brigade or a navy's fleet of frigates. It also includes military capabilities in the cyber domain, as far as they are related to the operational capabilities of armed forces, such as defensive or offensive cyber capabilities. I underline my focus on operational defence capabilities because there are many defence cooperation projects that solely focus on either defence *policy* or defence *industrial* cooperation. The former, particularly, is the focus of most of the existing literature in International Relations.

Both defence industrial and defence policy cooperation play an important role in the national defence of any country. However, when researching the impact of cross-border cooperation on core state powers, neither policy cooperation nor industrial cooperation creates dependencies on foreign partners that are comparable to stationing troops abroad and have them train together for joint deployments. There are, of course, some integration efforts, such as the integrated supply chains of Airbus Defence & Space or MBDA, multinational industrial capabilities that create strong dependencies between the participating governments. They rely on each other for the supply of critical materials and the know-how of engineers that contribute to the production of essential defence materials. The same is the case for the policy domain; EU cooperation on defence policy has grown in importance as the steadily rising number of CSDP missions indicates (Di Mauro et al. 2017, 80). Nevertheless, if a government needs to deploy troops or defend its territory, it is the operational capabilities of its military that embody the government's core state power of coercive force more than anything else.

The decision to share control over tangible operational capabilities is hence far more substantive for any government than the decision to allow a defence company to merge with a foreign partner, or the decision to discuss possible deployments in an international forum like the EU or NATO. It means that the executive, or in the case of Germany, the parliament's right to deploy or activate its own troops is contingent on the decision of a foreign government. Therefore, I selected the integration of operational defence capabilities as the focus of my thesis to examine the types of cooperation that can be expected to have the highest possible impact on core state powers.

Defence Capability Integration

For governments to cooperate in the field of defence is not uncommon; the Cold War division between East and West and the transatlantic security architecture ensured that European militaries knew how to fight together. The growing interest of governments to cooperate (and share costs) is often attributed to the shrinking defence budgets in the post-Cold War period. Indeed, some of the most significant declines in European military budgets occurred between 1988 and 2015, when inflation-adjusted defence spending dropped from US$ 711 billion in 1988 to US$ 396 billion in 2015.[3] During the same time period, an uptick in defence cooperation agreements can be observed, a trend that continued after the Russian conflict with Ukraine began in 2014 despite a modest reversal of defence budget declines.[4] Against this geopolitical and budgetary backdrop, many stakeholders inside and outside the armed forces argue for closer cooperation. Most often, they highlight the potential economic and operational

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[3] See SIPRI's Military Expenditure Database 2015 for a detailed break-down of historic military expenditure in Europe; all numbers in constant 2015 USD

[4] See Appendix for a timeline and overview of defence cooperation agreements

benefits while pointing toward the deteriorating European security environment (Hartley 2015). As Alexander and Garden put it: ‘The rising ratio of overhead costs to capability affects all nations as they reduce their front-line forces. Yet with pooled capabilities, they could reverse this trend’ (Alexander and Garden 2001, 520).

However, not all cooperations are comparable in terms of scope of activities or depth of commitment. As described in the preceding section, there are many different types of cooperations, and similarly, one can find varying degrees of commitments between cooperating states. For example, the European Defence Agency (EDA) is an institutionalised procurement body to facilitate joint purchases and Research and Development efforts of its members, but there is no obligation or commitment by its members that impinges on their core state powers. The same accounts for NATO training exercises or the EU battlegroups; these activities bring together the allied forces, but after a few months of preparation and weeks of training, all units return to their home bases or respective deployments abroad. NATO or the EU battlegroups are continuous cooperations ‘on-call’ but not a fully integrated fighting force. Of course, these cooperations also come with limited dependencies, the militaries of NATO members do complement each other in certain aspects, and after decades of cooperation, they tend to rely on each other. A recent example being Europe’s reliance on US air-refuelling capabilities during Operation Unified Protector (Brown 2011). However, on the *dependency spectrum*, these types of arrangements are representative of loose or less intertwined defence cooperations.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, one finds defence cooperations that are closely intertwined, those that create strong dependencies between their participants. One interesting example is the decision of the German Air Force to dissolve its entire air transport division and integrate that capability with several other European nations at an airbase in the Netherlands (Interview No. 24). This European Air Transport Command has taken on the full responsibility of coordinating and maintaining air transport for all the Air Forces of its members. Its rotating command structure assures that its members have a say in its day-to-day operation, but effectively each of the seven member states (with the exception of France) have shifted all of their air transport know-how, personnel, and several of their aircraft to the Eindhoven Airbase in the Netherlands. The degree of commitment required for such a decision is clearly more serious than that of becoming a member of the EDA or sending troops to a temporary NATO exercise. Reinstating these operational structures and capabilities at a national level would require a significant amount of time and capital if the decision to cooperate were to be reversed. These closely integrated defence capabilities are the focus of this thesis.

The criteria I reviewed when categorising the many ongoing cooperations included whether militaries decided to share military bases, equipment, training facilities, and other aspects of

operational capabilities. However, it is about more than just sharing facilities and material; to integrate troops at this level implies that the parties to the cooperation jointly hold authority over the deployment of the operational capabilities in question. This narrower definition limits the scope of my research to those military units with the highest degree of mutual dependency. Looser international cooperations, such as EU Battlegroups, joint training efforts, or similar arrangements, have been discussed elsewhere and are beyond the focus of this dissertation (e.g. Reykers 2017; Marchi Balossi-Restelli 2011; Major and Mölling 2011). With a few exceptions, such serious integration of two or more countries' operational capabilities, meaning the shared command, equipment, training, and possibly, joint deployment, is a recent phenomenon. Within the past two decades, the sheer number of such deeply intertwined cooperations has grown from a mere six agreements in 1999 to 29 in 2019.[5] They require a significant level of trust in a foreign government's foreign policy outlook and budget priorities, especially since a government's ability to activate, deploy, or control its military is imperative to defend its borders and project power abroad (Soetendorp 2014, 3).

Now, despite so many of these closely integrated cooperations being underway, the implications for a state's sovereignty remain insufficiently understood. The link between government or parliamentary control over the armed forces and their cooperation with foreign nations is regularly neglected in the scholarly analysis of defence cooperation agreements as well as by political decision-makers. Some countries, such as the United Kingdom, the United States, or France only reluctantly integrate operational capabilities and hence have little or no reason for concern about sovereign control. However, in recent years, politicians in the Netherlands or Germany have actively integrated critical capabilities, such as air defence or rapid reaction forces, and begun to effectively share their core state powers with foreign governments.

This combination of cross-border dependency and the growing number of agreements signed among European states is what makes defence cooperation projects an ideal research context for examining the sharing of core state powers. From a practical perspective, this is also important because most interviewees have indicated that there is little or no awareness of the extent of these cross-dependencies among political stakeholders (Interviews No. 2, 21, 27, 28, and 29). Most interviewees were aware of the cooperations but could not point toward a review or procedure that assessed the degree of exposure to the decision-making processes of foreign governments. These findings compelled me to examine how these decisions affected the core state powers of governments.

[5] Author's database, European operational defence cooperation bi- and multilateral agreements. See Thesis Addendum for an overview of those defence cooperation agreements of the German and Dutch Armed Forces

Hypotheses

The literature review of the existing research on defence cooperation discussed in Chapter 1 helped develop three hypotheses to answer the question of why states share their core state powers by integrating their operational defence capabilities. Existing literature on closely related topics, such as CSDP or NATO, often weighs the influence of systemic pressures (power and threats) on foreign policy decisions. A changing threat environment or a shift in the balance of power in international relations is often considered to cause governments to cooperate in defence matters (e.g. Waltz 2010; Walt 2013; Posen 2006). Additionally, no small number of publications and policy recommendations refer to the continuously increasing costs to maintain effective deterrence and the importance of domestic policy preferences (e.g. Weiss 2011). Organisations that coordinate defence cooperation, such as NATO or the EU, are considered ideal vehicles to increase the absolute strength of a group of countries, rather than their relative military power (e.g. Powell 1991, 1303). Finally, other scholars of the literature on European defence cooperation point to the endogenous drivers of defence cooperation, such as the socialisation among groups of policy entrepreneurs, experts who are initiating and fostering cooperation in the pursuit of a common goal with their international peers (e.g. Mérand 2008; Howorth 2004; Adler 2008).

Drawing on these theoretical arguments, I advance three hypotheses to explain why governments decide to share their core state powers. The goal of the hypotheses is to offer explanations that can be tested with qualitative data I collected in interviews and secondary research. The following three sections briefly preview each hypothesis and its theoretical foundation. Chapter 1 then discusses in detail the theoretical underpinnings and development of each hypothesis.

National Security Executives Constrained by Domestic Opposition

Neorealist scholars often argue that the ultimate motivation of all states is to defend their interests or seize opportunities to improve their influence in a world of anarchy (e.g. Waltz 2010; Walt 2013; Mearsheimer 2014). The underlying assumption is that the purpose of interstate cooperation, be it economic or military, is to generate a relative gain of influence over other states or to balance another power or a perceived threat to improve one’s national security. States are considered the predominant political unit, and military capabilities are considered a key indicator that allows scholars to measure and compare the strength of states (Waltz 2000, 9). However, more recent neoclassical realist interpretations, have recognised the shortcomings in explaining the foreign policy of states solely through the lens of systemic threats and power distribution, have suggested incorporating domestic policy decisions as an intervening variable to better explain government decisions (e.g. Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016). My first

hypothesis builds upon such a neoclassical realist approach. Initial data collected in my interviews suggested that domestic policy constraints might have been an important influence on the Dutch and German governments' decision to integrate military capabilities even though their leadership was eager to respond to the systemic threats that would prompt the strengthening of defence capabilities in realist interpretations. Opposition in parliament and within the electorate to defence budget increases are thought to have blocked the MoD's desire to unilaterally strengthen military capabilities.

Therefore, the first hypothesis proposes that, in light of domestic opposition to defence budget increases, the two governments have had few options but to cooperate and integrate their operational defence capabilities to improve their national security.

Hypothesis 1: The Dutch and German governments agreed to share their core state powers because domestic resource constraints prevented unilateral threat balancing.

Neoclassical realist theory recognises the importance of geopolitics, the threat environment, and relative power dynamics between states. Additionally, it incorporates domestic policy constraints that might have led to foreign policy decisions that the structural realist frameworks fail to explain (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 170). As I will demonstrate in the second part of the thesis, the Dutch and German governments did face strong opposition to defence budget increases from domestic political actors such as the media, public opinion, or opposition parties. These have proven to severely restrict the decision-making of the Ministries of Defence in both states concerning national security issues.[6] The theoretical framework of neoclassical realism allows for the inclusion of such domestic voices and their effect on governments' decision to share core state powers. Furthermore, preliminary empirical evidence suggested that both Dutch and German national security executives identified international security threats for which their armed forces were woefully unprepared (Sinjen 2018). Specifically, this was seen to be the conventional military threat posed by increased Russian military activity in Eastern Europe (Interview No. 20). This hypothesis states that this perceived threat, in combination with staunch domestic opposition to defence budget increases, drove both governments to pool operational capabilities as one of the few policy alternatives left to improve national security. My first hypothesis tests whether such concerns about foreign military threats in combination with staunch opposition to defence policy reforms at home prompted the two governments to integrate their operational defence capabilities in an effort to strengthen the relative strength of their respective armed forces.

[6] Media coverage in both Germany and the Netherlands, offers ample evidence for domestic opposition in both countries against defence budget increases, especially prior to 2014 (The Economist 2014; Beucker 2016)

<u>*Defence Cooperation to Increase Joint Capabilities*</u>

Liberal theoretical frameworks suggest that governments share their core state power in return for combined, absolute, gains in military power rather than relative gains as suggested by neorealist scholars (Powell 1991, 1303). The level of trust required for states to share their core state powers in exchange for gains that are not directly increasing their own military power is thought to be a result of strong existing ties between states and an understanding that an international regime can effectively regulate the joint benefits of cooperation (Keohane and Nye 1987, 5). Often such cooperation is the result of a high degree of pre-existing interconnectedness between cooperating states, as is the case for the Netherlands and Germany, who are highly interconnected trading partners (Keohane and Nye 1987, 8).[7] Liberal theory does not dismiss the importance of military power but recognizes that other factors such as geographic proximity and cooperation in other policy areas also play an important role in fostering the deeper integration of defence capabilities. The theoretical approach of liberal intergovernmentalism in the study of EU integration and its more recent interpretation, *new intergovernmentalism*, serve as the theoretical framework for my second hypothesis (Moravcsik 1997; Bickerton et al., Hodson, and Puetter 2015). Therefore, the second hypothesis tests if the Dutch and German governments decided to share core state powers to foster the military strength of their collective security alliances.

Hypothesis 2: The Dutch and German governments agreed to share their core state powers to increase the collective military capabilities of the EU and NATO.

Whether in an economic or security context, liberal theories assume that states cooperate even when there are no security threats or the need to counter a rising superpower (Keohane and Martin 1995, 40). If the government identifies a cooperative project which generates mutual benefits, it is thought to engage in cooperation and often institutionalises it to sustain benefits, in the long run, to 'reduce transaction costs' (Keohane and Martin 1995, 42). Hence, proponents of liberal theories would argue that the close cooperation and integration of defence capabilities between Germany and the Netherlands is driven by rational behaviour to generate absolute gains from sharing their core state powers which they then secure through the establishment of the permanent working groups that coordinate their many bi- and multilateral defence cooperation projects.

Since both countries are members of both NATO and the EU, the second hypothesis assumes that both governments are interested in the overall strengthening of these organisations and their collective defence capabilities. Furthermore, both states have, for many years, failed to meet

[7] Germany is the Netherland's number one export and import partner. For Germany, the Netherlands also ranks among its Top 10 trading partners (Worldbank 2017)

NATO's investment guideline to spend at least two per cent of GDP on defence (NATO 2020a). Their cooperation is a way of contributing to the effective functioning of this alliance as they pool resources and potentially create financial synergies. Empirically, multiple data points indicate that the Netherlands and Germany pursue such a multilateral security strategy and that it is the collective benefit that motivates the two governments to share their core state powers. Additional pressure from the United States and other NATO members to further invest in alliance capabilities only amplifies the two countries' need to show their commitment to grow the proverbial *security pie*. Examples of such combined strengthening of alliance capabilities include the deployment of the integrated Dutch and German forces to Eastern Europe as part of NATO's Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (Laubenthal 2018).

Communities of Practice Driving Cooperation

The Netherlands and Germany consider NATO to be their preeminent security organisation (Zandee 2017; BBC News 2019). Not only have both countries' armed forces aligned their equipment standards, training, and terminology to conform with those set by the transatlantic alliance but they also frequently contributed to NATO's out-of-area missions and multinational exercises, such as its support to the ISAF mission in Afghanistan or Operation Unified Protector over Libya. Additionally, the EU, as a policy actor in security and defence, has moved into the spotlight in recent years, and younger generations of officers have been exposed to the defence cooperation efforts underway to strengthen the EU's military capabilities (Interview No. 15). Considering this increasing internationalisation of military and civilian stakeholders involved and responsible for managing the cooperation projects of the Netherlands and Germany, the third hypothesis examines whether the international socialisation of these decision-makers caused their governments to share their core state powers. It tests whether the increasing number of staff exchanges and joint missions abroad under the EU or NATO umbrellas have created a community of practice of military and civilian defence policy stakeholders that influenced their governments to share their core state powers. This theoretical framework is based on the community of practice concept as it has been applied by Adler or Wenger in their analysis of security policy and organisational dynamics and other authors analysing the decision-making processes of governments (Adler 2008; Wenger 2000; Adler-Nissen and Pouliot 2014; Græger 2016).

Hypothesis 3: The Dutch and German governments agreed to share their core state powers due to the socialisation of key stakeholders in international security organisations.

This third hypothesis defies the structural and exogenous assumptions of neorealism and liberalism and instead analyses the social processes that inform government decision-making. Constructivist scholars argue that both process and socialisation have the power to change

structures and that preferences are formed 'endogenous to interaction' (Wendt 1992, 391–92). This hypothesis seeks to understand how the two governments' preferences changed over time rather than how a set of predetermined rational preferences informed their foreign policy. On the topic of defence cooperation specifically, it is often argued that the socialisation of decision-makers and stakeholders shape government preferences (e.g. Mérand 2008; Howorth 2004; Adler 2008). Considering the empirical evidence from interviews conducted for this research, the socialisation and constant rotation of senior civilian and military staff in international organisations, as well as in the Dutch and German Defence Ministries, might have played an important role in shaping the decision of the two governments to share their core state powers with each other and other foreign governments.

Whether such transnational *communities of practice* of military personnel seized upon an opportunity created by defence budget cuts or existing supranational cooperation proved to be fertile ground for closer cooperation, the constructivist approach allows for the integration of variables that have an endogenous effect on the decision to share core state powers and allows for a differentiated analysis of my research topic (Meyer and Strickmann 2011, 72). In fact, socialisation is often the first step toward the creation of shared values and ideals that then form the basis for the foreign and defence policy alignment necessary to integrate operational defence capabilities further. Hence, this theoretical framework significantly differs from the rationalist maxim of the second hypothesis or the materialist approach of the neoclassical realist hypothesis.

Research Design and Data Sources

Following a global review of defence cooperation projects, I selected the Dutch and German governments as case studies to answer the research question of this dissertation. I selected the government as a unit of analysis because its decision to share core state powers is the focus of the research question. The Netherlands' and Germany's leading efforts in integrating critical operational defence capabilities allow for the analysis of a rich set of foreign policy decisions. Other potential case studies, such as Belgium, Norway, Italy, or France, would not have yielded as much empirical material. The Italian and Norwegian governments maintain three and two cooperations respectively that would meet this dissertation's criteria for highly integrated operational cooperations, compared to 15 German and 13 Dutch defence cooperation projects that meet the criteria.[8] France, on the other hand, cooperates occasionally but, in most instances, it keenly guards its sovereign control and hence limits the creation of dependencies on foreign

[8] Italian projects: EU GNSS, EU Satellite Centre, NATO AGS, & NATO AWACS E-3A – Norwegian projects: NATO MMF, NATO AGS, & NATO SAC

partners which in turn leaves its core state powers largely unaffected (Interview No. 4).[9] Belgium maintains seven defence cooperation projects that are highly integrated but still falls short of the high number of German and Dutch initiatives.[10] Examining two states that not only cooperate widely in bilateral and multilateral formats, but also with each other, offers the added benefit to examine how the two governments manage the impact of the same defence cooperation projects on their core state powers. Lastly, the Netherlands' armed forces are roughly a quarter the size of the German armed forces in terms of active-duty personnel and their defence budget. This offers additional insights into the aspect that size plays for government control over core state powers.

The Netherlands and Germany maintain a large number of defence cooperations of which some are less integrated while others are closely intertwined. To differentiate these, I applied a set of criteria to identify truly *integrative* cooperations that are relevant to the research question. these were: 1) personnel and equipment are shared by two or more states, 2) a significant share of the personnel or equipment is based abroad, and 3) the defence capability is either permanently or temporarily under foreign command. The Netherlands currently maintains 13 and Germany 16 of such highly-integrated cooperation projects.[11] As a result, these two governments are also further along the maturity curve as it concerns the sharing of core state powers in these cooperations since they have had more time to experience challenges related to the sharing of their core state powers. However, while my research project is limited to two countries, my selection criteria, definitions, and collected data allow for future research to easily expand the analysis to additional countries and further test the hypotheses, as suggested in the case study research guidelines developed by Gerring (2006, 96). In Chapter 2 I will discuss these criteria in more detail and provide specific examples.

The Netherlands and Germany have been cooperating for many years, and most of the stakeholders I interviewed have supported multiple defence cooperation initiatives, which eased the data collection. Also, since both governments' decisions have previously been studied in different contexts (e.g. EU defence cooperation), the existing data was more transparent and accessible than for most other case study candidates — an important practical consideration for my research approach. The empirical data I collected represents a combination of in-person interviews, government documents, and analysis of secondary sources that include expert reports and news publications. I conducted 30 semi-structured interviews with knowledgeable interviewees in Germany and the Netherlands. Given the inherent complexities of the

[9] French projects: French German C-130 Squadron, EU GNSS, EU Satellite Centre, & EATC
[10] Belgian projects: NATO MMF, NATO AWACS E-3A, NATO SAC, EATC, EU GNSS, BeNeSam, & EU Satellite Centre
[11] See thesis addendum for an overview of those Dutch and German bi- and multilateral operational defence cooperation agreements under review in this thesis

government decision-making processes and the underlying political agendas at play, the collection of data greatly benefited from the open-ended research questions of my interview approach and helped me as the researcher understand the position of each interviewee within the two governments. This ‘nondirective’ approach not only helped me better understand why governments pursued a specific decision but also offered insights into the dependencies on its foreign partners (Yin 2016, 144). While I used the same interview guide to frame my research and contrast and compare the responses among different sets of interview partners (e.g. military staff, diplomats, politicians, or experts), it allowed for a seamless transition to a qualitative discussion.

The second and third part of this thesis qualitatively analyses the collected evidence in a structured manner and tests the three hypotheses. To achieve a fair, complete, empirically accurate, and credible interpretation that contributes to existing research, the following best practices in qualitative and case study research have been taken to ensure a high degree of rigour and reliability of the collected data in my research (Yin 2016, 221).

For open-source news documents, only information from established news outlets with a long-running history of quality journalism as well as specialist publications with expert knowledge of the German and Dutch armed forces have been taken into consideration. All interviewees, except two, came recommended by trustworthy contacts of mine or were follow-up recommendations. To achieve a diverse set of views on the research issue, I specifically asked for recommendations in different divisions of ministries or services of the military. Any statements by interviewees that represent critical information for the analysis of the case study have been verified with at least one other source, often in a subsequent interview or via follow-up research (Yin 2016, 156).

To stitch together a coherent picture of the factors influencing government decisions, the triangulation of various sources was immensely helpful (Yin 2016, 161). For example, the commentary of one interviewee might have explained the reasoning behind a specific paragraph in a Memorandum of Understanding, a document typically signed to initiated defence cooperation projects. Confirming his or her interpretation with a second interview partner generally increased my confidence in their statement, for example if it played a role during the negotiations leading up to a defence cooperation agreement. As necessary, more detailed follow-up questions have been e-mailed to interviewees to clarify statements. With the exception of four interviewees, all interview partners look back on at least a decade-long career at the intersection of defence and security in government. All interviews were semi-structured; meaning open-ended questions were asked initially while leaving room for the interview partner to steer the conversation toward topics they considered most important. The commentary that

appeared subjective to the author was pressure-tested with follow-up questions asking the interviewees why alternative answers appeared less-likely in their professional opinion.

Some interview partners presented me with government documents which are not classified but not destined for public release either. These have aided the understanding of the operational realities of selected defence cooperation projects but are not critical to the analysis as it concerns the research question. Again, many of these data points could also be triangulated with public data points. Most of the articles, documents, and other news coverage that I analysed are publicly available. Replicating the information collected from interviewees would naturally be more difficult to achieve as would the insights gained from viewing some of the non-publicised government documents. However, as described above, best efforts have been made to ensure a high degree of replicability of the information, and where alternative sources were available, information has been directly quoted so as not to dilute it.

Interview partners included diplomats of the Dutch and German embassies in The Hague and Berlin, members of Parliament involved in the relevant decision-making processes, civil servants at the Ministries of Defence or Foreign Affairs, commanding officers co-located with their foreign partners, and external stakeholders who have been advising governments. During research trips to Berlin, The Hague, Utrecht, and meetings here in London. All of them were or are active participants in the research on, execution, planning, or facilitation of defence integration projects involving either the Netherlands, Germany, or both nations. In total, 14 Dutch stakeholders were interviewed; these included one diplomat, three politicians, and ten officers ranking from General to lower-ranking officers. On the German side, 16 interviews were held, including three diplomats, two politicians, ten military personnel, and two researchers. The interviews were structured to limit personal biases as well as to achieve an ideal balance between professional opinions and facts on the subject discussed. All interviewees selected to remain anonymous, in accordance with the London School of Economics and Political Science's field research guide I have protected their identities and where relevant I refer to their title or role in a generalised manner in this document. Practically speaking, the promise of anonymity has overall let to more frank, less biased, and open conversations, particularly when discussing the relationship with the government of a foreign partner. Citing Weber's method of '*Verstehen'*, Hall wrote that 'good explanations of actions have to be compatible with the meanings the actors themselves associated with those actions' (Hall 2013, 24; Weber 1949). The interviews conducted as part of this dissertation serve exactly this purpose, to understand the perceptions decision-makers in the government associated with their decisions to integrate military capabilities with foreign partners.

The many decision-making steps and factors which influence a government's bureaucracy at the intersection of defence, foreign, and domestic policy goals represent a potentially difficult set of empirical evidence to be analysed. To do so requires an in-depth understanding of the weight and importance assigned to each stakeholder, process, and step in the negotiations. To address such a research challenge Bennet recommends process tracing as it 'focuses on the sequencing of who knew what, when, and what they did in response'(Brady and Collier 2010, 209). It helps establish causalities and uncover important variables which would have been omitted by less in-depth research methodologies. Moreover, given the unique nature and varying decision-making processes within each country's government, it is rather likely that inferences based on these, country-specific, non-comparable observations offer better evidence then artificial but detailed indicators across case studies (Thomas in Gerring 2006, 178). In the universe of available information, I made the best effort to uncover such relevant data where available.

I organized, analysed, and synthesized my data systematically using the NVivo qualitative research software which cross-references interview data and commentary with secondary sources to identify themes of importance that relate to more than one interviewee's responsibilities or the content of one newspaper article.

To structure the research analysis of secondary and primary data, I specifically analysed the following aspects of the defence agreements and discussed these with my interview partners:

- **Military** – what is the effect on a government's independent control over its military capabilities that are involved in the defence integration project?
- **Financials –** do the cost or savings generated by defence integration project restrict or enable participating states' defence budget allocations?
- **Procedural –** are the state's procedural processes to activate its military delayed, disturbed, or otherwise hindered by the defence integration project?
- **Foreign Policy –** what are the immediate and long-term foreign policy goals of the government in question, and how do they affect or are affected by the defence integration agreements?
- **Legal –** is the state exposed to legal obligations that limit its autonomy on when to activate its forces or equipment involved in the defence integration project?

Considering the above-outlined approach, it is worth mentioning some of the inherent limitations of my research project. I intend to contribute to existing research and to open the aperture for further studies at the intersection of core state powers and defence cooperation and would like to paint a more coherent picture surrounding states' preferences and motivations to integrate capabilities in areas which affect national-security interests. While this specific field holds much potential for growth given today's political environment and defence policy trends globally, the number of available cases remains relatively small, and the depth of some defence cooperation projects limited. In a relatively novel and still evolving research context such as this

topic, any single study must be viewed as exploratory in nature and limited in its generalisability. Its research contribution seeks to address an increasingly important approach to European defence cooperation and particularly focuses on the role of core state powers. My hope is that this dissertation will provide important theoretical and practical insights in this regard, but also serve as a starting point for future research to test, extend, and generalize the findings presented here.

Thesis Structure

Conceptually, the thesis is divided into three parts. In the first part (Chapters 1, 2, and 3), I review the existing literature on defence cooperation and develop hypotheses to answer the research question, based on existing theoretical frameworks in International Relations. This is followed in the second chapter by an overview of alliances and defence cooperation agreements that are concluded among governments globally. The review of these concludes that only a small subset of defence cooperation agreements between governments has in fact led to the deep integration of operational military capabilities, even though the number of such deeply integrated defence cooperation projects is growing. It is these *highly* integrated cooperation projects that can touch upon the core state powers of cooperating governments. In Chapter 3, I go on to explain the meaning and value of sovereignty to governments and the interpretation of the terminology in International Relations literature. Here, I also introduce the concept of core state powers of Genschel and Jachtenfuchs and highlight its distinction from the concept of sovereignty (2014). To do so, the chapter begins with a review of sovereignty (as discussed by Brown 2002; Krasner 1999; R. Jackson 1999; Wendt 1992, and others) and it concludes with a review of contemporary challenges to core state powers. Then I explain why defence cooperation poses such a unique challenge for governments' ambition to balance their control over core state powers while maintaining effective military capabilities. I demonstrate that despite the many challenges to core state powers, governments continue to defend them and highly value control over the three core state powers of *coercive force*, *public finance*, and *public administration*.

In the second part of the thesis (Chapters 4, 5, and 6), I depart from the existing literature and theoretical frameworks and transition to the analysis of the empirical evidence collected for this research project. It begins in Chapter 4 with a continuation of the core state power discussion but with an analysis of how cooperation between the Dutch and German armed forces affect the core state powers of the Dutch and German governments. In Chapter 5, I present the two case studies and test the three hypotheses against the empirical evidence. I begin with a more detailed introduction of the defence cooperation agreements of each country and highlight the financial or operational synergies associated with these. This is followed by an assessment of the unique

domestic and foreign policy preferences of each nation and an introduction of the relevant stakeholders in government that are involved in the creation of highly integrated defence cooperation initiatives. I show how and why the unique political, historical, and legal contexts shape the decision-making procedures of each government. Lastly, I assess the role the EU and NATO play in the integration of military units and differentiate, why some of their initiatives are catalysts for the integration of forces among allies, and how the decision to share core state powers might be closely interlinked with governments' allegiance to these two security organisations. In the third part of the thesis, I summarize and discuss my research findings and suggest potential paths for future research efforts focused on the integration of military capabilities.

Figure 1: Thesis structure

Chapter 1: Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

The previous section introduced the research puzzle of this thesis: Why do states share their core state powers by integrating their operational defence capabilities? The goal of this dissertation is to understand the steps that led to the Dutch and German governments' decision to share their core state powers with each other and other allied partners, meaning control over parts of their armed forces under the auspices of multiple G2G defence cooperation agreements. I also introduced the three hypotheses that form the basis for my research inquiry. These are a product of the literature review of this chapter and its discussion of different theoretical frameworks which have previously been used to explain interstate cooperation. The objective of this chapter is to outline a structure that serves as the framework of analysis for the following theoretical and empirical discussion in this thesis. I develop three hypotheses and discuss the existing literature as well as the empirical evidence from my field research that supports these hypotheses. Each hypothesis offers an alternate account as to why the Dutch and German governments decided to share control over their core state powers in exchange for a deeply intertwined joint military capability.

First, I will introduce the subject-matter literature on defence cooperation and its theoretical underpinnings in international relations theory. I highlight theoretical approaches that have produced answers to comparable research puzzles, for example, that of the continuous evolution of the EU's CSDP. This part serves the dual purpose of identifying existing research results that could help answer my research question but also demonstrates how my research topic of direct G2G cooperation differs from but complements much of the existing work done on understanding defence cooperation on the European continent. It looks at the broader literature of relevant International Relations theories that have hitherto been applied to analyse defence cooperation. In each of the three following sections, I then discuss the specific theoretical framework that I selected to develop my hypotheses. To justify this selection, I also review the empirical evidence that suggested the plausibility of each hypothesis.

Why States Cooperate – Theorising State Behaviour in Existing Literature

While I draw on the concept of core state powers from Genschel and Jachtenfuchs as an analytical framework, the primary objective of my thesis is to contribute to the existing

literature on defence cooperation in the field of International Relations (2014; 2016). In this section, I, therefore, discuss the most relevant approaches and applications of theoretical frameworks to date, namely realism, liberalism, and constructivism.

Realism: Power, Threats, and Anarchy

In this section, I assess the value of neorealist theoretical approaches and particularly the neoclassical realist framework to answer the research question and discuss the existing literature that follows this power- and threat-based frameworks. For the systemic analysis of state behaviour, neorealist accounts have been a prominent theoretical approach since the publication of Waltz's 'Theory of International Politics' (1979). Neorealist terminology revolves around *threats* and *power* and generally assumes that states will proactively pursue any course of action that improves their chances of survival or increases their influence in an anarchical system of states (Walt 2013, 263; Waltz 2010, 98). While there are differences among neorealist accounts, the above description of states as the principal unit of analysis in an anarchical world holds true for all iterations of neorealism. However, the frameworks of Waltz and Walt consider states to be 'black boxes' whose domestic priorities are shaped exogenously by systemic pressures (Vasquez 1998, 378). Neoclassical Realism on the other hand, adds an intervening variable of domestic preference formation and hence introduces the state as an important arbiter in the causal chain that leads from external forces to the behaviour of governments.

To answer my research question, why states share core state powers, neorealists would likely predict that governments decide to cooperate to balance against a rising power, a common threat, or hope to gain greater power projection capabilities as a result of cooperation. Generally, these answers correspond with the *balance-of-power*, *balance-of-threat*, or *offensive* realist approaches (e.g. Waltz 2010; Walt 2013; Mearsheimer 2014). The latter argument for offensive realism posits that regardless of their threat environment, states always seek to increase their military and economic strength relative to all other states. It considers defence policy to be a zero-sum game; the increase of security for one state goes hand-in-hand with the decrease of security for another (Jervis 1978, 169). Given the deeply integrated capabilities examined in this dissertation, offensive realism hardly seems applicable. Sharing control over one's armed forces hardly qualifies as an offensive realist approach to improve one's relative military power vis-à-vis one's neighbours. More importantly, the defence integration projects of the Netherlands and Germany are limited to defensive forces that would not lend themselves well to the projection of power abroad since their primary role is for territorial defence (e.g. missile defence). Hence, an offensive realist explanation for the decision of the Dutch and German governments seems rather unlikely.

Balance-of-power or *balance-of-threat* theories, on the other hand, are often invoked to explain the formation of defence cooperations or alliances, such as NATO (Waltz 2000, 18; Walt 2013, 25). The difference being that balance-of-power posits that states balance against rising powers while the balance-of-threat theory posits that governments form alliances to balance against powers that are perceived as threatening. Both theories have been applied to European defence cooperation in the past. For example, the initiation of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) in 1999 was often portrayed as a power-balancing act against US unipolarity. The lack of foreign threats at the time was considered evidence that the motivation for European cooperation must be to balance against the United States (e.g. Posen 2006; Hyde-Price 2006; Jones 2007; Layne 2006; Pape 2005). To acknowledge the continuous security relationship through NATO, some authors theorized that Europe is 'soft-balancing', meaning Europe continuous to maintain the transatlantic relationship but increases its power projection capabilities regionally to maintain a limited degree of autonomy in its periphery (Posen 2006, 151, 163; Pape 2005; Paul, Fortmann, and Wirtz 2004, 180). The underlying argument of these scholars is that European states seek to escape the two risks of bandwagoning to US power: 1) being entrapped in US foreign policy priorities that are not their own and 2) being abandoned at a time when they heavily rely on US military or economic power for their survival (Cladi and Locatelli 2012, 268).

Similarly, defence cooperation initiatives on the continent have also been interpreted through the lens of *balance-of-threat* theory. Since the protection of Europe by the United States' military is not guaranteed, alliance formation and deeper integration on the continent is at times described as a hedge against a withdrawal of US security guarantees (Valášek and Brattberg 2019; Smith 2018, 612). A more recent approach to the theoretical ideas of neorealism, *neoclassical realism*, leverages these balance-of-power and balance-of-threat arguments, but unlike structural realists, it argues that governments often fail to effectively balance threats or foreign powers (Schweller 2004, 160). In fact, in many instances *over* or *under balancing* is the result of domestic politics, the intervening variable ignored by the analysis of structural realist theorems. The most prominent examples being the great powers' failure to effectively balance against Napoleon or Nazi Germany, developments that support the neoclassical realist argument that the systemic balancing of powers and threats, as suggested by structural realism, is far from being an automatism (Schweller 2004, 160).

For the research question at hand, the power and threat-based theories of Waltz and Walt cannot be dismissed outright. The conventional military threats to Dutch and German security and the role of the United States as an ally have been continuous themes in interviews with stakeholders, giving at least some credence to the idea that threats and power are considerations that feature in the decision-making processes of governments (Interviews No. 2, 20, 26, and 28).

However, neither the Dutch nor German government acts in a rational manner that is purely driven by the structural forces that these two theories deem as the primary driver of state behaviour. Neither government is investing in its defence organisations at rates that would be required to sustain effective territorial defence capabilities independent of NATO. The European-led NATO operation Unified Protector was indicative of these obvious shortfalls when European forces needed support from the US military with Electronic Warfare and surveillance capabilities in the air campaign to oust the Libyan dictator, Muammar Gaddafi (Brown 2011; Nielsen 2012). It is hardly surprising then that both, Germany, and the Netherlands, continue to describe NATO as their primary security organisation in interviews. Dutch politicians are adamant about their allegiance to the US, and NATO security guarantees (Interviews No. 28 and 29). In light of this evidence, the *balance-of-threat* argument appears at first glance to be a more accurate explanation than the soft-balancing interpretation of some neorealist scholars (e.g. Pape 2005). Statements of the Dutch and German governments indeed often focus on perceived threats and the risk of abandonment and less so on the intention of balancing against foreign powers (Rumer 2016; Von der Leyen 2019). Now, while the balance-of-threat argument might explain the bandwagoning with the US, it falls short of explaining why the two decided to integrate their military capabilities to such a high degree and why their governments comparatively deprioritised their defence budgets.

Considering these data points, I seek to further investigate the Dutch and German governments' intention to balance threats by leveraging the neoclassical realist framework. Neoclassical realism's consideration of intervening variables could possibly account for the foreign policy behaviour of the two governments since it incorporates unit-level variables and hence can analyse foreign policy decisions rather than just systemic high-level developments (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 252). Of course, even here the causal link between 'systemic incentives' and 'policy responses' will not always produce an accurate description of the foreign policy decisions of government (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 216). Decision-makers might correctly assess the threat and power distribution of the world but might be constrained in their actions by other actors in domestic politics or society; the degree to which they can activate the economic and military resources of their state is variable and anything but guaranteed (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 214). A limitation of this theoretical framework is, for example, the question whether the domestic and systemic variables are additive or interactive; the theory assumes the former, but in reality, a domestic response to a foreign threat or the policy of a neighbouring country might be prompted by a specific domestic action (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 251). Hence, the neoclassical realist framework also comes with its limitations; nevertheless, its inclusion of domestic preferences greatly enhances the purely systemic analysis of structural realists.

Liberalism: Domestic Preference Formation and Absolute Security Gains

While neorealist explanations continue to be among the popular theoretical explanations of security-focused research programmes in International Relations, liberal theories are often invoked to explain cooperation among states more broadly and liberal intergovernmentalism specifically to theorise integration on the European continent (e.g. Keohane and Nye 1987; Moravcsik 1997; Pollack 2001). In this section, I discuss the applicability of the neoliberal institutionalist approach, the theoretical framework of liberal intergovernmentalism, and its more recent iteration of *new intergovernmentalism*, in relation to the research question of this thesis and present the predictions these theories would make with regards to the Dutch and German governments' decision to share core state powers.

Neoliberalist institutionalism diverges most starkly from neorealist frameworks in its claim that cooperating states subscribe to shared norms in form of regimes or institutions, for example, to guarantee democratic values or establish international law (Keohane and Nye 1987, 732). In other words, the realist assumption of international anarchy does not fully apply to nations that share the same values and adhere to internationally agreed-upon behaviour to resolve disputes (Pohl 2013, 355). These core values may include 'individual freedom, political participation, private property, and the equality of opportunity' (Doyle and Recchia 2011, 1434). Furthermore, commercial relations among states play an important role in liberal theories at large, as they are considered to effectively influence foreign policy priorities of governments by creating a dense web of cross-dependencies (Doyle and Recchia 2011, 1434). This aspect also deviates from the mostly threat- and power-focused rhetoric of neorealist literature. Keohane and Nye offer a view on the role of international regimes in coordinating cooperation among states; they state that the potential benefits of cooperation are absolute and that states seek to regulate the benefits from such cooperative gains (Jervis 1999, 49; Keohane and Nye 1987, 729). These institutions may occur in the form of international organisations, such as the EU, the World Trade Organisation (WTO), or NATO, or take the form of agreed-upon norms and regulations. Krasner defined such institutions or regimes as 'principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures that solve market-failure problems' (2008). These help governments determine just how much cooperation is necessary to increase the absolute benefits for all participants involved. States are thought to continuously identify shared interests with other states to improve the absolute returns for their cooperation; these do not have to be monetary but may also be returns of increased national security. This basic premise of neoliberalism highlights how the interdependence of states might play a role in explaining government decision-making processes to cooperate (Moravcsik 1997, 516).[12] The precondition

[12] The Netherlands exported more than €110 billion worth of goods to Germany in 2017, more than twice as much as to Belgium, its second largest trading partner (Global Edge Trade Statistics 2017)

of anarchy, as assumed by neorealist scholars, does not vanish in neoliberal theoretical frameworks but in the eyes of neoliberalists, states' proclivity to cooperate economically weakens their desire to disturb a security equilibrium.

Moreover, liberal theoretical frameworks elevate the importance of domestic preference formation and the role of domestic stakeholders even more so then neoclassical realism (Moravcsik 1997, 516). They deprioritise the role of the state as the all-dominating unit of analysis and raise the importance of 'state-society' relations (Moravcsik 1997, 515). This is an important differentiation from many neorealist accounts on foreign policy. Liberal scholars generally look for the political power struggles domestically and then interpret 'foreign policy as a function of domestic political calculations rather than of external security' alone (Pohl 2013, 355). The state is thought of as a representative of domestic interests rather than a top-down decision-making body solely reacting to systemic pressures (Moravcsik 1997, 518).

Moravcsik built upon the theoretical foundation of neoliberalism and observed that much of the interstate bargaining happening within the EU is driven by domestic constituencies of member states rather than by the supranational institutions of the EU (1997). His theory of liberal intergovernmentalism was developed with the EU in mind, but when applied to the research question of this thesis, its description of G2G negotiations between governments concerning the integration of government powers maps closely to what is happening when the Netherlands or Germany negotiate the sharing of core state powers with foreign partners. Liberal intergovernmentalism places the source of power with national governments and argues that their domestic preferences determine the pace and scope of EU integration. For example, the preference of powerful member states to limit the integration of defence capabilities in the EU could be explained in this framework to be the reason for the cumbersome advances made by the EU's CSDP.

However, more recently, the observation has been made by some scholars that EU member states have slowed the intergovernmental integration at a supranational level and instead proceeded to negotiate integration outside of the EU's existing institutions, a development that has been termed the 'integration paradox', it explains the phenomenon that no powers are ceded to supranational bodies while the integration of sovereign powers continues to progress (Bickerton, Hodson, and Puetter 2015, 4). The authors of this research have identified the obvious similarities to Moravcsik's work and termed these integration efforts as 'new intergovernmentalism' (Bickerton, Hodson, and Puetter 2015, 5). It is *new* because the integration efforts they review start to blur the *high/low politics* divide and touch upon *core state powers* (Bickerton, Hodson, and Puetter 2015, 5). I will discuss the benefits and

disadvantages of this theoretical framework in more depth in the below section since I apply it for the development of the second hypothesis.

Lastly, another liberal framework, *historical institutionalism*, investigates the role that regimes and institutions play in deepening cooperation beyond their original mandate. In it Pierson argued that the cooperation between EU member states set out as an intergovernmental bargaining process informed by domestic priorities; however, he suggests that the subsequent integration of 'policy authorities' is a product of time and institutional evolution which limits the manoeuvring space for cooperating governments (1996, 124–26). Pierson termed this theoretical understanding of international cooperation, historical institutionalism. However, it is different from neo-functionalism as it does not subscribe to the belief that all-powerful supranational institutions claim power from states; instead, historical institutionalism points to the power of existing regimes that corral the process of intergovernmental bargaining (Pierson 1996, 125; Fioretos 2011, 377). Having reviewed in-depth the *institutional aspects* of the Dutch and German military cooperations, such as the bilateral working groups that coordinate the military cooperation, I concluded that the explanatory power of this framework was too weak for the empirical evidence at hand. Frequent staff rotations curtail the decision-making powers of the bi- and multilateral working groups that steer defence cooperation projects, and the concentration of decision-making powers in the higher echelons of the Dutch and German governments were indicative of bi- and multilateral institutions and powerful stakeholders in Berlin and The Hague. Also, many of the aspects that define the historical institutionalist approach appeared to be not as inescapable as the framework would describe them to be, for example, most of the agreements under review in this thesis are mere MoUs, their participants are not even legally bound by international law to pursue the agreed integration of capabilities (Moravcsik 2018, 1667). Hence, the *new intergovernmentalist* framework appeared to be a better analytical framework for the second hypothesis as it accurately frames the rational bargaining process that drives the negotiations of these highly integrated defence cooperations in a policy area that clearly represents a core state power of governments.

<u>*Constructivism: Norms, Strategic Culture, and Elite Socialisation*</u>

In this section, I present prominent constructivist approaches that have contributed valuable insights to the study of defence cooperation in the existing literature. While constructivism covers a wide range of theoretical frameworks, the ideas of shared values, aligned strategic cultures, and the socialisation of elites have successfully been applied to analyse defence cooperation in Europe in multiple instances (e.g. Adler and Barnett 1998; Biehl 2013; Græger 2016; Mérand 2008, among others). For this thesis, I will first provide a general overview of the three most relevant existing threads of literature: *Europeanisation, Strategic Culture,* and *Elite Socialisation*. The discussion on the latter will draw on works related to the concepts of

communities of practice and epistemic communities, as well as the sociological analytical framework developed by Mérand to analyse the integration of European defence (Adler 2008; Howorth 2004; Mérand 2008).

What does it take for ideational or cultural factors to facilitate international cooperation? Who is the agent of change that perpetuates deeper integration of capabilities? Can sustained cooperation in established forums, such as NATO, result in the convergence of strategic culture? Constructivist theory argues that the socialisation of elites can shape the preferences of states and that such preferences are formed 'endogenous to interaction' rather than being given 'exogenously'; therefore, the focus lies on interstate relations and how interactions change preferences (Wendt 1992, 391–92). Wendt, and others, question whether structurally driven arguments, such as the neorealist view, can explain great power politics adequately and further argue that the rationalist theories ignore the processes which define and shape the preferences of actors on the international stage (1992, 391).

In comparison to the neoliberal and neorealist approaches, this means that constructivism sees beyond the rational power calculations at the basis of neorealism or the calculated preference formation of neoliberalism. Instead, the agency of individuals or groups of actors takes centre-stage, together with the assumption that socialisation plays a critical role in shaping the preferences and decisions of governments. In the existing constructivist literature on European defence cooperation - specifically, as it concerns cooperation among European states - there are three recurring analytical frameworks which are commonly leveraged to explain why governments decide to cooperate. They are *norms and identity*, *strategic culture*, and *relationships and socialization*, and they broadly correspond to the above-mentioned literature on *Europeanisation, Strategic Culture,* and *Elite Socialisation.*

Some constructivist theoretical frameworks chose to analyse the shared *norms and identities* of nation-states to understand whether the answer for G2G cooperation might be found in shared believes and values. For example, Anderson and Seitz argue that the ESDP has in large part been the result of a well-curated identity-formation project to strengthen cohesion among EU member states and highlight the many shared traits of European nations vis-à-vis the rest of the world (2006). Weiss aptly described this research approach as the 'top-down approach', as it suggests that shared norms and identities affect the preference formation of states rather than the other way around, this is also often described as 'Europeanization' (2011, 24). The literature focused on this theoretical approach stylises Europe as a 'normative actor' whose 'foreign policy is driven at a very fundamental level by the normative values ascribed to it 'rather than by rationalist considerations (Manners 2002, 235; Cavatorta and Tonra 2007, 350 and 361). The strong influence of political leaders, like Prime Minister Tony Blair on the Lancaster House

Treaties or Chancellor Konrad Adenauer on the creation of the Franco-German Brigade, are examples of how political leaders have formed bilateral identities for specific defence cooperation agreements (Hofmann and Mérand 2020, 158).

The existing literature on *strategic culture* builds upon the idea that the culture and norms of a society are the drivers of foreign policy decisions, such as whether to cooperate and with whom (e.g. Giegerich 2006; Biehl 2013). This theoretical framework offers a perspective on why multinational cooperation between states succeeds or fails. In a comprehensive publication on European Strategic Culture, the concept is defined as 'a number of shared beliefs, norms and ideas within a given society that generate specific expectations about the respective community's preferences and actions in security and defence policy' (Biehl 2013, 12). The analysis of a country's strategic culture is therefore thought to be a good proxy of a government's foreign policy decisions as it incorporates the beliefs and the unique history of nations, aspects which are outside the realm of more rationalist theoretical frameworks. The framework assumes that countries with overlapping strategic cultures are more prone to cooperate and integrate than those that have little in common.

Unlike, in the Europeanisation framework, institutions such as NATO or the EU play a facilitating role for the strategic culture approach but are not considered to impose their own agenda on the member states' governments (Biehl 2013, 397). However, the strength and limitation of the strategic culture framework lies in its breadth. Incorporating the beliefs, history, and unique cultural attributes to define a country's strategic culture is challenging. For example, if half of the German population has a positive view on Russian military spending and the other half a negative view on the same topic, does this simply lead to a well-balanced military posture vis-à-vis Russia, or does Germany's strategic culture change every time one or the other half of the nation is represented in government? Weiss points to this weakness by asking when a specific belief or conviction is salient enough to impact a country's strategic culture (2011, 25).

To avoid such a wide-angled approach that maps culture and identity at the highest level, another tenet of constructivist literature focuses on the role of decision-makers in government. The influence of expert communities within a policy field is thought to advance cooperation if such groups gather around a specific set of goals (e.g. Cross 2011; Mérand 2008; Howorth 2004; Adler and Barnett 1998; Adler-Nissen and Pouliot 2014). These theoretical approaches investigate how the frequent interactions of *elites* have prompted their governments to share core state powers. The concepts applied here are based on sociological analysis that might look at the formation of *communities of practice* or *epistemic communities*. However, other approaches focussing on elite socialisation have also successfully been applied in the field of

European defence cooperation. For example, in his book 'Beyond the Nation-State', Frederic Mérand leveraged the work of Pierre Bourdieu on the socialisation of political elites to explain the consistent deepening of European Union integration in the fields of security and defence (2008). He argues that European security professionals 'agree on institutional solutions because they share a certain number of practices and beliefs, but also because they have a strong professional interest in fulfilling the task they have been entrusted with' (Mérand 2008, 144).

In a similar vein, Deutsch's 'security communities', a concept revived by Adler and Bennet in 1998, represents one of the earlier ideas to explain the cooperation of states as a result of shared norms and identity (1969; 1998). According to Adler and Barnett, states in a security community will not only settle their disputes among each other peacefully but also cooperate and integrate policy functions *because* of their 'shared values, norms, and symbols' (1998, 3). Later Adler built on these ideas by describing how communities of practice, groups of international security professionals, advance the idea of self-restraint and the creation of security through greater cooperation (Adler 2008, 197). The most prominent examples being NATO and the EU in Western Europe after the Second World War. Key decision-makers are thought to have gathered around the idea of a 'joint enterprise' (such as peaceful change) and are part of 'intersubjective social structures that constitute the normative and epistemic ground for action (Adler 2008, 199).

When confronted with complex problems with uncertain outcomes, states rely on the knowledge and interpretation of communities of experts who continuously discuss and advance their knowledge in an *epistemic community* of transnational experts; consequently the norms of such communities indirectly 'increases the likelihood of convergent state behaviour', such as defence cooperation (Haas 1992, 4; Howorth 2004, 12). Howorth described these groups of security and defence experts as the 'endogenous' motor of integration in Europe (2004, 230). Thanks to extensive interviews to support their research, both Howorth and Mérand have collected strong empirical evidence to support their arguments on just how important these networks are for European integration efforts in defence and security. Howorth even suggests that 'there is a marked trend towards consensus-seeking, which goes far beyond what one might normally expect of diplomatic practice' (2012, 449).

The *epistemic communities* analysed by Howorth are a specific subset of a *community of practice*; they represent a group of experts that is defined by their common knowledge and expertise of European defence (Howorth 2004). This makes them part of a community of practice but differentiates them, for example, from the military personnel that participate in defence cooperation projects but are not necessarily educated in policy cooperation at a European level. The entire discipline working toward European defence cooperation in any

form or matter is what would, according to Adler or Græger, be considered a community of practice (Adler 2008, 199; Græger 2016, 418). Adler and Pouliot define international practices as 'socially meaningful patterns of action' and communities that perform such as 'like-minded groups of practitioners who are informally as well as contextually bound by a shared interest in learning and applying a common practice' (Adler and Pouliot 2011, 4; Adler 2008, 196). For this thesis, the international community of practice of relevance is the community of Dutch and German decision-makers involved in maintaining the defence cooperation projects with the partner nations of these two countries. Similar to Adler, Pouliot, Haas or Græger I will leverage this theoretical framework of communities of practice to understand why the Dutch and German government have decided to share their core state powers and whether this community of practice had sufficiently influenced such a decision (Adler 2008; Adler and Pouliot 2011; Haas 1992; Græger 2016).

As the empirical evidence in the second part of this thesis will demonstrate, the strategic cultures of the Netherlands and Germany have less in common than is generally assumed, and the security identity and understanding of the role their armed forces are supposed to play contrast significantly. Accordingly, I have neither selected Strategic Culture nor Europeanisation as theoretical frameworks for the third hypothesis. However, the relationships between German officers, politicians, and diplomats and their Dutch counterparts look back on a long history of cooperation throughout the Cold War, and interviews with stakeholders revealed a highly amicable relationship between key staff members of both Ministries of Defence that focuses on the common goal of professional excellence. Constructivism's explanatory power lies in its analysis of incremental changes that are the result of ongoing interactions between decision-makers, the development of a shared identity between states, or the cultural preferences of nations (shaped by their historical relationship to the armed forces, among other aspects). In one of the sections below that develops the third hypothesis, I will discuss the empirical justification and development of the hypothesis leveraging this constructivist framework of a community of practice. However, the next two sections will first discuss the development of the first and then the second hypotheses.

Balancing Security Threats Despite Domestic Resource Constraints

As presented above, neorealist theoretical frameworks are commonly used to explain state behaviour with regards to their foreign and defence policies. Alliances and defence cooperation have been the frequent focus of publications mapping the evolution of both, transatlantic and intra-European defence cooperation among states. In this section, I demonstrate why neoclassical realism represents a relevant theoretical framework that is worthwhile exploring to answer this thesis' research question. Furthermore, I will discuss empirical evidence that

justifies the selection of this theoretical framework over its neorealist alternatives and explains my reasoning for the development of the first hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1: The Dutch and German governments agreed to share their core state powers because domestic resource constraints prevented unilateral threat balancing.

Theoretical Framework and Empirical Justification

When the 11th Air Assault Brigade (*Airmobile Brigade*) of the Dutch armed forces was integrated with the German Rapid Forces Division (*Division Schnelle Kräfte*) of the Bundeswehr in 2014, the Head of the German Parliamentary Defence Committee, Hans-Peter Bartels, explained: 'We do not have enough money. We have new security challenges. [And integration is a] dictate of rationality' (Die Welt 2014). Similar statements can be found in multiple speeches by Dutch and German political stakeholders since the Russian annexation of Eastern Ukraine in 2014. For example, former German Defence Minister Ursula von der Leyen described Russia's military activity at the Munich Security Conference as the impetus for closer cooperation among NATO members (von der Leyen 2019). On the Dutch side, the most senior member of the Dutch armed forces I interviewed suggested that NATO has 'returned to an era reminiscent of the Cold War' when defence cooperation was promoted to contain the threat of a large opponent willing to disturb the international order (Interview No. 20).

These comments from key decision-makers are just a snap-shot of the many op-eds and public statements focused on the perceived conventional military threat from the Russian military. As this evidence suggests, Dutch and German political and military leaders are concerned with the threat emanating from an emboldened Russian military and its decision to ignore basic tenets of the international order by violating the borders of Ukraine in 2014. These systemic risks are what structural realist theoretical frameworks consider the drivers of rational government behaviour; the causal chain from a new threat to a government's decision to balance or bandwagon is direct and uninterrupted by intervening variables (Waltz 2010, 113). However, what if the response to balance a threat or foreign power is disproportionate, or the public and parliaments do not respond rationally to threats as neorealist theory would suggest? This is the weakness of structural realist theories, state behaviour that fails to react to systemic pressures and foreign policy decisions that defy rational expectations. In fact, this is the case for many European states, including the Netherlands and Germany. Defence budgets of both states are comparatively low, the operational readiness of their militaries is at all-time lows, and the threat perception of the public tends to understate conventional security risks. These domestic and foreign policy preference of voters and parliaments are neglected despite being important intervening variables. Neoclassical realism tries to address this shortfall; its framework 'suggests that state power—the relative ability of the state to extract and mobilize resources

from domestic society—shapes the types of internal balancing strategies that countries are likely to pursue' (Taliaferro 2006, 464).

The voter preferences of the Dutch and German public are confirmed by recent polls, in which defence spending increases are rather unpopular policy measures with the German electorate; only 32 per cent of voters were in favour of defence budget increases in 2017. While the Dutch public is less critical of such increases, their government had to cut spending across all of government as the country recovered from the global recession in 2008 (Koerber Foundation 2018; BBC News 2010). Effectively, this decision by the Dutch government equally represents a deprioritisation of defence policy. Nevertheless, the evidence discussed above suggests that political leaders in both countries recognised a foreign threat, and their rhetoric indicates a willingness to respond to that threat.

Essentially the Dutch and German governments were unable to react to the systemic pressures of a perceived threat due to domestic resource constraints that were imposed on them by their parliaments, which have the ultimate budgetary authority. Their only option to improve their military capabilities in the face of this threat was to cooperate and create operational synergies to deter the Russian military. Lobell called this the 'Janus-face' of the 'foreign policy executive': he wrote that 'leaders can act internationally for domestic reasons or domestically for international purposes' (Lobell in Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 44). Unlike the purely systemic analysis in the structural realist approach, neoclassical realist theory sidesteps the assumption that political decisions are made top-down and acknowledges that political leaders 'must draw on domestic society for material resources and popular support' (Taliaferro 2006, 472–73).

However, the neoclassical realist argument does not discount the influence of systemic factors on the decision-making of politicians; neoclassical realism takes these into account but adds domestic variables unique to each state (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 1; Dyson 2013, 390). Its epistemology can answer research questions that follow a 'structural realist baseline' but cannot fully be explained by classical or structural realism (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, chap. 5, p. 19). Structural realism does not recognise that preference formation of governments might not solely be based on systemic variables. In the neoclassical realist framework, governments are considered to be best-positioned to represent the national interest given their access to privileged information that assesses the dynamics of the international system (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 27).

Unlike liberal theoretical frameworks that see the government as an aggregator of national interests, neoclassical realism does consider the foreign policy executive, in the form of the governments' ministers, the head of state, and other policy elites to be the prime decision-

making group that develops an autonomous view on the international system, defines threats, and interprets the distribution of power (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 25). This differentiation between society and the state is important since the focus of my research lies on core state powers and the control over such is well-differentiated and accounted for in this theoretical approach. Furthermore, as parliaments generally control and oversee government budgets, governments ability to fully execute their core state powers is also dependent on the financial support of those domestic interests represented in the legislature. This, in turn, highlights another important differentiation of neoclassical realism vis-à-vis the structural realist frameworks: rather than analysing the anarchic international system from a 10,000-foot view under the assumption that great- and middle powers act rationally and automatically balance powers and threats, the neoclassical realist approach instead looks at the foreign policy outcomes of the bargaining process that occurs domestically after the foreign policy elite determined its preferred policy actions. Their assessment is the result of a multi-faceted review of priorities that is often hard to understand as an outsider and defies the rationalist logic assumed in structural realist assessments (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 47). These decisions are what produces the under- or over-balancing of foreign threats highlighted above, behaviour that remains unexplained in structural realist accounts.

Neoclassical realism suggests that the domestic politics of a state is not just a black-box but an important intervening variable, and by doing so, it elevates domestic politics as an important factor for government decision-making. Structural realists ignore that the power of societal and political elites originates from domestic politics and that their rational behaviour to defend their positions and domestic influence might appear irrational in the context of international relations (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 44–45). One interesting example is the 2004 terrorist attack in Spain which led its government to completely withdraw all troops from Iraq despite its previous commitment to the British- and US-led campaign: a change of domestic opinion drove a foreign policy decision that otherwise would not have been the rationale response to a terror attack (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 144, 175). For neoclassical realism, the domestic power struggle as an intervening variable is an important driver of foreign policy decisions that allow for a thick analysis. However, one of the limitations of neoclassical realism is that the weight of the intervening variable can vary greatly, at times it even competes with the independent variable (Sperling in Webber and Hyde-Price 2017, 81–82). Hence, this thesis will also focus on the strength of domestic constraints in the Netherlands and Germany when testing the hypothesis against the empirical evidence.

This variation in the intervening variable is extremely dynamic, and governments naturally seek to influence domestic stakeholders in favour of their policy preferences. For example, Schweller argued that the government of Nazi Germany successfully employed fascist ideology to

mobilize a maximum of domestic resources for its war efforts (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 227). While mass politics continues to play an important role in the contemporary political debate, the decision over how to spend domestic resources can be much more varied, influential interest groups or the parliamentarians themselves are important stakeholders. Since most parliaments in democracies control the state's budget, it is here where the preference formation and mobilisation of domestic resources often comes to a head. Naturally, the government, via its ministries competes for funding and lobbies the elected representatives to grant them the necessary budget appropriations. Hence, for the foreign and defence policy executives of Germany and the Netherlands, it is near impossible to quickly respond to a changing threat environment without domestic support from parliament. Rightly so, the German MoD points to these constraints when faced with allied criticism about the underfunding of its armed forces (Dyson 2010, 196). The integration of capabilities with foreign partners falls into the realm of the government, most G2G projects under review in this thesis have been initiated and maintained solely with the involvement of the MoD, Cabinet, or at most with the additional approval of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs. This allowed the government to strengthen their absolute deterrence capability without the need for budget increases approved by parliament. Only in a few instances, the approval of the legislative was required; for example, when the command structures of the integrated units were streamlined to allow Dutch officers to command German soldiers and vice-versa. Therefore, the resource constraints imposed by the Dutch and German parliaments on their respective governments impairs the otherwise expected response to the systemic risks perceived by elite stakeholders. Neoclassical realism helps to explain these foreign policy decisions of governments by connecting the unique domestic preferences of states with geopolitical developments.

In the case of the Netherlands and Germany, both governments have in the past faced a high degree of domestic opposition to a more determined strategic posture that balances foreign threats, even though the two states were faced with plenty of systemic pressures that demanded improved defence capabilities. These included continued critique from the US to spend more on defence, the increasing danger of US isolationism or a pivot to Asia, and an increased threat from Russia as well as the need for more engagement on the African continent to mitigate asymmetric threats (Rofe 2011; Rumer 2016; Renard 2010). Hence, it appears reasonable to explore the hypothesis that the two governments decided to share their core state powers to improve their military deterrence, notwithstanding the constraints they face domestically. In the second part of the thesis, I test this hypothesis against further evidence collected from field research and analyse the explanatory value of the neoclassical realist framework with regards to the foreign policy decisions of the German and Dutch governments.

Intergovernmental Cooperation for Collective Defence

I will highlight in this section the theoretical basis for the creation of the second hypothesis and the empirical justification of why the theoretical framework of new intergovernmentalism is worth exploring as a plausible theoretical framework to answer the research question. I will also discuss empirical evidence from my field research which supports the selection of this theoretical framework as the second hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2: The Dutch and German governments agreed to share their core state powers to increase the collective military capabilities of the EU and NATO.

Theoretical Framework and Empirical Justification

The 2011 Netherlands Defence Reform package had severe implications for the Dutch armed forces. Over a billion euros of budget cutbacks reduced the armed forces personnel by 20 per cent and strongly impacted existing equipment orders and maintenance operations, including the complete disbanding of the Dutch Army's fleet of Leopard II tanks.[13] For NATO, this meant that one of its members was not only deprioritizing investments into the alliance's security, but also removing its ability to operate heavily armoured vehicles altogether, an operational skillset that takes up to a decade to reacquire once it is lost (Interview No. 15). This complete capability loss was evaded thanks to the integration of the 43rd Dutch Mechanized Brigade with the German Bundeswehr's 1st Tank Division. The cooperation allows the Dutch Army to lease tanks from the German military while benefiting from the sustainment and logistics infrastructure of its larger partner. For Germany, the agreement ensured that one of its close NATO partners maintained valuable skills, trained regularly alongside German troops, and helped share the cost burden associated with maintaining an Army base in Northern Germany (Interviews No. 10 and 16).

The Royal Netherlands Navy was equally affected by the next round of spending cuts in 2013, and plans were put in place to sell the Karel Dorman, a 205-meter-long amphibious Joint Support Ship used to resupply forward-deployed troops and humanitarian aid missions. Its initial operating capability was scheduled for 2015, but Defence Minister Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert announced plans to sell the vessel even before its commissioning. In her speech, 'In the Interest of the Netherlands', the defence minister described that the need for amphibious support had been deprioritized in favour of other capabilities deemed more critical in times of financial hardship (Hennis-Plasschaert 2013). After further review and discussions with various

[13] Cuts mostly targeted the Dutch Army, after the air domain was prioritized in the country's national security strategy (Dowdall 2011)

NATO and EU partners, she withdrew these plans and together with her German counterpart announced the shared use (and financing) of the vessel in February 2016 (Hoffmann 2017).

As the evidence above indicates, the Dutch-German defence cooperation initiatives closely follow most liberal theoretical assumptions as to why governments would share their core state powers of coercive force. The values of both nations as they concern individual freedoms or human rights are closely aligned, suggesting that a fundamental criterion for cooperation in the liberal theoretical framework is met. However, such minimal normative alignment should not be taken for granted, even among democratic members of the EU. For example, Polish-German defence integration initiatives started with high ambitions but have been deprioritised after the election of the Law and Justice Party in Poland whose interpretation of democratic liberties differs substantially from those of the German government (Interview No. 22). Furthermore, the criterion for operational interdependence is also met, as both nations have repeatedly fought together in foreign deployments via NATO, the UN, and the EU. Dutch military officials whom I questioned on interoperability and joint deployment, without exception, described the cooperation in the field as highly complementary (Interviews No. 6 and 7). It is not unlikely then that once a government noticed such a mutual benefit that they institutionalise it to sustain benefits in the long run and ‘reduce transaction costs’ (Keohane and Martin 1995, 42).

More importantly though, the clear focus on strengthening the absolute security of both states as well as the overall strength of the NATO alliance is a break from the threat-driven assumptions of neoclassical realism. The actions of stakeholders observed here suggest that the strengthening of mutual capabilities, a decision that also aligns with domestic political preferences in Germany and the Netherlands, has been taken to strengthen the joint security of both states as well as their preeminent security alliance. This is unlike the neoclassical realist framework, where cooperation is the product of domestic resource constraints in an effort to improve deterrence capabilities to counter a systemic threat environment.

Also, the creation of working groups that meet regularly and identify ways to deepen the cooperation represents an institutionalisation of the partnership that is in line with one of the foundational ideas of neoliberal institutionalist frameworks. In fact, most of the Dutch-German defence cooperation projects are governed by a regime in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding between the two governments as well as established working groups between the key stakeholders (Interviews No. 6 and 7). However, these working groups do not supersede government decision-making at the ministerial level; the working groups do not take on the role of supranational entities that adopt the role of policy entrepreneurship. They are set up to channel each participating governments’ decisions and avoid the creation of a powerful supranational body (Moravcsik 2018, 1656). Therefore, the intergovernmentalist aspect of the

cooperation is clearly visible in each government's sustained decision-making powers and G2G negotiating processes that initiate and guide the cooperation projects.

Furthermore, domestic priorities in the Netherlands and Germany played a role in the decision to cooperate. Budgetary concerns and operational shortfalls were the results of domestic government decisions to prioritise other policy areas which in turn led both militaries to co-finance joint operational capabilities. Through the lens of the theoretical framework of *new intergovernmentalism*, this would suggest that cooperation is a result of shared principles, economic and political interdependence, and domestic preference formation rather than a product of systemic security concerns. This is further supported by the fact that long before these defence budget cuts hit the Dutch armed forces, an operational capability gap was identified among multiple European nations in the late 1990s (Rapporteur 1995). Mission requirements at the time demanded an increasing need for airlift capabilities, and many NATO and EU members had insufficient air transport fleets and little budget to improve their national capabilities. This lack of operational capability gave birth to the European Air Transport Command (EATC) in 2010, a coordinating body to pool the air transport fleets of European states. Excess available flight hours could be traded with other states to ensure the most efficient use of this high-demand capability. One of the officials I interviewed at the German MoD confirmed that it was 'a deficit analysis that gave birth to the EATC' (Interview No. 24). This instance of cooperation between the Netherlands, Germany, and several other nations is of specific interest to my research because Germany and the Netherlands decided to completely relinquish their national air transport capabilities after the creation of the EATC, a strong sign of their trust in this newly created institution.

Unlike the neoclassical realist assumption that power- or threat-balancing prompts governments' action to cooperate, the above examples highlight that a desire to improve operational capabilities cost-effectively could have prompted the Netherlands and Germany to integrate their operational capabilities. From a Dutch perspective, the cooperation with Germany offers a sensible financial solution in the face of unavoidable budget cuts, and for German stakeholders, the cooperation offered a way to advance and strengthen intra-EU defence cooperation with a trusted partner with comparable security interests.

Why is *new* intergovernmentalism a relevant theoretical framework to explore as a plausible answer to the research question at hand? It emerged from the observation that while governments are still the ultimate decision-makers they have less often transferred their powers to the EU's supranational entities post-Maastricht, then they used to (Bickerton, Hodson, and Puetter 2015, 305). The assumption being that policy elites recognised the need for more centralised coordination due to the limited reach of their national regulatory powers but also wanted to avoid

the centralised and prescriptive policy solutions from supranational bodies that were more common in earlier days of EU integration (Bickerton et al., Hodson, and Puetter 2015, 305). Today, member states cooperate in an array of loosely defined groups in many functional areas previously untouched by the EU. Today, 'supranational, intergovernmental, and transgovernmental' cooperation are the norm to achieve pragmatic solutions to shared policy issues (Smith in Bickerton et al., Hodson, and Puetter 2015, 113).

Howorth's suggestion of a 'supranational intergovernmentalism' had already been indicative of this weakening of the purely liberal intergovernmentalist research agenda in the field of EU security and defence policy (2012). He suggested that many of the intergovernmental working groups that guide CSDP policy are in fact increasingly autonomous, supranational, entities that pursue policy goals more in line with what has been socialised in the hallways of the EU then back home in the capitals (Howorth 2012, 449). However, while Howorth's analysis follows a constructivist interpretation to answer the question how integration advances despite a lack of new EU treaties, new intergovernmentalism assumes that the powers of governments remain untainted but are expressed in different forms, such as through the creation of 'de novo institutions' that coordinate G2G agreements among a subset of member states (Bickerton et al., Hodson, and Puetter 2015, 33).

Furthermore, in the scope of new intergovernmentalism, the breadth of integration has expanded beyond just '*low politics*' or non-core state powers; instead, a fragmented approach of multi-tiered integration allowed for the integration of core state powers in recent years (Bickerton et al., Hodson, and Puetter 2015, 5). While Hoffmann would likely have argued that the *high* politics of defence are unlikely to be the target of deeply intertwined cooperation, new intergovernmentalism argues that such a high/low differentiation has outlived its applicability in the European context (Bickerton et al., Hodson, and Puetter 2015, 16 and 35). Yes, within the Maastricht Treaty's Pillar Two of the Lisbon Treaty's unanimity rule, defence cooperation still moves ahead at a slow pace but outside of these contractual constraints, the G2G cooperation between individual member states flourishes. Cooperation with like-minded groups of states that coordinate policies in intergovernmental formats without the creation of supranational structures plays well with voters, but also allows policy elites to drive toward solutions at the scale necessary for an interconnected and essentially borderless political community.

This continuous expansion of European cooperation in defence, outside of the supranational EU structures, could be well captured with the ideas of the new intergovernmentalist framework which points to the fact that cooperation did advance since the Maastricht Treaty was signed in 1992 and thereby sets itself apart from the liberal intergovernmentalist interpretation of Moravcsik who focused his analysis solely on the EU as an institution but excluded

extracurricular examples of G2G cooperation between European states outside of the EU (Bickerton et al., Hodson, and Puetter 2015, 18). While the integration of core state powers between the Dutch and German armed forces occurs outside of all EU structures, the empirical evidence suggests a comparable premise: intergovernmental G2G cooperation supported by shared values, the motivation to generate financial synergies to maintain capabilities that go beyond the limit of national capabilities, and lastly the integration of military capabilities without the delegation of core state powers to a supranational entity. Therefore, I expect that liberalism and particularly the theoretical framework of new intergovernmentalism offer an interesting analytical lens to analyse the integration of Dutch and German military capabilities.

Defence Cooperation, a Product of Stakeholder Socialisation?

Departing from the rationalist approaches highlighted above, constructivist theoretical frameworks explain aspects of state behaviour where the rationalist frameworks often fall short. Endogenous developments that emerge from the socialisation of institutions and stakeholders in response to each other's actions may have the power to change the foreign policy of governments incrementally. In this section, I will briefly discuss why the empirical evidence, particularly the interviews with stakeholders, supported the development of a hypothesis that considers whether a *community of practice* among Dutch and German stakeholders prompted and deepened the military cooperation efforts that led to the sharing of core state powers. I will also explain why the socialisation of senior officials into a community of practice emerged as a recurring theme in interviews. Rather than socialising around specific know-how, the MoD officials interviewed for this thesis have shown a strong professional interest to strengthen the overall survivability and operational capabilities of their units to fulfil their mission as well as they possibly can. In the third hypothesis, I hence theorise that such communities of practice, involving Dutch and German stakeholders and their international counterparts in multilateral cooperations, might have caused the integration of military capabilities.

Hypothesis 3: The Dutch and German governments agreed to share their core state powers due to the socialisation of key stakeholders in international security organisations.

<u>Theoretical Framework and Empirical Justification</u>

In 2019 a New York Times reporter asked a German colonel commanding an integrated Dutch-German battalion: 'Would you die for Europe?' – his answer was 'Yes' (Bennhold 2019). While his answer is not representative of the entirety of the German and Dutch armed forces nor the general public, it raises the question whether the integration of capabilities might be driven by

the ideas and perceptions of military and political elites.[14] Is it possible that the decision to cooperate is motivated by social constructivist factors, such as a common ideology or a shared vision for the two countries' defence and foreign policy? Alexander Wendt argued that this process of socialisation is what constructs a state's identity, so the socialisation between two allies' political and military leadership could have constructed a shared identity that facilitated the integration of the two nations' military capabilities (1987, 405). Governments' choices might be driven by norms and values rather than rational decisions to improve a country's military capabilities, as neorealist or neoliberal theories would predict (e.g. Meyer and Strickmann 2011). However, the obvious weakness of these ideational or cultural approaches lies in their empirical validity. When did a specific idea occur, how did it change the culture of a nation-state, and what drove such change (Mérand 2010, 349)? These aspects are very difficult to measure, but often the answers lie with the stakeholders who influenced government decisions. Therefore, rather than trying to map the potential amalgamation of culture, I focus in the third hypothesis on the socialisation of Dutch and German stakeholders and their potential influence on the two governments' decisions to share their core state powers in their drive to improve their very own professional capabilities as a transnational community of practice. This community of practice consists of Dutch and German soldiers, officers, MoD officials, as well as those members of the parliamentary defence committees who are involved enough to shape the cooperation efforts of the two governments. Svendsen and Adler-Nissen pursued a similar approach in analysing the social practices of officials and military officials of the EU in the aftermath of Brexit which allowed for a differentiated view on the influence of 'social dynamics' on the security and military cooperation in Europe (2019, 1424).

In the literature on security and defence cooperation, the analyses of such transnational networks and their power over government decision-making is no novelty. Outside of Adler's work on communities of practice at the state level, many other authors have identified the power of social networks in their empirical research (2008). For example, in his work on 'new security alignments', Christian Bueger identified communities of practice as critical in creating government responses to international security threats in a timely manner (2013). Nina Graeger identified a community of practice among EU and NATO staff as the driving force behind a continuous advancement of EU-NATO relations despite the lack of a high-level political agreement between the two organisations since the conclusion of the Berlin Plus agreement (2016).[15] Lastly, Pouliot and Adler-Nissen, found that the 'multilateral diplomatic practices' of

[14] For a general overview of European Opinion Polls toward the idea of using military force to defend against an attack on an allied country see the PEW Research Report 2017 on Member States' Attitudes toward NATO: (Pew Research Center 2017)

[15] The Berlin Plus agreement, signed in 2002, seeks to coordinate the at time overlapping security and defence related activities of the EU and NATO. Most importantly, it grants the EU access to military capabilities assigned to NATO to pursue its own operations.

government officials during the negotiations leading up to the 2011 intervention in Libya influenced the negotiating process and represents a power resource otherwise undervalued in international relations scholarship (Adler-Nissen and Pouliot 2014, 909). The concept of communities of practice applied by these authors dates back to Wenger's analysis of organisational dynamics and its later introduction to International Relations by Neumann (Wenger 1998; Neumann 2002). However, today, the idea of 'practices' more generally is being investigated as an alternative explanation to an array of topics in the field, particularly with reference to diplomatic interactions (Bicchi and Bremberg 2016).

During one of my field research trips to The Hague, I witnessed how such diplomatic and military practices were honed and reinforced. I was invited to participate in the annual alumni meeting of those Dutch officers who graduated from the German General Staff College and those German officers who had graduated from the Dutch General Staff College. For many years, three or four Dutch officers and the same number of German officers attended and graduated from the partner nations' General Staff College each year, fostering the two militaries' understanding of their neighbouring ally (Interview No. 15). Outside of this exclusively bilateral arrangement, soldiers and officers of all ranks work side-by-side in the large international institutions, such as NATO, the UN, or the EU. Furthermore, two of my interviewees were Dutch Army officers dispatched for several years to the German MoD. Their understanding of the intricacies of the German political-military landscape was equivalent to that of their German colleagues, and they were granted full access to sensitive German materials within the limitations of their responsibilities and rank (Interviews No. 6 and 7). Finally, the ongoing deployments in Mali and Afghanistan and a recent NATO exercise with 2,500 Dutch and German soldiers under the leadership of the 1st German-Netherlands Corps are examples of how often the militaries of both nations liaise and socialise to work toward common goals, similar to the definition of communities of practice according to Wegener (NATO 2019b; Wenger 2000, 226).

Furthermore, political stakeholders, such as diplomats, ministers, and parliamentarians also engage with each other in various international forums, such as parliamentary exchanges, conferences, or EU and NATO-organised events (Interview No. 15). These forums allow for an incremental deepening of relationships among the political and military elites. In fact, personal relationships have been highlighted by several interviewees to be paramount to the cooperation between the two nations (Interviews No. 1, 4, and 15). For example, one interviewee stated that 'defence attachés are the oil in the gearbox of cooperation' and mentioned that the close personal relationship of the Dutch armed forces Chief of Staff and German Inspector General (the two militaries' highest-ranking officers) has also been an important facilitator for the deepening of all existing integration efforts (Interview No. 15). While differences between

German and Dutch military culture were highlighted in several discussions, these differences were mostly understood as complementarity by both sides and an overall advantage for the cooperation (Interviews No. 6 and 18).

When applying the constructivist analytical framework of communities of practice to my research question, the idea that the socialisation of relevant stakeholders has led to the subsequent integration of operational military capabilities cannot be dismissed easily. In fact, multiple aspects of the close cooperation between the Netherlands and Germany suggest that a constructivist answer to the research question is plausible, similar to the analysis Adler performed on NATO's post-Cold War development (2008). A shared history, significant economic interdependence, close personal relationships among stakeholders, and shared values are all hallmarks of the Dutch-German cooperation. As I highlighted above, these are all attributes at the core of the existing literature on strategic culture, security communities, or elite socialisation within communities of practice (e.g. Biehl 2013; Adler and Barnett 1998; Mérand 2008; Adler 2008).

While the frequent personnel exchanges between the two nations represent ample opportunities to engage and socialise it remains to be seen whether these relationships are forging an identity among the countries' decision-makers that have fuelled the decision to cooperate. As indicated by the German colonel in the New York Times interview, there is certainly an existing sense of 'European identity' among part of the leadership. For example, in December 2018 the German MoD considered recruiting non-German European soldiers to combat the acute personnel shortages of the Bundeswehr, indicating a new openness toward a European defence identity (Die Zeit 2018). However, while there is initial evidence regarding the socialisation of Dutch and German decision-makers, the empirical data does not yet indicate an amalgamation of ideologies. On the question of NATO primacy in all security matters, the Dutch and German elites are largely at odds with each other – the Germans being far more supportive of elevating the role of the EU in defence matters (Interviews No. 1 and 6). Nevertheless, most of the stakeholders I interviewed knew each other and interacted on a regular basis with multiple offices of the partner government; these findings are supportive of previous research efforts on EU defence cooperation which suggested that elite socialisation can impact government decision-making (e.g. Mérand 2010; Cross 2011). After all, many officers and diplomats are dispatched on a rotating basis to the capitals of Europe and have ample time to connect with their counterparts in a variety of forums and meetings. The working groups that coordinate the Dutch-German cooperation might not be as identity-inducing as the vision of a united Europe, but a general sense of pride among all interviewees that they drive pragmatic G2G cooperation that operates without the red-tape and political manoeuvring of Brussels was certainly visible in interviewee responses (Interviews No. 6, 7, 10, 15, 16, and 17).

The extensive internationalisation, even of low-level bureaucrats and junior members of the military in the German and Dutch armed forces, is, therefore, a hypothesis worth exploring, particularly since similar research on the evolution of the CSDP has suggested that such communities of practice or policy elites can mobilise notable support in favour of the integration of core state powers. Discussions with interviewees suggested that the level of professionalism found in the cooperating units is very high and that all participants are motivated to become the best at what they are tasked to do. In a sense, the camaraderie between personnel of both nations is driven by a joint professional goal to become the best at what they do, with politics and ideology playing a secondary role in the pursuit of this professional goal. Similar to, what Mérand noticed in his conversations with CSDP stakeholders: ‘they have a strong professional interest in fulfilling the task they have been entrusted with’ (Mérand 2008, 144).

Conclusion

This chapter began with a literature review of existing theoretical frameworks developed to explain cooperation among states more generally but in particular in the field of security and defence. The review followed the research question broadly as it discussed publications that attempted to understand government behaviour and specifically their decision to cooperate on defence topics. Noteworthy here is the strong focus of existing research on the evolution of the EU’s defence capabilities under the banner of the CSDP. Highly integrated G2G defence cooperation projects, such as those pursued by the Netherlands and Germany and many other states, received little or no attention. Most relevant publications in the field of European Studies or International Relations instead focus on the big geopolitical questions or the integration dynamics of the EU. The literature review discussed the benefits and disadvantages of neorealist, liberal intergovernmentalist theories, as well as the benefits of constructivist approaches in explaining some of the gaps that the two rationalist frameworks fail to explain. The discussion serves as the basis for the development of three hypotheses to answer the research question of this thesis.

I then reviewed the preliminary empirical evidence, which helped to identify specific theoretical approaches that will provide the theoretical frameworks for the three hypotheses. For example, statements by decision-makers of the German and Dutch government and militaries suggested that the changing geopolitical threat environment in Europe paired with the increasingly isolationist US foreign policy gave them a reason to improve military readiness. However, both countries also faced domestic political and budget constraints that would not have allowed them to balance against these perceived threats unilaterally. This assessment led to the first hypothesis that the Dutch and German governments agreed to share their core state powers due

to domestic resource constraints to meet the identified threat. This hypothesis aligns with the theoretical framework of neoclassical realism, as its inclusion of domestic constraints goes beyond the systemic power-balance and threat environment analysis of structural realism.

Further evidence from interviews and secondary research suggested that governments might have pursued the integration of capabilities because of rational cost-benefit calculations after recognising that domestic preferences were not in favour of defence budget increases and a large independent military. Public documents and conversations with stakeholders suggested that established institutions, such as NATO, have further facilitated the creation of integrated capabilities among closely interwoven trading partners such as the Netherlands and Germany. This points toward an interest of governments to improve collective alliance security for the least amount of investment required rather than a threat-driven need to grow defence spending. These preliminary findings led to the development of the second hypothesis, drawing upon a neoliberal framework, particularly the framework of new intergovernmentalism which has previously been applied to analyse the increasingly pragmatic G2G integration of core state powers among EU member states.

Finally, my interviews and review of secondary sources also indicated that the close relationships between the small group of stakeholders in the Dutch and German armed forces could have facilitated the continuous deepening of the G2G cooperation of the Netherlands and Germany. This suggested the development of a constructivist hypothesis to test whether such a transnational community of practice really had a substantial influence on the decision to cooperate in defence and share core state powers. Hence, the third hypothesis builds on the constructivist theoretical framework of communities of practice, investigating the socialisation of government elites in international forums.

Chapter 2: Global Review of Defence Cooperation Agreements

This second chapter dives deep into the subject-matter of my research topic and explains how governments around the world cooperate in the field of security and defence. The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate that within the many defence cooperation agreements that states pursue globally, a small subset of such G2G cooperations is growing in importance. Those that are highly integrated and directly affect governments' control over their core state powers. I collected data on defence cooperation agreements globally to highlight what differentiates different types of agreements and show what it takes for a cooperation project to impact the core state powers of its participants.

Firstly, I leverage a global database of government treaties, and I show that cooperation in defence has only gained in importance over time. Following this broader overview of the types of agreements signed by governments I discuss briefly why alliances or institutionalised forms of defence cooperation become a popular subject of research in International Relations (e.g. Waltz 2010; Wendt 1992; Keohane and Nye 1987, and others). In short, defence cooperations that have an outsized impact on the power distribution in the international system often become more popular among scholars. For example, the US-Japan Security Cooperation represents a more impactful rearrangement of the Asia-Pacific security environment than a potential entente between Brunei and Singapore. However, I argue that it is not only the scale of the *external* effects of defence cooperations that make them worth studying, their *internal* impact on core state powers is also a topic worth studying. Regardless of the weight that defence cooperations have globally, their impact on the government's control over its armed forces offers an interesting view upon government preferences and foreign policy decisions.

Since most of the literature reviewed in the previous chapter is focused on alliances and institutionalised forms of defence cooperation, I use this chapter to differentiate those cooperations of interest to my research, operational defence cooperations initiated between two or more governments with the objective to highly integrate two or more units of their armed forces. Applying this filter shows that European states are the most proactive in signing these interwoven bi- and multilateral defence integration agreements. In fact, the Netherlands and Germany are leading this trend to sign these highly integrative forms of operational defence cooperation agreements. While outlier examples can be found elsewhere, such as the North

American Aerospace Defense Command between the United States and Canada, the collected evidence of G2G agreements strongly indicates that the trend is most prevalent in Europe. Here, 41 defence cooperation agreements have been identified. In other words, agreements that go beyond high-level political reassurances or diplomatic symbolism that created significant cross-border dependencies. Finally, 27 of these are *operational* defence cooperation initiatives of which 20 meet this thesis' criteria to qualify as *highly integrated* operational capabilities.

Finally, this chapter concludes with insights into why and how this unique but growing subset of defence cooperation agreements impacts the core state powers of governments by discussing the example of the military command structure of Dutch-German defence cooperation.

Global Alliances, Military Treaties, and Defence Cooperation Agreements

In this section, I briefly describe the characteristics of and differences between the three most common treaty documents in the field of security and defence: 1) *international military treaties*, 2) *alliances*, and 3) *defence cooperation agreements*. Each type of agreement serves a different purpose and impacts the core state powers of governments to varying degrees. While alliances are important tools of diplomacy to achieve geopolitical goals, their impact on a government's decision-making powers is limited in times of peace. Similarly, international military treaties hardly touch upon the sovereign powers of governments and are mostly used to facilitate specific military activities between two states. However, defence cooperation agreements are used by governments to structure a more permanent relationship with foreign states and manage in detail those cooperations that touch upon a government's core state powers. I will discuss the different use cases of these agreements in more detail and discuss their rise to prominence in recent years. The chapter concludes with a review of a specific subset of defence cooperation agreements that is of interest to my research, *operational defence cooperation* in Europe. I will discuss examples of the latter and highlight how, in some instances, the operational capabilities of armed forces are highly integrated with each other and therefore directly touch upon the core state powers of governments.

The evidence presented in this chapter supports the selection of the Netherlands and Germany as the most relevant case studies to answer my research question and differentiates the types of G2G defence cooperation of interest from other forms of defence cooperation.

International military treaties

International military treaties are signed to fulfil a specific bureaucratic purpose to facilitate diplomatic and military relations with another state's military or bureaucracy. However, they are not the diplomatic tool of choice for significant political commitments, such as forming an alliance. Examples of their use include treaties to coordinate the secure exchange of classified

military data, such as the one signed between the US and Estonia in February of 2000 (U.S. Department of State 2000). Visits of delegations are also often coordinated and framed with the help of international military treaties, such as the visit of a New Zealand military delegation to the island state of Fiji for a military exercise in 1997 (Poast, Bommarito, and Katz 2015). In other instances, these treaties coordinate the exchange of classified information, provide military aid, or are signed to arrange the secure transport of military equipment across borders. At other times, countries with loose foreign policy ties might use these treaties to communicate a burgeoning friendship or extend a polite diplomatic gesture, or the domestic authorities of one of the signatories might require an international legal document to approve the transport of hazardous materials, frequently they are also signed to authorise a defence equipment export. The World Treaty Index, a treaty database largely based on information held by the United Nations Treaty database, lists 1,349 international military treaties that were signed globally between the years of 1945 and 2000.[16] These treaties coordinate anything from the maintenance of war graves, foreign basing, and the ban of landmines, to the visit of naval vessels (Poast, Bommarito, and Katz 2015; Pearson 2001). These examples show that while these treaties deal with important issues in their own right, their purpose is not to initiate long-standing cooperation between the armed forces of their signatories. Since these treaties are often wrongly heralded as defence cooperation initiatives, it is important to differentiate their comparatively limited impact on the operation of militaries and the essentially non-existent effect on the core state powers of signatories to such treaties.

Alliances

Alliances, such as NATO or the Western European Union (WEU), are agreed-upon by states either as temporary or permanent security guarantees. The Correlates of War Database, a research project mapping and classifying international defence and security treaties, lists 271 unique alliances signed between 1945 and 2012 alone (Gibler 2009).[17] This comprehensive database of alliances maintains several subcategories, including defence pacts; neutrality and non-aggression pacts; or ententes. These categories reflect the varying levels of commitments made between allies in case of a conflict but since the definitions for categorising alliances vary widely different authors have arrived at varying counts of such agreements (Russett 1971, 262–63). However, for my research, the final number and typologies of alliance agreements are less relevant. What is noteworthy is the unabated trend to form alliances because alliances are often the first step toward closer integration of military capabilities and the conclusion of defence cooperation agreements.

[16] For this treaty count, the following topic identifiers have been used to analyse the dataset and down-select defence-related treaties: '1ARMCO, 1STATUE, 4MILT, 4MILIT, 9MILT, 9MILIT, 9MILMI'
[17] The Correlates of War Project Version 4.1 (2018)

While alliance documents often stipulate little detail beyond that of a mutual security or non-aggression guarantee, they often form the foundation for all defence cooperation agreements under review in this thesis. It appears as if only countries that are willing to fight side-by-side develop the type of relationship required to integrate parts of their armed forces. While almost all defence cooperation agreements under review in the following section of this chapter are based on a previously agreed-upon alliance between their partners, the one exception is Switzerland's participation in the EU's Galileo satellite constellation, a military-grade global navigation and positioning system which allows its participating militaries to use its global positioning technology jointly. However, due to Switzerland's proclaimed neutrality and the space-based, highly technical nature of this specific type of defence cooperation, this instance should be considered an exception to the rule.

Defence Cooperation Agreements

Defence cooperation agreements represent a group of international agreements that address more complex matters, such as those cooperations under review in this dissertation. The participants in these agreements are, in most cases, already part of an alliance that stipulates their mutual defence and have developed their relationship beyond the international military treaties required to coordinate practical matters. States that agree on defence cooperations decide to exercise and prepare their troops to fight side-by-side, jointly develop and debate foreign and defence policy goals and sometimes ask their industries to develop weapon platforms and systems together. The level of effort and coordination that goes into such collaboration is what sets it apart from the much less-committal *international military treaties* discussed above or the high-level mutual defence language of *alliances*. Some of the most prominent examples of such defence cooperation can be found among the members of the NATO alliance. Its members regularly conduct exercises together, use common ammunition standards to ease the logistical burden during joint deployments, and their defence industries are intertwined. Such cooperation and the depth of some of these agreements represents a quality of interaction that is rarely found elsewhere in the world. The Correlates of War Database's specific database on Defence Cooperation Agreements lists 1,871 Defence Cooperation Agreements signed between 1980 and 2010 alone, (Kinne 2020). However, it is important to note that Defence Cooperation Agreements are signed for particular topics, for example, the US and Canada would maintain a broad Defence Cooperation Agreement (signed in 1994), a specific agreement concerning equipment procurement, another one for R&D cooperation and, additionally, multiple sector-specific agreements (Kinne 2020). Hence, the total number of agreements is not comparable to the other two categories but the number of agreements signed per year grew from eight in 1980 to 117 in 2010, indicating a growing interest in expanding relationships with other states or deepening existing ones (Kinne 2020).

Further analysis of the data reveals that a proportional majority of agreements has been concluded among European states (Kinne 2020). Outside of Europe, defence cooperation agreements are significantly less common although a handful of examples exist. Often, regional or bilateral initiatives are formed with the goal of increasing regional security, or defence cooperation is the result of an existing bilateral alliance. Just at the outskirts of the European continent, one finds close military cooperation between Russia and Belarus, known as the Regional Forces Group of Belarus and Russia. In Asia, the ASEAN Militaries Ready Group on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief has been created to respond to natural disasters and other humanitarian catastrophes quickly and cohesively (Government of Malaysia 2016). Also, the United States maintains close military ties by offering security guarantees to countries such as the Philippines, Japan, and South Korea. The latter even directed wartime command authority to the US, an arrangement that is currently undergoing review. Often these top-level alliances then create more serious cooperation efforts on a tactical level between the militaries and lead to defence cooperation agreements later.

US-Australian defence cooperation is most likely the defence cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region where two allies cooperate the closest with each other. Not only is Australia one of the Five Eyes states, the Anglo-Saxon intelligence-sharing community, the two countries also jointly develop and procure weapon systems and platforms and their navies maintain an active Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) data exchange. The alliance itself dates back to the 1951 ANZUS Treaty between Australia, New Zealand, and the United States; separate military treaties have since formalised different aspects concerning this defence cooperation (US State Department 2019). Similar to the United States relationship with Australia, the 1960 Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the US and Japan as well as the US - Republic of Korea Mutual Defence Treaty of 1953 form the basis for a significant number of US troops being based in Japan and South Korea (Council on Foreign Relations 2014; Yale Avalon Treaty Project 2019). However, while these cooperations carry much importance in regional geopolitics, the cooperation efforts on an operational level would not compare to the cooperation witnessed among European NATO members. The partner nations here prepare to fight a coordinated war but with little or no ambition to integrate forces in the lower ranks into mixed units.

On the African continent, security cooperation is also on the rise, though at a much slower pace than in Europe. This might be an attempt to mirror European efforts or a recognition that it takes more than one country's military to stop the violent conflicts the continent has suffered from in the past decades. The African Union (AU) is an institutionalised form of security and defence cooperation which maintains the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, a permanent body that is charged to manage and resolve conflicts (Sturman 2002, 21). The council is further

responsible for implementing the African Union's common defence policy, has the right to levy sanctions, and to deploy the AU Standby Force on peace missions. However, only the African Union Assembly has the right to deploy the AU Standby Force to an intervention mission (African Union 2019).

The African Union Standby Force is structured as five regional chapters that are not only multinational but also cover a comprehensive security approach, that includes police and, military, as well as civilian components. The regional chapters are separated into North, South, East, West, and Central Africa. However, neither one of these brigades could be considered an integrated defence capability when compared to the definition developed for this thesis or compared to the Dutch-Belgian naval cooperation or the Franco-German Brigade. Its structure and purpose are more like United Nations Peacekeeping operations, or at best NATO response forces rotated to certain locations for the protection of its members. The regional headquarters are established on a permanent basis but function merely as planning offices or commanding units once deployment has been agreed upon (Africa Union Standby Forces 2019). However, an interesting example of integrated defence capability in Africa could be on the horizon thanks to the ambitious plan for an East African Federation of states. Negotiations between the sovereign states of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda are underway to form such a federation, though its political feasibility is hard to assess at this point in time. Its creation would likely see the integration of the air forces, navies, and special forces of the six nations to defend the federation, particularly as the militaries of the negotiating states are already conducting exercises together (Musaazi 2018).

In the Americas, a push was made for creating a more cooperative security architecture in 2008 with the creation of the South American Defence Council as part of the Union of South American Nations (Medeiros Filho 2017, 673). However, in essence, this superimposed institutionalisation is hardly different from its African counterpart, if not less effective, as the state interests in South America are so entrenched that cooperation appears extremely difficult to achieve (Vaz et al. 2017). For example, the Brazilian agenda for the newly created council was to better integrate the continent's defence industries and generate synergies while the Venezuelan ambition was to create a 'Southern NATO with a notably anti-hegemonic character' (Medeiros Filho 2017, 677). This leaves only one of the oldest defence cooperation agreements as the most significant form of cooperation in the Americas, the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD). It was initiated in 1958 to protect the United States and Canada against ballistic missile attacks. To this day, NORAD maintains radar and vital communication systems in both countries and is manned by both Canadian and US military personnel to defend North American air space.

In Europe on the other hand, states cooperate far more widely, and the respective depth of integration varies as well, from the intention to integrate (e.g. the EU's PESCO) to near-complete integration (e.g. the Benelux Admiralty). Not surprisingly those nations that find themselves in the same alliance (NATO or the EU), including Sweden, Norway, and Iceland, cooperate far more than those European states that are not formally members of an alliance. This myriad of defence cooperation agreements found in Europe can best be categorised as *Policy*, *Industrial*, or *Operational* agreements.

Industrial cooperation has really experienced its strongest growth with the creation of the single European market, which aided the closer integration of multinational defence companies. With the blessing of their governments, selected industrial defence capabilities were integrated to generate economies of scale and more effectively compete in the global aerospace and defence markets. Particularly, after the first wave of industrial consolidation of US competitors, such a development was necessary to maintain much of the technical and development capabilities for European companies. Among these multinational companies are the well-known Airbus Group, the French-, Italian-, German-, British missile-manufacturer MBDA, and most recently the newly created armoured vehicle manufacturer KNDS that emerged from the merger of the French state-owned company Nexter and the family-owned German tank manufacturer Kraus Maffei Wegmann. These integrated defence equipment companies benefit from the support of not just one but multiple governments that help sustain their revenues despite years of defence budget decreases in Europe.

Developing the intellectual property to manufacture modern weapon systems is considered a highly-guarded state secret that is typically not shared with foreign governments or businesses. To develop stealth aircraft or active-electronically-scanned-array radars is so complex that these technological capabilities are naturally considered to be part of a state's ability to defend itself. Therefore, defence cooperation agreements that deal with the joint development and production of defence equipment have the potential to indirectly impact the core state power of coercive force, particularly, when large swaths of a nation's military rely on a multinational supply-chain. Examples are the twin-engine Eurofighter or the recently launched French-, Spanish-, and German initiative to manufacture a sixth-generation fighter jet called the Future Combat Air System (FCAS). These industrial defence cooperations are in part, delivering attractive cost savings for governments but are also important from an operational perspective as they improve the interoperability between their militaries. For example, the Norwegian-German decision to purchase the same type of submarine is largely based on their comparable operational requirements in the Baltic Sea; the two governments have decided to realise such industrial and operational synergies by means of a defence cooperation agreement (Josefsen 2018).

Frequently, governments also decide to cooperate in the realm of defence policy. At a global level, this might happen ad hoc to combat new threats (e.g. piracy or terrorism) or in permanent institutions, such as the UN. In Europe, for example, one finds institutionalised versions of defence policy cooperation that are in fact moving toward the integration of member state defence policies more broadly (Vosse 2018). Namely, the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy and Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO). Unlike the United Nations or the African Union, the EU pursues a much deeper level of policy cooperation between the relevant political decision-makers. CSDP represents an intergovernmental decision-making format that serves as a forum for participating members to coordinate their defence policies. For example, under the umbrella of CSDP, many joint military deployments to protect and advance the interests of EU member states have been initiated. Among these CSDP missions are military operations far outside the territory of the EU (e.g. in Mali). The goal of this form of defence cooperation is to compare, coordinate, and finally align policy objectives between governments once common interests have been identified. With PESCO, a group of 25 EU member states decided to actively pursue a Lisbon Treaty provision that had hitherto been dormant but under which these states will initiate further defence cooperation projects to advance the integration of defence capabilities at a broader level.[18] PESCO is part of CSDP, but the integration pursued by PESCO does not require participation by all member states, allowing for some policy areas to achieve far more integration than possible under the CSDP structure.

Lastly, states also sign defence cooperation agreements to allow their troops to cooperate closely to prepare for future missions. These *operational* defence cooperation agreements are struck at a bi- or multilateral level and increasingly occur outside of institutionalised security organisations like NATO or the EU. Instead, governments identify partners with complementary capabilities and cooperate in all domains of the military (air, land, sea, cyber, and space). These cooperations are of interest as they become increasingly relevant to governments to be able to execute their foreign and defence policy effectively. It is these operational defence cooperations that are most directly affecting a government's control of its core state powers. In the following section, I will discuss specific examples of such operational cooperation and explain to what degree some of these cooperations are integrated.

Operational Defence Cooperation Agreements

Operational defence cooperations allow armed forces to train and work together as opposed to *policy* or *industrial* cooperation agreements which occur between policymakers or among

[18] European Union, Treaty of Lisbon Amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty Establishing the European Community - Protocol on Permanent Structured Cooperation established by Article 42 of the Treaty on European, 13 December 2007

defence equipment manufacturers. The integration of operational assets requires the highest level of coordination, as most nations' militaries are decades- or centuries-old organisations with unique organisational cultures. Industrial cooperation, for example, is often easier as the private sector is more accustomed to operating in international markets that require them to bridge cultural differences. The same accounts for defence policy cooperation; here trained diplomats who regularly engage with foreign governments and speak multiple languages are in the driving seat. Most importantly, when the capabilities of one military become deeply integrated with those of a foreign military, the two governments elect to share control over their monopoly of violence and with it their means of waging war or protecting their territory and nation. In the literature on core state powers this dimension of government control over coercive force has been referenced as the 'resource-based dimension' of core state powers, the capacity of the political system to mobilize resources (Kuhn and Nicoli 2020, 7).

The figure below offers a simplified visual aid to discuss the depth of integration of defence cooperation agreements and the assumed level of inter-state dependency associated with varying degrees of integration. Highly integrated cooperations intertwine the committed capabilities of two or more nations and often create a dependency between the participants for the use of the capability in question. However, it is worth noting that the degree of dependency may not be mutual for all participants; in fact, in most instances, a smaller state's military with a niche capability complements the military of a larger state, as is the case in many of the bilateral Dutch-German cooperation projects. Also, not all defence cooperation agreements impair core state powers; as I will explain below, the structure of the cooperation largely determines its impact on core state powers.

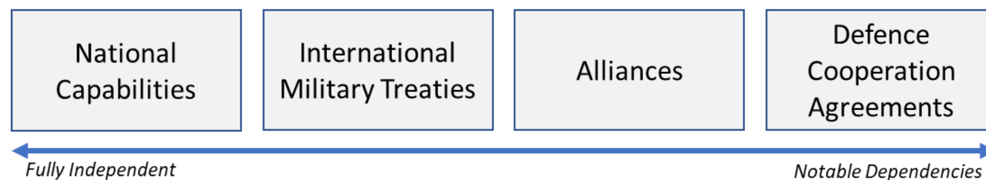

Figure 2: High-level overview of the three most common treaties and agreements and their associated level of cross-border dependencies

For example, a smaller state may partner with a larger state to establish a joint medical evacuation capability (MEDEVAC), but the larger state may nevertheless maintain a separate and independent and sovereign MEDEVAC capability. Furthermore, even for integrated capabilities, the degree of dependency can be controlled by the participating states. For instance, states may integrate by deciding to pursue *role specialisation, pooling and sharing, or joint force generation* (Diesen in Matlary and Petersson 2013, 61). These structures are indicative of how a government wishes to control the integrated capability throughout the life of the cooperation.

In line with the definition by Diesen, *role specialisation* would be on the right side of the spectrum I have shown in Figure 2, as it requires each participating nation to develop one specific capability while omitting others, with the expectation that each participant will pitch in unconditionally when the need arises to leverage coercive force (2013, 62). Similarly, *pooling and sharing* would also be situated on the right side of the integration/dependency spectrum, though slightly to the left of *role specialisation*. Here, Diesen described the approach as sharing defence assets, for example, transport aircraft, which might be physically or virtually pooled and then shared among member states, such as the EATC (2013, 63).

Finally, *joint force generation* would imply that two or more partners maintain their full spectrum of military capabilities and instead rely on a common set of supply routes, e.g. a joint logistics network for spare parts (2013, 64). An example is the contribution of Norwegian forces to the UK's Expeditionary Force or Germany's support of maintenance infrastructure to the Dutch main battle tanks. This latter approach may be found further to the centre of the integration/dependency spectrum as it reserves the right of each nation to operate for an extended period independently until a state is reliant on joint support capabilities.

Of the operational defence agreements, I came across in my research; I identified many initiatives that would feature on the far-right end of Figure 2. To do so, information from stakeholder interviews has been very helpful in determining the depth of integration. One key indicator to determine to what degree a cooperation is integrated is the agreed-upon command structure and the organisational hierarchy of a cooperation. The more intertwined and the more leeway higher-ranking officers have over those foreign soldiers subordinated to them, the closer the two countries typically work together. Other indicators are the joint use of equipment as well as the joint procurement for these integrated troops. Lastly, truly integrated defence cooperation projects often operate from a shared base. The operational defence cooperation projects discussed in the next section all feature some sort of rotating command structure, meaning that at least one of the partner militaries is always placed under foreign command. Additionally, all projects have several high-ranking officers based abroad, in shared bases with their foreign counterparts. Finally, most of these projects make use of shared equipment, lease platforms from each other, or jointly procure new systems. All of these aspects are indicators of strong commitments between the involved partners and signs that to deploy these joint capabilities the government in question will almost certainly have to involve their partner in the decision-making process and hence share their core state powers.

Examples of Operational Defence Cooperations

In this section, I present different operational defence cooperation projects, describe their purpose, and paint a picture of how strongly the partner nations are intertwined. Most of these

agreements were concluded in the past thirty years and are indicative of a broader trend toward such G2G agreements. Many governments appear to be increasingly willing to sign these G2G agreements with some of their closest allies to strengthen the overall operational capabilities of their armed forces. Even at the time of writing, several more such projects are currently under negotiation between various European governments and expected to be initiated in the coming years (Interview No. 17). The following list begins with the most recently agreed-upon cooperation at the time of writing and ends with the longest-standing cooperation project, established early on during the Cold War.

1) **Joint Logistic Support Ship:** The Karel Doorman, a joint logistic support ship of the Dutch Navy, is used to perform strategic sea and logistics support for an array of missions ranging from humanitarian aid to sea-basing for forward-deployments of troops. In 2016, the German and Dutch Ministries of Defence agreed to turn the ship into a joint capability, allowing German sailors to use the ship for their missions as the German Navy has not been able to procure comparable vessels in recent years and had been trying to fill this capability gap for some time (Naval Today 2016). German divers, mine-sweeping experts, and engineers of the German *Seebataillion* (Marines) will train on the ship, and the two Navies plan to exchange knowledge on amphibious capabilities going forward.

   At the time of the agreement, the Dutch Navy was under much pressure to sell the Karel Doorman as a result of severe defence budget cuts; however, the German participation in financing the operating costs saved the vessel from being sold (Boere 2016). This cooperation agreement has been the latest in a series of projects between Germany and the Netherlands further deepening the integration of defence capabilities between the two European partners. Following my categorisation of cooperation projects highlighted above, this capability is an example of a typical joint force generation initiative, as a supply vessel like the Karel Doorman is mostly used to offer transport for or to re-supply deployed military assets. The Netherlands continues to use the vessel for unilateral missions, and Germany will still plan to acquire a set of comparable logistic support ships.

2) **Multi-layered Land Forces Integration:** Also referred to as *Project Taurus*, this cooperation agreement between the Netherlands and Germany is the poster child for the integration of operational defence assets. In 2011 it became clear that the Dutch defence budget cuts would not allow the nation's Army to maintain their fleet of Leopard II main battle tanks, and thus the government decided to retire the Army's tank capability completely (Hennis-Plasschaert 2013, 21). Within NATO, this decision

was controversial at the time because it can take many years for an army to re-build such capabilities from the ground-up (Interviews No. 16 and 18). To avoid such a capability loss, the Dutch and German Armies initiated bilateral discussions, and a few years later, in 2016, the entire Dutch 43rd Mechanized Brigade was integrated with the 1. German *Panzerdivision* so that the Dutch Army could maintain its fleet of tanks. In the G2G documents between the two countries, this initiative is often described as an 'intertwined integration' because it places a Dutch unit under the command of the German 414. *Panzerbatallion* which in turn is under the command of the Dutch 43rd Mechanized Brigade which is now part of the much larger German 1. Panzerdivision (Netherlands and German MoD 2016).

Since the Netherlands' Army had already sold most of its tanks at the time the two militaries agreed to the cooperation, they are now leasing 18 German tanks to train along with their German colleagues in a military base in Northern Germany (Dagblad Noorden 2016). This way, the Netherlands' Army maintains its tank capabilities for future operations and can also train in larger military formations with their German partner (Interview No. 16). This defence cooperation would be described as *pooling and sharing* in other literature even though its integration goes far beyond the examples of pooling and sharing as it occurs with other states.

3) **C-130 Franco-German Shared Base and Operation:** The French and German governments agreed in 2017 to acquire and base 10 C-130J Lockheed Martin transport aircraft in Évreux, France. Four French and six German aircraft will help bridge an ongoing shortage of air transport capabilities in both nations, a bilateral pooling and sharing project to save money and improve operational cooperation. With it, 200 German soldiers will be based in Évreux, and both countries hope to achieve operational and maintenance synergies in the process, mostly by offering joint training for their personnel. These aircraft will also be part of the pool of aircraft available via the European Air Transport Command. Both countries in this instance, also share the same airbase and have each invested $130 million to expand the airport's infrastructure to accommodate this new joint capability (Trevithick 2018).

4) **Polish and German Naval Cooperation:** In 2013, the German and Polish navies agreed to initiate multiple cooperation projects under the banner of one Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) (Interview No. 22). One of the most prominent and successful examples being the Joint Submarine Operating Authority launched in 2016 that now controls both countries' submarine operations. It is located within the larger German Maritime Operations Centre in Glücksburg, Germany. Both countries will

retain full operational command over their respective submarine fleets but make use of the integrated capability to share and improve their maritime situational awareness. Essentially, the cooperation will greatly facilitate the communication among deployed submarines as well as joint operations in the future (Inteview No. 22).

As agreed in the MoU, two Polish naval officers are permanently based with their German colleagues at the Maritime Operations Centre. Furthermore, this cooperation has laid the foundation for joint training sessions where Polish sailors joined training sessions onboard German submarines since 2018 (Interview No. 22). As the Polish Navy is also planning to modernise its fleet, joint platform procurements are also being considered in the future (Interview No. 22).

5) ***Corp Mariners* and *Seebatallion*:** Since 2016 the German Navy has been in the process of integrating its *Seebatallion*, with the Dutch *Corp Mariners*, both units having a comparable purpose to that of the US Marine Corps. So far, this integration effort has not progressed as far as the integration projects in the land domain (Interview No. 4). However, both navies are in the process of planning and executing several further initiatives under this umbrella MoU between the two countries' navies.

   The goal is that the German battalion of 800 soldiers will regularly conduct exercises with their Dutch counterparts and that both officer corps will permanently exchange staff among each other's units. The integration agreement was signed together with the joint-use agreement of the joint support ship, Karel Doorman since both the Dutch Marines and German battalion will heavily rely on making use of this landing ship (Hoffmann 2017).

6) **NATO Multi-Role Tanker Transport Capability (MRTT-C):** Coordinated by the European Defence Agency in 2012, the fleet had significantly grown in size in 2016 when the NATO joint procurement agency, Organisation Conjointe de Coopération en matière d'Armement (OCCAR), signed a contract for seven Airbus 330 MRTT aircraft on behalf of the consortium of MRTT-C member states. These now include the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Germany, and Norway. In 2017, Belgium also expressed interest in joining the pooled fleet of Airbus aircraft and confirmed its order for one aircraft (which will be added to the overall pool) in 2018 (Allison 2018). Five of the eight planned aircraft will be based at NATO's Eindhoven Airbase in the Netherlands and three at Cologne-Bonn Airport in Germany. While all aircraft are formally NATO assets, only the participating member states have access to their tanker/transport capability.

7) **Project Apollo (Short-Range Air Defence):** Initiated in 2015, Project Apollo really gained momentum in 2017 when the German Air Force's Surface-to-Air Group was integrated with the Dutch Ground Based Air Defence Command at the Vredepeel Base in the Netherlands (Interview No. 19). The project is separated into six unique work-streams which are expected to generate synergies between the two partners in various areas (Fiorenza 2017). These include for example the creation of a joint air and missile defence academy, the generation of best practices protocols, joint procurement of very-short range air-defence (VSHORAD) and short-range air-defence (SHORAD) capabilities in the future, and the creation of fully operational air and missile defence task force that can be deployed by NATO. While VSHORAD and SHORAD represent a severely deteriorated capability of both the German and Dutch militaries, it is regaining importance due to the conventional military threat associated with an increasingly assertive Russian military. Hence, the two countries have decided to initiate this project to regain capabilities that have been lost since the Cold War (Interview No. 19).

8) **Polish-German Tank Cooperation:** In 2014, the Polish and German governments agreed to initiate the integration of the 411th German Tank Battalion into the 34th Polish Tank Brigade which in turn is planned to be integrated into the 41st German Tank Brigade. Since both countries operate Leopard II tanks, their military leaders have stated that such cooperation would benefit both sides, by exchanging information, learning best practices, and generating operational efficiencies (e.g. joint exercises, etc.). This integration of military units at the Western Polish and Eastern German border is envisioned to improve the two militaries' readiness levels and allow them to operate jointly on the battlefield with minimal interruptions. This could prove particularly advantageous regarding the defence of European territory or a joint NATO deployment.

   At the moment, the cooperation experiences significant delays, and the German MoD now speaks of a potential operating capability in 2021 (Mueller 2018). Nevertheless, more recent political developments in Poland and within the NATO alliance have revived this somewhat sleepy integration effort according to two senior German government officials I interviewed (InterviewsCorop No. 5 and 22).

9) **German Rapid Response Forces Division and 11th Dutch *Air Mobile* Brigade:** This new joint division was the first Dutch-German integration on a divisional level since the agreement in 1995 to launch the 1. German-Netherlands Corps. Since the Dutch Army only maintains three brigades fully integrating another of them with the German military was perceived as a major step towards bilateral integration in 2013 (Interview No. 20). This cooperation is part of the overarching *Project Griffin,* which is the

umbrella project for multiple integration defence cooperation initiatives between the two countries. The 2,100 infantry soldiers of the 11th Air Manoeuvre Brigade have been under the full operational command of a German Commander and Dutch Deputy Commander since 2014 (Kasdorf 2014, 202). However, all Dutch soldiers will remain based in the Netherlands, about 30 kilometres from the German border. They bring with them light attack helicopters and other rapid response equipment that adds valuable capabilities to the German Rapid Response Force. This Dutch-German effort has become part of NATO's Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) which was initiated at NATO's 2014 Wales Summit.

10) **European Air Transport Command:** The European Air Transport Command is a multilateral initiative that pools the air transport assets of its members and is in operational command of all those aircraft. Its seven members (France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Luxembourg, Belgium, and Italy) contribute more than 200 military and VIP transport aircraft for air transport, air-to-air refuelling, and medical evacuation missions. At its headquarters in the Netherlands, a multinational command manages the assignment and operations of the entire fleet. Its command rotates every two years between French and German two-star generals. However, few if any of the aircraft are stationed in Eindhoven, and they remain on their home bases in each respective member state. The EATC simply generates operational synergies by coordinating air transport requirements across all its members. Effectively, this may result in a Spanish minister using a German Air Force aircraft to fly to a meeting in Poland. This is a textbook example of the pooling and sharing of military assets. It allows members to buy military capabilities by the hour. The EATC has been very successful in fulfilling its mission, so much so that the German Air Force and other members entirely dissolved their national air transport commands (Interview No. 24). However, France, also a member of the EATC, decided to maintain its national air transport command due to worries of transferring all operational command for a capability that is in indirectly linked to the country's nuclear deterrence (i.e., to transport nuclear warheads), a noteworthy decision when viewing the cooperation through the lens of core state powers (Interview No. 24).

11) **Regional Forces Group:** In 2009, the Russian Federation and Belarus signed an agreement to advance the military cooperation of the two states under the umbrella of the Union State Agreement of 1999 which also initiated economic and trade cooperation between the two countries (Government of the Republic of Belarus 2017). As part of this cooperation, the two countries not only frequently train together, it also deployed Russian equipment and soldiers to Belarus to exercise their integrated regional air defence systems, protecting both countries against airborne threats. Furthermore, the

two states' militaries have integrated certain divisions responsible for securing supply routes from Russia to the Western border of Belarus (Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Belarus 2009).

12) **Strategic Airlift Capability (SAC):** Ten NATO members, Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovenia and the United States as well as two Partnership for Peace nations, Switzerland and Sweden, initiated the NATO Strategic Airlift Capability in 2006. Since 2009, these countries have access to three C-17 air transport aircraft which may be used for their national missions or NATO, UN, or EU operations. Unlike the EATC, the SAC aircraft are owned and operated directly by NATO and are all stationed together at the Papa Airbase in Hungary. Together with the NATO AWACS aircraft stationed in Eindhoven, the Netherlands, SAC is the only defence assets under the direct control of NATO.

13) **Galileo Global Navigation Satellite System:** The EU commissioned the development of the Galileo satellite constellation in 2001, which operates as the European alternative to the US Global Positioning System (GPS). Like GPS, its satellites help both civilian and military applications to navigate the globe, a military capability of growing importance. When finished, 24 satellites and six spares will be part of this constellation. However, access to the military-grade navigation technology, also referred to as Public Regulated Services, will be reserved for the militaries of EU member states. All EU members are participating in this effort, and the recent decision of the United Kingdom to withdraw from the programme as part of its exit from the European Union has highlighted just how difficult such a decision can be once a state has jointly invested in integrated operational assets worth billions. EU officials are not granting the UK access to the military-grade information of the Galileo system after its exit from the EU, and as a result, the country stands to risk billions of euros (Gannon 2018). Additionally, the UK MoD has recently invested into building up a stand-alone satellite constellation, requiring hundreds of millions in additional funding to replace the very same capability (BBC News 2020).

14) **Baltic Operational Defence Cooperation:** Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania integrated specific defence capabilities and vowed to improve further the cooperation of their militaries given their comparatively small armed forces. While most of these agreements have been concluded ad-hoc rather than under one umbrella initiative, the three countries are very much aware of the need to cooperate wherever possible, as their defence budgets in absolute terms are dwarfed by the budgets of most of their neighbouring countries'. One of the early initiatives in the naval domain has been the

Baltic Naval Squadron (BALTRON). Established in 1998 by the three partner nations, they agreed to improve their respective naval readiness and contribute these naval assets to NATO operations in the Baltic, as necessary. In fact, the German government coordinated the negotiations between the three partners when the idea was first conceived, and donated two of the mine countermeasure vessels used by the squadron. Today, Estonia hosts a base for the personnel of BALTRON (Baltron Staff 2013). Also, 12 further nations have vowed to help the three small states to establish the BALTRON squadron which principally serves as a mine countermeasure capability for NATO in the Baltic. The three countries also maintain the Baltic Defence College to train officers and maintain an integrated regional airspace surveillance network of air defence radar stations called the Baltic Air Surveillance Network (BALTNET) established in 1998 (Latvian MoD 2014). The three countries agreed to rotate the command of the main Control and Reporting Centre every three years. This integrated capability will likely also be the foundation for a joint air defence system that the three countries are planning to acquire in the future.

15) **Belgian-Dutch Naval Cooperation (BeNeSam):** In 1995, Belgium and the Netherlands initiated a cooperation between their navies establishing an integrated command structure. Therefore, despite its name, BeNeSam, in fact, represents the rather well-integrated command structure of the Benelux Admiralty which is based in Den Helder, Netherlands. In 1987, Luxembourg joined the two countries, and in 2012, the group of states used the existing naval cooperation as a platform for further cooperation in other naval matters. Since then, BeNeSam is the platform for ongoing and future integration initiatives such as joint training centres, staff exchanges, joint training exercises, as well as coordinated equipment purchases (Interview No. 13). The navies of both the Netherlands and Belgium operate under a fully integrated command structure, headed by the Admiral Benelux (ABNL). Recently, Belgium and the Netherlands both ordered identical frigates and mine-sweepers jointly to generate cost savings which also makes it easier to train sailors and support staff at the Belgian-Dutch Operational School (Belgian MoD 2018). While the crews on board are not yet mixed, the two countries strongly rely on each other's capabilities; hence this project would fall into the category of role specialisation.

16) **1St Germany-Netherlands Corps:** The entire German Army is organised under three *corps*. Corps are the largest army formations; they are often composed of more than 30,000-50,000 soldiers or the equivalent of two divisions or more (Encyclopedia Britannica 2020). The Corps structures are responsible for improving processes and coordinating the operational defence capabilities by staging large scale exercises and

improving the overall efficiency of allied forces. For the German Army, all corps are bi- or multinational: the German-Netherlands Corps, the Eurocorps, and the Multinational NATO Corps Northeast (Interview No. 5). The units that make up these corps may be used for national purposes of the contributing nations or be assigned to the operations of multinational organizations such as NATO, the UN, or the EU. What made the creation of the 1st German-Netherlands Corp in 1995 unique? Unlike the Eurocorps in Southern Germany or the Multinational Corps in Northern Poland, the peacetime command lies with the commanding officer of the 1st German-Netherlands Corps. This small but important difference grants the highest level of authority to the Dutch or German officer leading the Corps and hence comes close to complete integration of all associated units (Borawski and Young 2001, 24). The arrangement has been referred to as 'Integrated Directing and Control Authority' as it is still short of full Operational Command (OPCOM), the highest command authority in NATO terminology. The Corps' own staff (about 1,200) is based in Muenster, Germany not too far from the Dutch border. The Dutch 43rd Mechanized Brigade, and the 1. Panzerdivision of the German Army into which it is integrated, are also both subordinated to this corp. While the Eurocorps is led by a Franco-German and the Multinational Corp Northeast by a Danish-German-Polish standing committee, their commanding officers do not enjoy operational command in peacetime and most of their subordinated structures are national rather than bi-national (Interview No. 5).

17) **EU Satellite Centre:** The European Satellite Centre, based in Torrejón de Ardoz, Spain has specifically been launched to support EU member states in their foreign and defence policy decision-making. While it was initially a Western European Union initiative when the centre was launched in 1992, it became a fully-funded EU agency in 2002 to supply satellite data to all participating governments. Its 131 employees service the geospatial and imagery intelligence needs of the EU Military Staff as well as requests of individual member states, FRONTEX, the UN, or the OSCE (EU Satellite Centre 2017). While the Satellite Centre is not an exclusively operational defence capability, its main customers are European military missions abroad.
18) **Franco-German Brigade:** The Franco-German Brigade was one of the earliest binational integration efforts of the German military. It became operational in 1989 after Chancellor Helmut Kohl and President Francoise Mitterrand agreed on its creation in 1987. It encompasses 5,500 German and French infantry soldiers who are subsumed under the broader command of the Eurocorps where the brigade represents the main capability of the Corps. Most other soldiers associated with the Eurocorps are based in their home countries, far away from the Corps' headquarters. However, the brigade is

scattered among seven different locations in Germany and France and only its command in Mülheim, Germany and its support divisions are binational and under rotating command. Nevertheless, the brigade has been deployed several times already as part of NATO or EU missions, most recently to the EU's anti-terror training mission in Mali (EUTM Mali).

19) **NATO Airborne Warning and Control System:** NATO operates a fleet of Boeing 737s that are deployed to provide situational awareness to ongoing NATO missions and offer targeting support via their sophisticated on board radar and communication equipment. Since 1982, 15 aircraft have been stationed in Geilenkirchen, Germany and are under the direct command of NATO. This multinational base made up of eight NATO nations has provided support to most of the alliance's missions. This integration initiative is particularly noteworthy in that its aircrews are made up of a mix of nationalities. This means Canadian soldiers fly in the same planes as German or Belgian soldiers to support missions abroad. In this specific circumstance, this deep level of integration had caused political debate, especially when Germany abstained from the NATO-led mission in Libya (Interview No. 8).

20) **North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD):** NORAD is one of the longest-standing examples of two countries cooperating on a crucial defence capability, missile defence. The United States established the North American Aerospace Defense Command as early as 1958. It consists of various radar stations, and other surveillance means in both countries to accurately track and identify incoming ballistic missile threats. Its main headquarters is deep underground in the Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Base in Colorado Springs, USA. While the mission of NORAD slowly shifted from actual air defence toward the defence against incoming ballistic missiles in the case of attack, the bilateral effort continues to run successfully to this day (Charron 2018).

    Unlike the rotating command structure that is common among the defence cooperation projects in Europe, the US always takes on the commanding post at NORAD, while a Canadian Air Force officer permanently occupies the position of deputy commander. The bilateral agreement, updated in 2006, stipulates that the 'Commander NORAD and Deputy Commander NORAD shall not be from the same country, and each of their appointments must be approved by both Parties' (Government of Canada 2006). However, this does not mean that a US commander will be in charge at the main NORAD facility at all times; for example, the Canadian Deputy Commander of NORAD was in charge of the facility at the time of the September 11th attacks (Charron 2018).

When going through the above list of defence cooperation agreements that integrate operational capabilities to a high degree, it quickly becomes apparent that both Germany and the Netherlands have been very active in promoting and participating in both, bi- and multilateral defence cooperation projects and not just with each other but also with neighbouring states. Therefore, I have decided to review these two governments and their respective integration efforts in-depth as part of this thesis. The agreements of both states not only offer a wide breadth of a total of 18 projects to research but also spearhead a European trend of integrating capabilities, meaning that their governments have decided more often than other states to share their core state powers with a foreign partner. While the Regional Forces Group of Belarus and Russia or the US-Canadian air defence cooperation show that similarly deeply integrated operational cooperation exists elsewhere, these two examples are arguably outliers compared to the large number of agreements signed between the Netherlands, Germany, and their immediate European neighbours. The figure below illustrates the increasing pace at which the Dutch and German governments have decided to sign agreements with each other as well as with other nations to integrate parts of their armed forces.

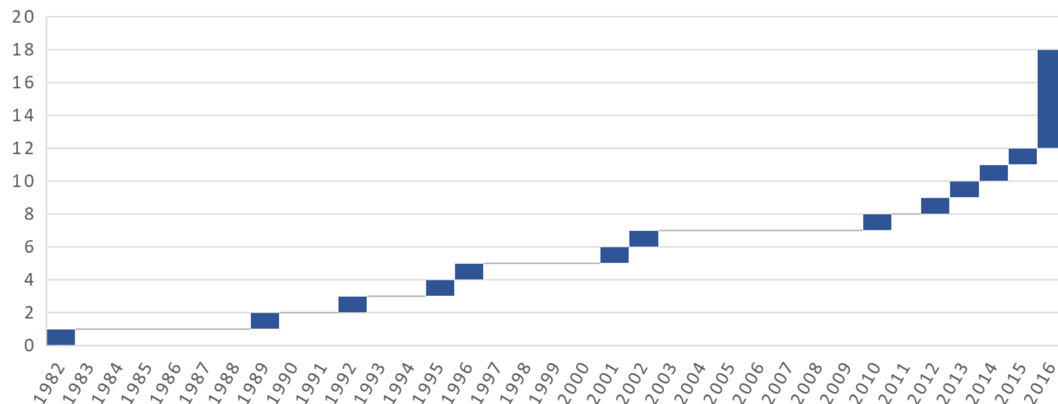

Figure 3: Highly integrated operational defence cooperation agreements concluded by the Dutch and German government with each other or third governments

<u>*Command Structures in Multinational Military Units*</u>

One way to measure how deeply intertwined a cooperation has become is to review its organisational hierarchies and command authorities. The Dutch and German governments are interesting units of analysis as they have granted their officers unprecedented authority over each other's military personnel. In this section, I will briefly highlight these novel command structures to explain by just how much the two countries' militaries have moved beyond mere cooperation and began to truly integrate their armed forces.

When two states cooperate in defence, their mutual foundation of trust is, in most instances their joint membership in an alliance. For the Netherlands and Germany, NATO is the one organisation that had already developed much of the shared technical standards and terminology

that allowed them to launch cooperation projects that integrated large parts of their militaries. As Europe's overarching military institution, it also required a complementary approach to Command and Control (C2) of its members. To show how deeply integrated the German and Dutch cooperation projects are and why they are truly spearheading this trend of highly integrated G2G defence cooperation in Europe, I will use this section to outline their decision to develop a new type of command authority for their integrated units that goes beyond the existing NATO doctrines.

The government's core state power of coercive force, as defined earlier, includes the control of such force, the deployment of its military, or authority to task the Police to enforce its laws (Genschel and Jachtenfuchs 2014). While the government directs its armed forces at the highest strategic level, the hierarchical organisational structure of all armed forces takes great care in defining how this decision-making power is then managed throughout the entire organisation; those interviewees involved in politics that had a previous career in the military were particularly aware of this connection (Interviews No. 28 and 29). From the highest-ranking general down to the most junior soldier, everyone is aware of their rank vis-à-vis the commander in chief, often the democratically elected prime minister, defence minister, or president of a nation (Interview No. 18). Therefore, command and control structures within integrated defence capabilities are an important indicator as to the depth of a cooperation and reveal to what extent cooperating states trust each other's military and political elites to manage their respective core state powers. C2 is a critical functionality for organising and coordinating an operational military force, and when two or more militaries integrate parts of their defence capabilities, the hierarchies of these newly created joint structures become an important point of discussion in negotiations (Bundesgesetzblatt 1998).

As discussed in the previous section, most defence cooperation projects approach this issue by establishing rotating command structures in some form or another, which then allows both nations to make their mark on the integrated unit. However, Germany and the Netherlands have taken this one step further and created an entirely new NATO command category to deepen their integration (Kasdorf 2014, 202). The creation of such a category allows their integrated units to react faster and cooperate nearly as effectively as a purely national military unit. There are six key NATO C2 categories, ranked from most to least control as found in the 'Joint Doctrine Publication 5' issued by the Ministry of Defence of the Netherlands (2016). Full Command (FULLCOM) is the highest commanding authority, in principle the authority to control all aspects of a military unit as assigned by the national armed forces. This all-encompassing command power is a national prerogative and cannot be transferred to foreign armed forces, even within an alliance. This specifically includes the training, discipline, or direction of forces as well as the assignment of sub-command structures. No NATO commander

ever receives FULLCOM from any other partner nation. Operational Command (OPCOM) is the highest command category a NATO officer might hold, it authorises him or her to structure and organise all subordinated units, deploy them, and assign them to missions or tasks. Operational Control (OPCON) allows an officer within a NATO mission to command specific tasks and allows him or her to delegate all necessary units accordingly without the burden of responsibility for the entire mission or responsibility for logistics or other associated supplies and services that are part of larger missions. Tactical Command (TACOM) can be delegated to unit commanders to complete missions and the necessary command to fulfil these. Like OPCON, Tactical Control (TACON) represents more of a coordinating authority which is not as encompassing as TACOM but can be delegated to military personnel to direct forces or manoeuvre them. Lastly, Coordinating Authority is the lowest level of authority in the NATO C2 categories, effectively designating a staff member to mediate between various entities in the armed forces but without the right ‘to force an agreement’ (Netherlands MoD 2016, 142).

	Most Control				Least Control
Authority	**FULL CMD**	**NATO OPCOM**	**NATO OPCON**	**NATO TACOM**	**NATO TACON**
Direct authority to deal with nations, diplomatic missions, agencies	x				
Granted to a command	x	x			
Delegated to a command			x	x	x
Set chain of command to forces	x				
Assign mission/designate objective	x	x			
Assign tasks	x	x		x	
Direct/Employ forces	x	x	x		
Establish maneuver control measures	x	x	x	x	x
Reassign forces	x				
Retain OPCON	x	x			
Delegate OPCON	x	x	x		
Assign TACON	x				
Delegate TACON	x	x	x		
Retain TACON	x	x	x		
Deploy forces (information/within theater)	x	x	x		
Local direction/control designated forces	x				x
Assign separate employment of unit components	x	x			
Directive authority for logistics	x				
Direct joint training	x				
Assign/Reassign subordinate commanders/officers	x				
Conduct internal discipline/training	x				

The national authority always retains FULL COMMAND by Allied doctrine.
- has this authority
- denied authority or not specially granted

LEGEND
OPCON - Operational Control
OPCOM - Operational Command
TACOM - Tactical Command
TACON - Tactical Control

Figure 4: Joint NATO Command and Control Doctrine

In addition to these main categories, Administrative Control and Logistical Control are two further NATO command categories required to execute those two specific tasks. While the above overview is based on the Joint Doctrine Publication 5 of the Ministry of Defence of the Netherlands, each NATO member has a comparable doctrine that is modelled on this NATO structure (Netherlands MoD 2016). For example, within the Bundeswehr, the doctrine is referred to as *Zentrale Dienstvorschrift 1/50* (German MoD 2019). This allows for a high degree of compatibility should NATO forces train or fight together. However, it is also clear that it helps governments to avoid ambiguity as to who is in command of their core state power of coercive force. In most instances, this means that even within multinational units, these categories are used to retain the highest levels of command within the ranks of one's own military. The following examples will illustrate this.

The multinational Eurocorps receives OPCOM only when it is deployed, the Multinational Corp Northeast is assigned OPCOM and OPCON only during wartime, and other multinational corps that include UK or US troops merely operate under OPCON during wartime (Borawski and Young 2001, 24). Essentially, this means that during peacetime NATO commanders of multinational formations hardly have any direct authority to substantially improve the readiness of the formation until they receive OPCOM or OPCON during wartime (Young 2002, 41).

The Dutch-German cooperation, on the other hand, developed new terminology to allow for effective control of its joint forces. The integration of the German Rapid Response Forces Division and the 11th Netherlands Air Manoeuvre Brigade is the first exception to this NATO C2 arrangement. Effectively, the two countries have decided to create a new category between OPCOM and FULLCOM to give the commander and deputy commander of the unit as much leeway as possible in preparing the unit to achieve the highest readiness levels in peacetime as well as wartime. The Chief of Staff of the German Army, Bruno Kasdorf, described the arrangement as follows:

> 'They are integrated into a headquarters, commanded and controlled by a German Commander and a Dutch Deputy Commander and the attached 11th (NLD) Air Mobile Brigade (11th AMB) will be NATO OPCOM: a German-Dutch division comes into existence.' (Kasdorf 2014, 202)

The above arrangement is referred to as Integrated Directing and Control Authority**,** a new terminology to describe FULLCOM without touching on the key prerogatives of national commanders (Bundesgesetzblatt 1998, para. 6). In effect, this means that German soldiers must obey the orders of a Dutch Commander in charge as if they came from a German commander and may also be disciplined by the Dutch commander. However, soldiers may always be recalled through national orders, and complaint processes are also protected from this newly

created C2 category. Nevertheless, according to interviews and research on the topic, further integration that would allow for full command by foreign commanders has been reviewed by the two militaries (Fleck and Addy 2001, 46).

While this thesis also looks at the highly integrated cooperations of the Dutch and German governments with other partners. Their highly integrated bilateral command structures are a good example as to why the bilateral German and Dutch governments are such interesting case studies to investigate the research question why governments decide to share their core state powers with foreign partners. The degree of integration of command authority is indicative of just how far these two states have gone to advance the integration of their forces and what this means for the decision-making powers and readiness of their militaries. Cooperation, that goes beyond most other examples of defence cooperation.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented the openness of governments to sign an increasing number of international defence cooperation treaties and agreements. Among these, the two most common G2G agreement types found around the globe are *alliances* and *international military treaties*. Alliances are an effective way to strengthen a country's armed forces for both offensive and defensive operations and to balance its security vis-à-vis foreign threats and power dynamics. International Military treaties, on the other hand, have become a more common phenomenon in the 20th and 21st centuries with the propagation of international law. They are signed between friendly as well as competing states and cover less strategic topics, such as the administration of war graves, safe passage for naval vessels, or personnel visits. Both *alliances* and *international military treaties* are distinctly different though from *defence cooperation agreements*. This third type of G2G agreement discussed in this chapter mostly builds upon existing alliance partnerships, and its purpose is to coordinate cooperations that go beyond the political promises of alliances or the bureaucratic requirements addressed by international military treaties.

Defence cooperation agreements are focused on either policy, industrial, or operational cooperation. The latter is of interest to this thesis as many governments, particularly in Europe, have signed such operational defence cooperation agreements in recent years. The Netherlands and Germany are leading signatories to these agreements, and I demonstrate how some of their cooperation projects are extremely closely intertwined; these often share military bases, procure equipment jointly, and feature highly integrated command structures. In some instances, the two countries even go as far as to create novel command structures to grant their foreign partner enhanced command authority over the joint units. The increasing number of such closely-knit G2G agreements that integrate military capabilities in recent years prompted this research project in the first place as I found these direct G2G cooperations to be an underrepresented

topic in the existing literature on defence cooperation despite their growing popularity. As highlighted in the literature review, the majority of research is focused on alliances or the analysis of institutionalised forms of defence cooperation, such as the EU's CSDP or NATO.

Chapter 3: Sovereignty and Core State Powers

In this chapter, I explore the concept of *sovereignty* in the academic literature as well as its meaning for policy-makers responsible for the integration of military capabilities. Since sovereignty encompasses the control over the monopoly on violence, it is often invoked by politicians when defence cooperation agreements are signed. The purpose of introducing sovereignty in this chapter is to analyse to what extent sovereignty is shared among participants of defence cooperation agreements and to differentiate *sovereignty* from the concept of *core state powers* that I continue to use in this thesis going forward. I argue that only some aspects of sovereignty are affected when two or more states cooperate but since the term represents a very broad definition, I opted for the definition of core state powers instead.

While sovereignty is a 'defining property' of the 'state as a unit of analysis' it is important to differentiate sovereignty from the autonomous control over sovereign functions of the state, the ability of a government to act independently from outside influence (Bartelson 2011, 1). Therefore, this chapter first unravels the definitions of sovereignty in International Relations literature to differentiate between this frequently used short-hand for those autonomous powers that are really being shared when two or more governments decide to cooperate in defence. In the latter half of the chapter, I, therefore, introduce the concept of *core state powers,* a terminology developed by Genschel and Jachtenfuchs that describes the powers of a sovereign government that allow it to pursue its preferred course of action (2014). These core state powers are the specific sovereign powers governments share when integrating military capabilities.

Lastly, this chapter will assess the value of core state powers to governments to validate the relevance of the research question. After all, if governments assign little value to core state powers, it would not be surprising if they decided to share these with foreign partners. In this chapter, I find that core state powers continue to be highly valued by governments and demonstrate that they are an effective means of assessing the impact of defence cooperation agreements on the control governments have over their armed forces, defence budgets, and even foreign policy.

Unravelling Sovereignty

Whether one understands sovereignty as an outdated notion in a globalised world or as an indisputable pillar of interstate relations in an otherwise anarchical system, the debate on sovereignty continues to be central to the scholarly debate in International Relations (e.g. Krasner 1995; Bartelson 2011; Wendt 1992; Philpott 2008). Witnessing how the German and Dutch governments increasingly integrated large parts of their armed forces without much attention to the impact such decisions had on their sovereign control is one of the revelations that prompted this research project. In this section, I will discuss why sovereignty enjoys such a central role in the field of International Relations and how the debate on the concept evolved over time. To understand the evolving definitions of sovereignty in the field allows to differentiate what *aspects* of sovereignty are really affected when the Dutch and German governments decide to pursue a highly integrated defence cooperation project.

Sovereignty: The Chameleon of International Relations Literature

In this section, I will briefly touch upon the original definitions of sovereignty developed by authors, such as Bodin, Hobbes, or Rosseau to introduce the idea and its original definitions. However, the sheer number of publications related to the topic of sovereignty would hardly allow for a comprehensive literature review in this dissertation. I will instead reference those publications most relevant to my research, such as Stephen Krasner, Robert Jackson, Alan James, and Christopher Brown, among others (Krasner 1999; R. Jackson 2013; James 1999; Brown 2002). Understanding how their theoretical arguments shape sovereignty in the debate tees up the introduction of core state powers in the latter half of this chapter.

Bartelson described the scholarly debate on sovereignty as being two-sided: those who perceive sovereignty as a fundamental concept of International Relations that is characterised by ‘indivisibility and discreteness’, and those who consider it an outdated concept that is increasingly challenged by ‘new constellations of authority and community’ (2006, 464). Often, the debate on sovereignty focuses on the legitimacy of power, its limits, and the ensuing responsibility of government. Between 1583 and 1762, important thinkers like Bodin, Hobbes, and Rosseau were among those to discuss the question of sovereignty in their publications. Bodin took an interest in sovereignty from the perspective of a legal scholar, Hobbes followed a more comprehensive political and philosophical approach, and Rosseau developed the idea of the sovereignty of the people (Tuck 2015, 2–4). Interestingly, this distribution of scholarly interest mirrors very well the contemporary debate on the topic. International law, political science, and contemporary politics are the main fields or forums of debate that shape our understanding of sovereignty in the 21st century.

Mutual recognition among the system of states is one of the most important aspects to legitimise a government. A state might declare itself as sovereign at any time, but for most states, the acceptance of their peers greatly adds to the validity of such claim. The difficulties of the Republic of China to gain acceptance among other states is a good example. The value assigned to such reciprocal recognition immediately becomes clear once one reviews the terminology that is used to define sovereignty in the contemporary debate: autonomous political authority, independence, or recognition (Krasner 1995, 115; R. Jackson 1999, 424). The terminology is reliant on prepositions (a state is autonomous *from…*) that indicate the reciprocal nature of the concept. It is indicative of why sovereignty is such a central concept for International Relations.

Many scholars who publish on the topic and its evolution consider the signing of the Peace Treaties of Westphalia in 1648 a critical juncture in the analysis of sovereignty. At the time, the Thirty Years War had come to an impasse. Both Protestants and Catholics agreed to sign the Peace Treaties of Osnabrück and Münster and agreed that governments should not interfere in the domestic affairs of other states. Therefore, even before Thomas Hobbes' published 'Leviathan', the international recognition of sovereignty was born in the aftermath of the most devastating conflict the continent had seen up to that point in history (Hobbes and Macpherson 1988). In these peace treaties, the idea was manifested that each state may enjoy complete *sovereignty* within its territory, such was defined as a state enjoying 'exclusive authority within its own geographic boundaries', meaning other states should not interfere with the domestic policies of their peers (Krasner 1995, 115).

However, there has hardly ever been a time when the international system of states fully lived up to the Westphalian model. Territorial transgressions, invasions, and conflicts are commonplace in modern history, and for students of history, it must appear as if no state ever observed the rules established in Westphalia. However, Krasner rightly argued that the Westphalian system of states should not be thought of as set in stone; in his opinion, the value of the framework is not diminished if states fail to abide by its rules, in fact upon closer observation, most states merely diverge temporarily and to varying degrees but then return to its guiding principles (1995, 117). Clearly, the definition of sovereignty has evolved over time, but most of the academic discussions in recent literature are likely to agree with Thomas Hobbes' initial assessment that sovereignty can be defined as 'supreme authority within a territory' and often bases its research on this basic premise of government authority (Hobbes in Philpott 2008, 18). Hobbes' centuries-old definition appears to be the one commonality in the debate on sovereignty to this day (Thomson 1995, 219).

To begin, the work of Alan James provides a concise overview of the concept of sovereignty; he defines it as follows:

> ‘On the political level it is the one and only organizing principle in respect of the dry surface of the globe, all of that surface now being divided among constitutionally independent entities. Being constitutionally independent also makes a state eligible to participate on the international stage, and the vast majority of them take full advantage of this opportunity’. (James 1984, 17)

He further developed three features of sovereign statehood: sovereignty needs to be *legal*, *absolute*, and *unitary* (James 1999, 462). With *legal,* he means that a state needs to be constitutionally independent of any other state and that its constitution cannot be subordinated to any other power. This implies that the power of a state, the strength of its armed forces or of its economic capacity, are immaterial to fulfil James’ condition of constitutionality (1986, 40). James also underlines that international law is irrelevant in determining the sovereign status of a state, as it coordinates the dealings of sovereign states between each other but does not make states sovereign. On the other hand, international recognition of sovereign peers is important, but legally speaking, domestic constitutional law determines a state’s sovereignty more so than international law (1986, 40). This line of argument closely maps with the domestic focus of neoclassical realist or liberal theory of International Relations as it places the origins of government power at the heart of the nation-state.

With the need for *absolute* sovereignty, James highlights that states can only be sovereign or not, there are no partially-sovereign states by his definition (1986, 47). James uses the word *absolute* to indicate that governments’ rule must be supreme to all powers in its territory though that does not mean governments need to oversee all matters. For example, a sovereign government may of its own accord decide to leave the governance of its currency or trade policy to an international body, such as the EU. This decision does not make it less sovereign; it remains the supreme decision-making power within its territory and maintains its independence internationally despite having outsourced parts of its responsibilities — a noteworthy distinction with a view to the integration of military capabilities with international partners.

However, governments must not rule supreme over all matters in their territory. It only applies to the fact that the status of being sovereign cannot be subdivided. Finally, James considers *unity* to be an important feature of sovereignty (1986, 50). A state’s constitutional independence or sovereignty must be unitary, and even if one investigates different aspects of sovereignty, such as a state’s external or internal sovereignty, it must not be forgotten that one would not be sovereign without the other (1986, 50). James took great care in describing the most common characteristics of sovereign states to identify potential additional conditions that need to be met for a state to be sovereign. He notes that all sovereign states maintain a territory that is inhabited and self-governed but points out that not all such states are sovereign (1984, 3).

With the latter commentary, James circumscribed the idea of autonomy which also features in the definition of Brown:

> '…the distinguishing feature of international political theory, which is that it deals with the implications of a world in which there are multiple political units, each claiming to be, in some strong sense, autonomous…' (2002, 4).

Brown also highlights that it has not just been a constructivist undertaking to help sovereignty re-emerge as a critical concept in political science; realist publications like those of Stephen Krasner have equally helped elevate the debate on sovereignty against the backdrop of increasing European integration and 'the putative onset of globalization' (2002, 4).

Brown defined sovereignty in the international system as 'the absence of an authoritative central institution' (Brown 2002, 5). Comparing it to a federation of states, he underlines, similar to James, that the constitutional-legal dispute settlement of a federation of states is inherently different from the anarchical network of states in the international community (Brown 2002, 6). Though he concedes that exceptions exist, institutions such as the International Criminal Court, have state-like power, albeit limited, that only affect certain individuals, a development that has been particularly pronounced in the EU. This represents a conflation of the domestic and international realms, which Brown argues in his idea of international political theory. In a sovereign state system, the rights of states are defended by means of political influence (e.g. by diplomacy or militarily if necessary), but in the domestic or federal system, these rights are defended within the political-legal/constitutional structure of the country in question, with one ultimate authority (Brown 2002, 7–8). To summarise, Brown contests and cross-examines the existence of boundaries in the international system to develop international political theory. Conventional political theorists, who are concerning themselves with the same questions of rights and justice, are constrained in Brown's opinion by the very notion of sovereignty that divides the world into *them and us* (Brown 2002, 10).

For my thesis, Brown's publication is of relevance not because of his call to rearrange the analytical toolbox of political theory but because of his lucid explanation of the world of sovereign states versus the world of domestic politics, which shows how important the notion of sovereignty is for political science as a whole. While sovereignty itself might be challenged in modern times, it remains a defining concept in the international system of multiple units and is likely to remain such because as Brown observed: 'the vision of a politics that is all-embracing would imply the absence of any kind of scarcity, which hardly seems to be a sensible starting point' (2002, 10).

James took great care in describing how governments refer to the concept of sovereignty and what conditions are relevant for sovereign statehood while Brown focused more on the political theoretical aspects of the sovereign state system versus the authority structures in domestic

political systems. The following section will now turn to the analysis of a selection of International Relations scholars who have taken different views as to how to comprehend sovereignty in modern times. Both Stephen Krasner and Robert Jackson have contributed important observations to this discussion.

Krasner famously took the Hobbesian definition and dissected it to suggest four types of sovereignty: 1) *Legal Sovereignty*, the recognition of a state's de jure 'independent territorial entity', for example by international organisations or other states, 2) *Interdependence Sovereignty*, the ability of a state to control the flow of goods, services, and ideas across its borders, 3) *Domestic Sovereignty*, the de facto ability of a state to exert control within its own territory, and finally 4) *Westphalian Sovereignty*, the right of a state to determine and defend its domestic authority structures autonomously and independent of external influence (1999, 3).

Krasner's approach offers a helpful view of the concept as it highlights important characteristics of sovereignty and categorises them into aspects that make up a whole while still being independent of each other. States might check the box on one or more of these characteristics of sovereignty but not all of them; also, one characteristic of sovereignty might be strengthened at the expense of another (1999, 4). He cites Somalia in the 1990s as the 'unfortunate example' of a state that lacked interdependence sovereignty despite checking the boxes on all three other types of sovereignty (1999, 4).

Despite being a commonly cited explanation of sovereignty, Krasner's four-way approach has failed to win the approval of his peers, in large part because his definition is strongly shaped by a realist understanding of International Relations. Daniel Philpott criticised that interdependence sovereignty is merely about power and lacks any 'constitutional authority' (2001, 300). Krasner's assumption that a state's capacity to regulate border flows should be differentiated from its mere capacity to act within its territory has been viewed by others as a helpful differentiation (Brown 2002, 4). One could argue that it ultimately comes down to whether or not one agrees with Krasner's assumption that 'the logic of consequences trumps the logic of appropriateness' (Krasner 1999, 6; Philpott 2001, 301).

Robert Jackson, on the other hand, did highlight the constitutionality of sovereignty that Philpott found missing in Krasner's work:

> 'Sovereignty is a distinctive configuration of state authority. […] Governmental supremacy and independence is that distinctive configuration of state authority that we refer to as 'sovereignty'. It is vested in the highest offices and institutions of states as defined by constitutional law: kings, presidents, parliaments, supreme courts, etc. It is also vested in the independence of states: their political and legal insulation from foreign governments as acknowledged by international law. (R. Jackson 2013, 6)

Overall, Jackson's definition follows a more legalistic approach. He even cites the UN Charter's Article 2 that highlights 'equal sovereignty, territorial integrity, and non-intervention' of all members and states whose sovereignty is vested by constitutional law (2013, 8). Similar to Philpott, he calls out Krasner's definition of sovereignty as misguided because of its 'conflation of authority and power' (2013, 14). He goes on to explain that this conflation of the two concepts is due to an anachronistic world view of times when states used their power to impose authority over other states (2013, 16). He argues that in contemporary politics, an international legal system maintains a normative framework which allows states to retain sovereignty despite being weak. In Jackson's definition of sovereignty, the capability of a state to defend itself or exert power internally is not linked to it being sovereign (2013, 16).

Furthermore, Jackson also aligns with the widely understood description of sovereignty, as he describes sovereignty: 'as an authority that is supreme in relation to all other authorities in the same territorial jurisdiction, and that is independent of all foreign authorities' (2013, 10). Interestingly, another overlap in both Jackson and Krasner's work is their take on the future of sovereignty: they both predicted the increasing need to share sovereignty, an interesting prediction with relevance to my research question (Krasner 2005; R. Jackson 2013).

In 'The Case for Shared Sovereignty', Krasner talks about: 'the creation of institutions for governing specific issue areas within a state—areas over which external and internal actors voluntarily share authority', indicating two or more powerful negotiating parties that task a third entity with the execution of a duty normally associated with their sovereignty (2005, 76). Jackson, on the other hand, talks about a rearrangement of 'political and legal authority on the planet', hinting at a global institutional arrangement (2013, 113). Incidentally, Krasner and Jackson are not the only authors who concerned themselves with the sharing of sovereignty or pooling of authority. The European Union represents an interesting case study that has been thought to pool the sovereignty of its members, a trend widely discussed in International Relations literature (e.g. Mcnamara and Meunier 2002; Wallace 1999, and others). Furthermore, constructivist theoretical approaches highlighted the evolving nature of sovereignty and have gone as far as to suggest that the norms of nations shape the very meaning of sovereignty, Alexander Wendt described the sovereign states thus as 'an ongoing accomplishment of practice, not a once-for-all creation of norms that somehow exist apart from practice.' (1992, 413)

Moving Beyond Sovereignty

The review of sovereignty and description of its fluid definitions provides an overview of the different attributes associated with the concept and the meaning associated in various definitions. It is a discussion around the range and limits of government power. Its purpose is to

demonstrate what it is that governments are sharing when they decide to integrate military capabilities. These attributes of power and sovereignty are affected when governments integrated their militaries with foreign partners. For example, domestic politics and the constitutionality of a state's authority, as highlighted by multiple authors, take on a central role for my research (e.g. R. Jackson 2013; James 1986; Philpott 2001). However, so does the authority and power to execute said authority as prioritised in Krasner's analysis of sovereignty (Krasner 1999). When operational defence capabilities are integrated, I will show later that domestic political preferences are often a hidden impetus for the decision to cooperate.

The authority of a government or parliament to share control and the right of its armed forces to execute coercive force are two further attributes of sovereignty highlighted in the academic debate that takes on an important meaning for my research topic. It is the aspect of autonomous decision-making of governments that was highlighted by Jackson and Brown that is being shared among governments when they decide to integrate parts of their armed forces (R. Jackson 2013, 6; 2002, 4).

However, while the scholarly debate offers the necessary theoretical foundation of the concept of sovereignty, its terminology lacks precision when analysing the foreign policy decisions by the German and Dutch governments. Sovereignty represents the intellectual foundation of my analysis but only in an abstract sense. Therefore, I have identified the terminology of *core state powers* as a functional and applicable definition to specifically research and assess the sovereign powers of governments that are shared when integrating their military capabilities (Genschel and Jachtenfuchs 2014). Following the analysis of other research approaches, I explain how I arrived at this decision and why core state powers rather than sovereignty are a better description to analyse the dependencies governments create with a foreign partner when they decide to pursue highly integrated defence cooperation agreements.

Core State Powers

How does the concept of core state powers differ from sovereignty, and why is it important to this thesis (Genschel and Jachtenfuchs 2014)? Whether one agrees with Hobbes and thinks of sovereignty as 'supreme authority within a territory' or whether one subscribes to the various other definitions of sovereignty as discussed above, all strive to be as all-encompassing as possible (Thomson 1995, 219). This makes for an excellent intellectual exercise, to contemplate the many directions sovereignty has evolved; however, such overarching definitions are limiting for a detailed analysis of those powers that governments are sharing with each other when integrating military capabilities. In this section, I argue that the functional aspects of sovereignty, the sovereign powers that allow governments to control their armed forces are what is most relevant for the examination of defence cooperations in this thesis.

Control over these core state powers is what governments agree to share with their foreign partners. The core state power terminology struck me as particularly applicable for this task as these powers are what allows a government to govern and execute on its policy decisions.

Genschel and Jachtenfuchs defined core state powers as: 'coercive force, public finance, and public administration' (2014, 9). If one were to visualise these powers and sovereignty, core state powers would fall within the larger Venn-diagram of sovereignty, as depicted in the figure below. In German, there is a word for such core state powers, *Hoheitsaufgaben*, which broadly translates to *sovereign responsibilities*. This aspect is what differentiates core state powers from the overarching concept of sovereignty, which enjoys a much more expansive definition, as highlighted in the earlier sections of this chapter.

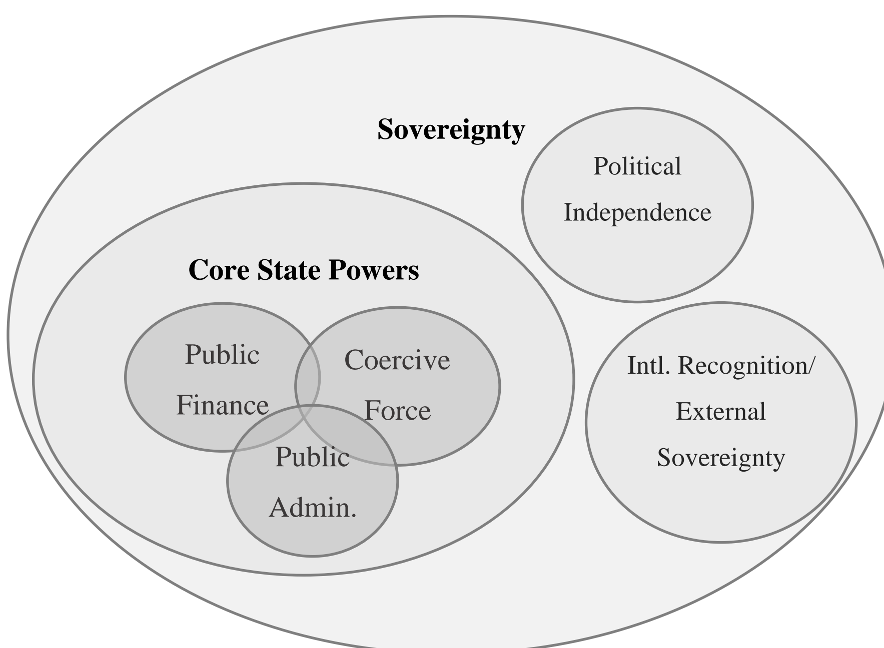

Figure 5: A simplified view of sovereignty and its relationship to core state powers.

Much of the scholarly debate on sovereignty focuses on the state's independence, the legitimacy of its government from a constitutional point of view, its international recognition, or ability to execute its authority (e.g. Krasner 1999; R. Jackson 2013; Philpott 2001; Bartelson 2011). These aspects are of interest in capturing the meaning of sovereignty, but they are not descriptive of the functions within a government that retains authority and executes or enforces policy decisions. Kuhn and Nicoli wrote that 'the key issue here is the extent and exclusivity of control over coercive, fiscal or administrative capacity that the state commands' to describe these functions of the government (2020, 8).

As I wish to explain a government's control of its military and the effectiveness of its military capabilities when engaging in defence integration, these functional aspects are critically

important. The definitions of core state powers allow for such a break-down of sovereign powers by type and functionality.

Sovereignty's broad definitions and continuous development in the field of International Relations represent a concept too vague to rely on as a fundamental building block for my research methodology. In fact, sovereignty is frequently redefined in academia or, as the following example shows, even by governments:

> 'The British (English) used sovereignty to separate themselves from the medieval Catholic world (Latin Christendom). Then they used it to build an empire that encircled the globe. Then they used it to decolonize and thereby create a multitude of new states.' (R. Jackson 1999, 9)

To avoid such ambiguity and all-encompassing definitions of sovereignty, I found core state powers particularly applicable to solve the research puzzle of my thesis. Another way of differentiating the two concepts is Michael Mann's idea that most definitions of the state can be grouped into an 'institutional' view on the state, as proposed by Weber, or a 'functional' view of the state (1984, 187–88). While institutionalist analyses look at 'what a state looks like', meaning its territorial borders, its institutions and personnel, and its monopoly of authority, functional analyses take a view on 'what the state does' (Mann 1984, 187–88).

The scholarly debate on sovereignty resembles an institutionalist view of the state in many instances. For example, Krasner's differentiation between the four types of sovereignty solely focuses on what a sovereign state looks like on paper (Krasner 1999, 3). It does not explain what responsibilities or tasks a government needs to perform to execute its authority but to understand how sovereign powers are shared, it helps to analyse both dimensions. The core state power definition of Genschel and Jachtenfuchs; they differentiate between the functions of the government which can then be read in the context of an institutional understanding of the state:

> 'States losing control of the monopoly of force, suffering from fiscal incapacity or lacking a bureaucracy of minimal effectiveness are usually considered failed states while inadequate state action in, say, poverty reduction, environmental protection, or public education merely signifies policy failure. Apparently, coercive force, public finance, and public administration are constitutive of states in ways that other policy functions of the state are not. It thus makes sense to consider them as core powers of the state.' (Genschel and Jachtenfuchs 2014)

The figure below outlines a selection of the core state powers associated with the state's executive, legislative, and judiciary branches, what they are tasked with and their underlying responsibilities.

Core state powers

Public Administration	Coercive Force	Finance
Citizenship & Migration	Internal Security	Finance & Money
Foreign Policy	Defence Policy	Issue Debt
Judiciary	Operational Defence Capabilities	Raise Taxes
Domestic Policy	Industrial Defence Capabilities	
	Defence Policy Capabilities	

Figure 6: A representative figure depicting a simplified overview of the three core state powers and some of their underlying government functions and applications. thesis focus marked dark

This outline of core state powers in the figure above attempts to differentiate the various powers of a government and place the core state power of *coercive force* in context. However, the absence of other regulatory powers which are typically fulfilled by governments should be noted. Genschel and Jachtenfuchs set aside the various integrational patterns surrounding peripheral powers of the state, such as tariffs or environmental law, which have both already largely been transferred to European Union institutions. Since I am reviewing the integration of military capabilities, the core state power of coercive force is most relevant, although military integration also affects other powers, as I will discuss later.

The core state power of coercive force might be compared to the concept of the monopoly of violence, an important aspect of sovereignty, the relevance of which was first described by Bodin and Hobbes in the 17th century (1986; 1996). For most democratically-elected governments, the electorate decided to transfer this core state power to their government to enforce laws, protect the country's borders, deter foreign threats, and to project power internationally as part of the government's diplomatic toolbox. Therefore, the power of coercive force can include domestic law enforcement, border control, intelligence/security services, and other public safety functions that are the responsibility of governments. For my research, these domestic public safety responsibilities are of lesser importance as they are seldom related to the military defence capabilities of states in the conventional sense. While police organisations also cooperate across borders, such cross-border cooperation between domestic security actors is not the focus of my research project.

The aspect of coercive force that is relevant is concerned with the defence capabilities of the state, those armed forces which are tasked with the defence of the nation, deterrence, and projection of power. For Germany and the Netherlands, their armed forces are tasked with operating abroad or for territorial defence. While some militaries support police forces' anti-

terror units, reinforce riot control, or perform other limited domestic law enforcement roles, these are again not a focus of my research. Furthermore, the capabilities of armed forces are largely reliant on three parts: defence policy, defence industry (often technological or engineering) capabilities, and operational defence capabilities.

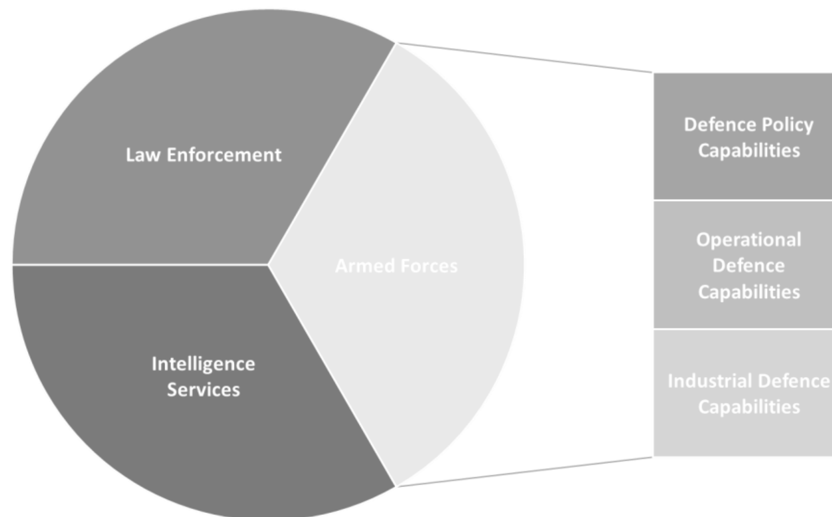

Figure 7: The coercive force circle

These three parts in the above figure represent an analysis of Genschel and Jachtenfuch's definition, and with it, I seek to explain the key government functions that are fulfilled by the armed forces' contribution to the core state power of coercive force.

<u>*The Value of Core State Powers*</u>

Historically, the value of core state powers has been high, and most governments have tried to solidify their control over them before extending their reach into any peripheral activities. The Roman Empire went to great lengths to establish its right to mint money, defend its territory, and administer citizenship (Duncan-Jones 1994, 33–63). Bartolini, who analysed small European states in the Middle-Ages found that states knew very well that the 'military, tax, juridical, and economic subsystems' needed to be controlled and centralized to maintain sovereignty, essentially, the same government functions highlighted in Genschel and Jachtenfuchs' definition of core state powers (Bartolini 2007, 60; Genschel and Jachtenfuchs 2014, 9).

Bartolini writes that the execution of government responsibilities was far more complicated for governments in his historical case studies to exercise their core state powers (2007, 63). However, governments today equally face obstacles that obfuscate or challenge core state powers. Governments have developed remarkably diverse relationships with foreign partners

that redefine their core state powers. These range from complete control over a military capability, to shared capabilities and highly integrated structures, to the outsourcing of some government powers. These unique approaches are often shaped by numerous factors, including but not limited to a state's unique history, its geographic location, and its economic and demographic profile. In the end, the way in which governments manage their core state powers also offers a glimpse into how much they value them. Some powers might be in dire need of preservation, and hence, sharing of these remains essential. Others might be considered of lower importance at the time and outsourced to a supranational institution.

Furthermore, international cooperation often requires that states exercise selected core state powers jointly or in a coordinated manner (e.g. members of the Eurozone). Technological advances have made it possible for capital and labour to move swiftly across different jurisdictions, making it increasingly more difficult to tax or regulate corporations (Corkery et al. 2013, 5). These examples are a first indication as to how modern states have needed to develop a different appreciation and relationship to core state powers over time. Hence, the way governments exercise their core state powers has also evolved significantly throughout history.

Additionally, governments are used to defending their rights to exercise their power in the international arena, either militarily or by practising skilled diplomacy. How governments defend their core state powers today also advances our understanding of how much they value them and why they decide to share some of them if necessary. To assess the challenges that influence the value of core state powers, I discuss a few of the most frequently cited challenges in the following section (though, in some cases, these challenges also represent opportunities). While an event, such as a foreign invasion, clearly challenges a state's territory and therefore its ability to exercise its core state powers, others, such as the globalisation of international trade, digitalisation, or memberships in international organisations may be a double-edged sword that might allow less influential states to punch above their weight or place them at the mercy of larger more influential players in the international community (Sexton 2019).

The Value of Core State Powers to Governments

Core state powers are crucial government functions at the heart of government activity. These 'key functions of sovereign government include monetary and fiscal affairs, defence and foreign policy, citizenship and internal security' (Genschel and Jachtenfuchs 2016, 2). In this section, I will discuss why and how governments value these core state powers and how at times external circumstances challenge these sovereign powers of governments. While it is difficult to develop a one-size-fits-all valuation of core state powers, the discussion will offer important context supporting my analysis of why governments take the decision to share their core state powers. It finds that the value of core state power to governments is hard to overstate and that despite a

myriad of modern challenges that try to chip away at government control, politicians seek to ensure their grip on core state powers (James 1999, 458).

The behaviour of other states and domestic or environmental dynamics can severely impact the core state powers of governments (Krasner 1995, 117). Such challenges can increase the value of one state power or devalue another overnight. For an easier overview, I have categorised modern challenges to core state powers in four overarching categories: International Organisations, the European Union (deserving of its own category), Global Challenges, and lastly Foreign Aggression and Domestic Disorder.

International Organisations (excluding the EU)

States tend to confer a fraction of their core state powers to international organisations either by joining organisations as voting members or by signing treaties which imply commitments to transfer certain core state powers. These treaties are then reviewed and accepted as legally binding by the international organisation, Krasner refers to these agreements as 'contractual' compromises of sovereignty (Krasner 1995, 117). The list of international organisations established since the Second World War is long. However, the missions and purpose of such organisations have different implications for different countries. For example, the 48 landlocked member states of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) can hardly claim that the organisation interferes greatly with their core state powers (Paleri 2014, 77). Other states, for example, those pressured to raise their defence spending to meet the two per cent NATO spending goal, are clearly experiencing a very different pressure on their sovereign decision-making powers because of their membership in NATO.

The United Nations, clearly the most prominent international organisation, has since its inception, fought off criticism that its policy decisions have a severe impact on sovereignty and hence on the core state powers of governments (e.g. Makinda 1998). Particularly, since the *responsibility to protect* became a prominent justification to legitimate foreign military interventions to provide security to the people of conflict-torn countries, debates about UN challenges to states' sovereignty gained in popularity. Several examples exist, one being UN Security Council Resolution 940 in 1994 which was used by the United States and its allies to initiate 'Operation Uphold Democracy' to topple the Haitian dictator Raoul Cédras who refused to accept his loss in a nationwide election (Makinda 1996, 158). This specific UN Security Council Resolution was interpreted by some UN member states, including China and Brazil, to be a direct violation of a state's sovereignty, effectively stripping the Haitian government of their core state powers.

To this day, the voting behaviour of the People's Republic of China at the United Nations can be interpreted as being largely driven by the motivation to avoid any legal precedence which

might justify a military intervention like the one referenced above (Reilly and Gill 2000, 44). Sarooshi observes:

> 'A State may wish to object in a persistent manner to the way in which delegated powers are being exercised within an organization precisely in order to prevent any future rule of custom that may result from the organization's acts binding the State and thus constraining its unilateral exercise of powers outside the context of the organization' (Sarooshi 2007, 116)

Such voting behaviour is equally relevant within the structure of other international bodies, depending on their organisational structure and position vis-à-vis the international rule of law. However, the United Nations is certainly the organisation which faces the most daunting task of balancing the broadest possible preferences of most of the world's governments without offending the ideology and political views of each member states' government. On the one hand, it can severely curtail the core state powers of any of its members (e.g. UN Security Council Resolution 2397 against North Korea).[19] On the other hand, it is also one of the weakest international organisations to do so because it requires the agreement of numerous other member states with significantly different political agendas and ideologies. The UN only represents a true challenge to core state powers once it manages to overcome such internal opposition.

Other international organisations, such as the WTO, impinge on a more specific subset of core state powers. The agreements struck under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), and the following WTO treaty curtails member states' core state power of public administration, specifically as it relates to trade regulations (e.g. customs and tariffs) or economic policies (e.g. government subsidies). Unlike the UN though, there is no powerful Security Council or General Assembly which reviews the policy decisions of single member states but rather a judiciary enforcement mechanism which controls member states and their adherence to the agreed-upon treaties.

Often the WTO is described as 'the most powerful international juridical institution in the world today' (J. H. Jackson 2008, 437). The reason for this statement is the organisation's powerful dispute settlement body which has been tasked by the WTO's members to resolve any differences in the interpretation of the organisation's agreements. This dispute settlement system is the enforcing mechanism of the organisation's treaties and is activated each time a member accuses one of its peers of violating the WTO's guidelines. Effectively, joining member states curtail their own core state power of public administration by agreeing to limit

[19] Unanimously adopting resolution 2397 (2017), the Council limited the country's imports of refined petroleum to 500,000 barrels for 12 months starting on 1 January 2018, with crude oil capped at the current levels for that period.' (United Nations 2018)

their policy-making, and in case they deviate from these agreements, the dispute settlement body can enforce penalties against behaviour that is inconsistent with membership obligations (Palmeter 2005, 89). However, all this is in return for preferential trading arrangements with the world's largest trading blocs.

According to Jackson, an ongoing debate revolves around the question 'how to balance these international goals [of the WTO] with other important goals which may be better enhanced by more traditional *nation-state sovereignty* thinking, such as protection of democracy, or in some cases protection of human rights' (J. H. Jackson 2008, 452). Here, he highlights an overlapping concern faced by many nation-states with membership in international organizations: a trade-off between national policy preferences (e.g. human rights, environmental protection, or trade policies) and finding agreement with a wide range of member states.

While the WTO relies on its key treaties to guide its members' trade policy decisions, one of the UN's subsidiaries, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), supports its members by lending money to governments which run into balance-of-payment difficulties. Membership alone will not challenge the ability of most IMF members to enact their core state powers; however, once a government runs into financial difficulties and decides to apply for debt support, it will only receive support in exchange for austere policy measures which encourage saving and reduces government investments (Dreher, Sturm, and Vreeland 2015). The many vocal critics of the IMF repeatedly highlight the limitations of core state powers faced by governments relying on the IMF's support, often referred to as 'IMF conditionality' in order to receive continued disbursements of the loans, governments are expected to comply with specific policy conditions (Dreher, Sturm, and Vreeland 2015, 121).

Examples where IMF conditionality has impacted governments' control over their monetary and economic policies abound. The East Asian Financial Crisis in 1997 or the more recent European Sovereign Debt Crisis in 2009 both represent examples in which countries, such as Indonesia or Greece, were forced to adapt austere policy reforms in exchange for continued loan disbursements by the IMF. However, governments agreed to such curtailment of their decision-making powers in exchange for maintaining economic stability. In most cases, the opportunity costs to not opt for an IMF bailout are staggeringly high and would paralyse a government's ability to act at all. In the end though IMF membership is optional, and it is up to the government of each member state to accept the IMF's offer or to decline.

One organisation which is quite different from those reviewed above is NATO. Rather than being inclusive, NATO is an exclusive alliance of European and North American states which draws its legitimacy and strength from the commitments made by its member states to the alliance. In comparison to the UN or EU, the alliance can hardly be described as challenging the

core state powers of its member states; on the contrary, it is often heralded as the premier security alliance which strengthens the independence of its member states (Horst 2019; EWB 2019). Nevertheless, one could argue that the obligations set forth in the alliance's founding treaty also have an impact on the core state powers of its member states, as for example in the case of an Article V attack, the commitment of each member state to come to the defence of another member under attack. This means that members are asked to dedicate a sizable amount of their financial resources to their armed forces regardless of other policy preferences. Even within this treaty document of an alliance whose very purpose it is to defend all its members, there is no automation to aid the other states, only an implicit understanding of trust, and this is how deeply rooted the understanding of sovereignty and core state powers is with governments (NATO 1949).

This commitment, to protect one another and dedicate the budget to maintain this capability, indirectly limits a state's core state powers and can impact a government's budget authority. Again though, this trade-off has been made by many states in return for increased security. The ultimate decision for both budget and provision of military capabilities rests with the state. Additionally, few states have one-dimensional sets of preferences, and most states navigate their responsibilities in international organisations and treaty commitments in order to generate a best-outcome for their unique situation (Sarooshi 2007, 7). Other states, such as Ireland, Switzerland, and Austria, have intentionally declined to join NATO (and selected other international organisations) to avoid commitments that might limit their sovereign decision-making powers (Kilroy 1998).

The challenges to core state powers because of states' membership in international organisations is still several steps removed from the commitments made by governments which decide to integrate their operational defence capabilities. As much of the literature on the topic indicates, membership in international organisations poses limited challenges to core state powers. Often states clash with international organisations temporarily when they deviate from agreed-upon rules which seldom results in punishment; however, this is hardly noteworthy in comparison to the binding commitments in integrated military capabilities.

When compared to operational defence capability integration, the commitments made by governments to international organisations are distinctively different as they are enshrined in international agreements in which the organisation (thanks to the support of all its members) is almost always the mere agent on behalf of the member states. In bi- or multilateral defence integration agreements countries agree to share part of their core state power, which is different from delegating it temporarily to an international body. They are essentially betting on compliance by their partner to uphold a military capability to protect their nation rather than just

assigning control to an agency to make policy suggestions on topics like trade or international aid.

The European Union

As my research looks at two of the European Union's member states, it seemed appropriate to investigate the EU's relationship with core state powers of its member in more detail. Compared to other international organisations, the EU's unique structure allows for far deeper integration between member states as well as transfers of core state powers to its institutional bodies. The gravitational pull of the EU is in fact so strong that even governments of non-member states yield to its regulatory powers (e.g. Switzerland). It is not surprising that within the fields of International Relations and European Studies, a significant amount of time is dedicated to theories of European integration. Understanding the power structures and relationships within the EU means understanding what happens to the core state powers of its members. Intergovernmentalism, neofunctionalism, and other theories seek to explain the process of integration within the EU, but they also describe why and how core state powers are redistributed between stakeholders (e.g. Rosamond 2005; Moravcsik 1997).

Genschel and Jachtenfuchs highlight how core state powers of member states in the fields of Military Security, Fiscal and Monetary Policy, and Public Administration are integrated beyond the more obvious economic aspects of European integration (2014). Importantly, the authors note that the standard view in political science assumes that the EU only integrates non-essential state powers in its role as a 'multi-level regulatory polity' but that in reality the organisation directly or indirectly assumes many higher-level state powers beyond just those policy areas commonly perceived to be EU prerogatives (Genschel and Jachtenfuchs 2014, 2).

The EU treaties following the Treaty of Maastricht have allowed member states to opt-out of specific provisions within the EU which allowed the EU to begin the integration of core state powers in a differentiated manner (Schimmelfennig, Leuffen, and Rittberger 2015, 765). Once core state powers, such as the protection of borders (i.e., the Schengen Agreement) or monetary policy (i.e., the Eurozone) began to be negotiated selected states (i.e., the UK or Denmark) noticed the challenge these new treaties represented for their control over their core state powers and decided to retain control.

The EU's challenge to core state powers remains a political issue in all member states, especially during trying times when a concerted effort promises a better response than individual action. One of those times was the Sovereign Debt Crisis when the ECB's monetary policy was cause for great debate among member states and led to hearings in front of national constitutional courts, for example in Germany, to evaluate to what extent the EU is in fact allowed to exercise this core state power and whether it indirectly hurts the budgetary power of

national parliaments (Dahan, Fuchs, and Layus 2015). Once the sovereign debt crisis challenged the newly created European Monetary Union (EMU), it was suggested that the EU required an even greater transfer of core state power than initially anticipated to deal with the problems at hand. Today, the Eurozone countries share more of their core state power of public finance via their ECB membership than most stakeholders would have anticipated when signing EMU provisions in the Treaty of Maastricht.

The various patterns of integration observed by the many scholars in the field of European Studies speak to the ongoing negotiations between member states and the EU on how control is distributed between the two. For my thesis, the progress that has been made in recent years concerning the EU's PESCO in the fields of security and defence are of interest as such increasingly close cooperation tends to rely on the fully integrated operational defence capabilities that are the focus of this thesis (Quencez and Billon-Galland 2020). However, even if such capabilities are assigned to EU defence initiatives, the ultimate control rests with the participating member states. This differentiation is important to keep in mind as EU battle groups, for example, are not under the ultimate control of the EU as an organisation although they require approval for deployment by all member states.

Global Challenges

Apart from international organisations, governments face many other challenges which are threatening their core state powers. Among these are global phenomena such as migration or climate change, and economic changes such as digitalisation or globalisation. The latter is often studied under the banner of *global governance,* a term that appears to hint at a shift of power away from national governments (Finkelstein 1995, 365). These unique challenges to core state powers have increased with the growing interdependence of the global economy, individual mobility, and economies of scale (Ghemawat and Altman 2019). More recent examples include the global financial crisis and the refugee crisis in the greater Mediterranean.

Public administration of citizenship, the right to work, and the protection of borders are all part of a government's core state powers and are being challenged globally by an increasing number of refugees, and economic migrants as inhumane living conditions or deteriorating economic outlook uproot millions of people. The 2017 United Nations report on migration testifies that 'the number of migrants as a fraction of the population residing in high-income countries rose from 9.6 per cent in 2000 to 14 per cent in 2017' (United Nations 2017).

Globalisation and increasing economic interdependence represent equally important trends which shift the power from national governments to economic actors, such as multinational corporations or the global workforce of individuals who are following economic opportunities internationally rather than following traditional career paths domestically. As a result,

governments are competing against each other by underbidding each other's tax incentives or offering subsidies to corporations; a process commonly referred to as the 'race to the bottom' (MacRae 2017). Like migration, globalisation could be described as a force-majeure that forces the hand of governments to maintain as much control over their core state powers as possible.

Finally, technological advances are also increasingly perceived to challenge governments. The introduction of the internet multiplied global interdependence and allowed for the global exchange of services, making it harder for governments to tax sales in their jurisdiction. Equally, the development of decentralised digital currencies which are completely independent and self-regulating take on the core state power to mint money. From a technological perspective, these digital currencies have the ability to replace central banks and hence are often heralded to do just that. Even if a fraction of the global currency exchange is shifting toward this new technology, it will be significantly harder for governments to maintain control over exchange rate regimes (Hanl and Michaelis 2017, 370). However, despite all these threats to government control, states are slowly re-capturing control by regulation that ensures ultimate control can be retained. Incentives are on the way to set global taxation standards and regulate trade in services indicators that show states are ready to address these challenges (Gurría 2019).

Foreign Aggression and Domestic Disorder

Today's conflicts hardly compare in scale to the wars of the 20th century. However, foreign aggressions and domestic disorder remain acute and frequent threats to governments' core state powers. While outright invasions are less common, incursions to gain territory, resources, or to debilitate neighbouring states politically, continue to threaten governments. Recent examples include the Russian-Ukrainian conflict or the fortification of artificial islands by the Chinese government in territories considered to be international waters (Averre 2016; Fisher 2016). Domestically, independence movements or military coups challenge the very same core state powers as foreign aggressors. However, the former are likely the most direct and blatantly obvious attacks against governments' sovereign powers.

The case of Ukraine is interesting, as the country experienced not only a threat to its territorial integrity but also an attack against its 'domestic information space' as the Russian state, in this case, made use of internet bots and other technologies to undermine the Ukrainian government's ability to execute public policy (Damarad 2017). The government not only lost control over its territory but is constantly challenged on the internet and in the media and needs to defend its policy decisions against these curated disinformation campaigns.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I discussed definitions of sovereignty and highlighted the scholarly debate on the concept at the heart of the field of International Relations. I demonstrated that the concept of sovereignty is of high relevance to the field of IR as well as to governments. The discussion on sovereignty served as the theoretical foundation to explain that the concept encompasses much more than governments' control over their armed forces. This discussion set the stage for the introduction of the terminology of core state powers which I will use from here on to describe the government functions that are at risk when governments decide to create dependencies on foreign governments through highly integrated defence cooperation agreements.

I argue that the concept of *core state powers* is most applicable to analyse the empirical evidence of this thesis. They describe the functional aspects of sovereign power and control and its three categories of public administration, coercive force, and public finance. As I will demonstrate in the following chapter, these three powers best depict the government functions that are most affected by defence cooperation agreements that seek to integrate operational capabilities to a high degree. Furthermore, I examined the value of core state powers today and highlighted that many modern challenges have the power to weaken the grip of governments on their core state powers. Nevertheless, control over these continues to be fiercely defended, despite a plethora of challenges to core state powers, governments continue to highly value them because they are essential to govern their territories effectively. These findings further strengthen the saliency of the research question, which asks why governments share their core state powers with foreign powers when integrating operational military capabilities.

Part II – Dutch and German Defence Cooperation

Chapter 4: Deliberate Partner Dependencies

In the first part of this thesis, I reviewed the existing literature on defence cooperation and developed hypotheses, based on existing theoretical frameworks in International Relations, to answer why governments opt to share their core state powers. In Chapter 2, I presented an overview of the myriad of alliances and defence cooperation agreements that are concluded among governments globally, the review of these alliances and agreements showed that only a small subset of defence cooperation agreements has led to a deep integration of operational military capabilities. It is these highly integrated cooperation projects that can touch upon the sovereignty of cooperating governments. In Chapter 3, I then explained the breadth of the definition of sovereignty in International Relations literature. I argued that the concept of core state powers is a more applicable terminology to analyse the impact defence cooperation agreements have on the decision-making powers of governments. Furthermore, I demonstrated that even though many challenges to core state powers exist, governments continue to defend and assign high value to them.

With this second part of the thesis, I will now transition to the analysis of the empirical evidence collected for my research; research insights gained first and foremost from in-person interviews, government documentation, and expert publications. In this chapter, I continue the discussion on core state powers from the previous chapter but apply the concept to the two case studies and review the dependencies created by the Dutch and German government as a result of their close cooperation with foreign militaries. First, I assess the impact on each of the three core state powers discussed in Chapter 3. Then I will discuss the empirical evidence from my research interviews which indicates to what extent political decision-makers had visibility into the constraints they created for themselves and their government. Lastly, I will discuss how they handle the sharing of core state powers with their partners today.

The chapter concludes that the impact on core state powers for both governments has been substantial in almost all areas where the two militaries decided to pursue a deep integration of their armed forces. For the Netherlands, as the smaller partner nation, the reliance on Germany is far greater than the other way around. Also, I find that in most instances political decision-makers in both countries have ignored or been unaware of the implications of deeply integrating parts of their armed forces with a foreign partner and have only recently begun to find solutions

to manage their control of the joint Dutch-German military capabilities cooperatively. This is particularly the case for the core state powers of coercive force and public administration. There is, however, preliminary evidence that with regards to the core state power of public finance, governments were well aware of their commitments and might even have welcomed sharing this core state power with a partner nation.

Coercive Force – Sharing the Monopoly on Violence?

Among the three core state powers outlined in the earlier chapters, the control of the monopoly on violence, or coercive force, is likely the most tangible government prerogative with regards to its national security. In this section, I analyse the procedures of the Dutch and German governments for the deployment of their militaries and discuss examples when the independent and sovereign control over armed forces was challenged by commitments made to defence cooperation partners.

Every state manages control over the core state power of coercive force differently. Often, the constitution is a good starting point to understand how the executive is supposed to control the armed forces. Additionally, legislative debates and customary political procedures help refine one's understanding of how parliaments and opposition parties interpret the law and audit the use of coercive force in the modern state. In Germany, the ultimate power to deploy armed forces rests with the parliament. Hence, the Bundeswehr is often described as the Parliament's armed forces (*Parlamentsarmee)* (Schade 2018, 88). Once the government decides to consider military action, it asks the MoD to prepare a mandate for deployment. This is carefully put together, often by the most senior political appointees in the MoD who use their network with parliamentary staffers to pressure-test a draft before the official mandate is dispatched to the government cabinet (Interview No. 8). Here, between the Foreign Minister, Defence Minister, and Chancellor, the mandate is approved and then forwarded to both the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committees of the Bundestag. After the consultation in these committees, the final draft is sent for debate and approval in the plenum. This parliamentary right to approve or veto military deployments is called parliamentary conditionality (*Parlamentsvorbehalt*). In Germany, the three criteria that need to be fulfilled prior to most military deployments are: 1) a UN Security Council Resolution, 2) a multilateral deployment, and 3) parliamentary approval. However, exceptions to this rule have occurred in the past, such as the Kosovo mandate which failed to achieve a UN Security Council resolution (Miskimmon 2009, 561). Also, the deployment of the German Special Forces, the *Kommando Spezialkräfte*, continues to be a prerogative of the government (Hickmann 2015; Brössler and Szymanski 2019).

As in Germany, the Dutch government is also the originator of the mandate for the deployment of its military, but unlike in Berlin, the Dutch government does not require parliamentary

approval, it retains the ultimate power to deploy the military.[20] However, in recent years, the articles of the Dutch Constitution granting the government the sole power over the country's armed forces have been re-interpreted to require more oversight and involvement of the parliament. Therefore, today's procedural custom to deploy the Dutch armed forces very much resembles the German approach (Interview No. 28). Like the German Grundgesetz, the Dutch constitution is the ultimate legal document guiding the government's control over coercive force. Procedurally, this means that the cabinet will decide on a specific mandate to deploy the armed forces and duly inform parliament in an official letter. Article 97 of the Constitution underlines this by assigning the 'supreme authority' over the armed forces to the government. It further outlines that the armed forces should be leveraged for the defence of the Netherlands as well as 'to maintain and promote the international legal order (Dutch Ministry of Interior 2018). The constitution also requires the government to inform the parliament in advance of any deployment of the Dutch armed forces. However, it does not grant a veto right to the parliament for the deployment of the military.[21] The Dutch Military Doctrine of 2013 clarifies that while the 'parliament does not officially have a right to consent, [however] an operation without a clear parliamentary majority is inconceivable' (Netherlands MoD 2013).

The Dutch government's notification to parliament does not indicate a willingness in principle to participate in an international mission (Assessment Framework 2001). The investigation may result in a positive or negative decision, and in both cases, parliament will be informed. If the government informs parliament of a positive decision to participate, a debate will follow. This exchange of views shows to what extent there is support for the decision in the House. The government also informs parliament in the event of an extension or reduction of the mission duration, change of the mandate or expansion of the area where Dutch units are active. One Dutch scholar described the situation as follows:

> 'Parliament can try to convince the government that an intended participation in an international operation is unwise or wrong. Parliament can even threaten to withdraw support for the government and pass a vote of no confidence, which would lead to the fall of the cabinet. But, even if this were to happen, Parliament cannot reverse a decision to engage the armed forces if the government wishes to do so' (Besselink 2001, 370)

[20] Constitution of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Article 97: 1. There shall be armed forces for the defence and protection of the interests of the Kingdom, and in order to maintain and promote the international legal order. 2. The Government shall have supreme authority over the armed forces. (Dutch Ministry of Interior 2018, para. 97)

[21] Constitution of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Article 96: 1. A declaration that the Kingdom is in a state of war shall not be made without the prior approval of the *States General*. 2. Such approval shall not be required in cases where consultation with Parliament proves to be impossible as a consequence of the actual existence of a state of war. 3. The two Houses of the *States General* shall consider and decide upon the matter in joint session. 4. The provisions of the first and third paragraphs shall apply mutatis mutandis to a declaration that a state of war has ceased. (Dutch Ministry of Interior 2018, para. 96)

In 1994, parliament, in fact, requested a right to participate in the decision to deploy troops which the government refused outright. In response, the government offered to inform parliament prior to any engagement, an offer accepted by parliament and which led to the introduction of Article 100 which essentially states that the government should inform parliament unless there are valid reasons to withhold this information from parliament (Besselink 2001, 369).[22]

In addition to the constitutional articles attributing control and delineating processes for the use of coercive force, the Dutch government also maintains an Assessment Framework called the *Toetsingskader* (also referred to as the Assessment Framework 2001) with evaluation criteria for participating in military operations, which was added agreed-upon in 2001 (van der Veer 2018, 54). This document has been repeatedly updated, and according to the Dutch Military Doctrine, it helps 'determine the political desirability and practical feasibility of participation by Dutch military personnel in international crisis management operations' (Netherlands MoD 2013). Within the past decade, the most notable incident that prominently displayed the extent to which Article 100, as well as the above-mentioned Assessment Framework 2001, have been leveraged to execute parliamentary oversight over the cabinet was the Committee of Inquiry on the War in Iraq. The committee, consisting of several legal scholars, concluded that Article 100 had been violated and the Assessment Framework 2001 was improperly applied; hence parliament was not informed correctly (Board of Editors 2010). However, the entire oversight process occurred years after the deployment rather than prior to the deployment of Dutch troops to Iraq.

How do these differences in control over coercive force potentially impact the control over the many shared capabilities of the two countries? Two of three Dutch Army brigades, the 11th Airmobile Brigade and the 43rd Mechanized Brigade, are today integrated into the German armed forces. This represents a large share of the Dutch land forces potentially affected by the political decision-making process in Berlin. Equally, the somewhat less strict Dutch parliamentary oversight could potentially lead to deployment decisions, such as the one to Iraq, which affect shared Dutch-German military capabilities. In the following section, I will discuss such an example and examine in more detail the powerful oversight tool of the Bundestag, referred to as parliamentary conditionality.

[22] Constitution of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Article 100: 1. The Government informs the Parliament in advance if the armed forces are to be deployed or made available to maintain or promote the international legal order. This includes the provision of humanitarian aid in the event of armed conflict. 2. The provisions of paragraph 1 may not apply if compelling reasons exist to prevent the provision of information in advance. In this event, information is supplied as soon as possible. (Dutch Ministry of Interior 2018, para. 100)

Parliamentary Conditionality and Defence Cooperation Commitments

One often-cited hurdle for defence cooperations is the German *parliamentary conditionality*, the right of the Bundestag to decide on all major deployments of the Bundeswehr, including their type, length, and scope. A former German Defence Ministry official highlighted that the country's NATO and EU partners were often perplexed by the level of detail that goes into carefully delineating the Bundeswehr's activities in their deployment mandate, and had on occasion inquired if Germany could simplify the process to speed it up (Interview No. 8). While it is not unique to Germany as, several other NATO members also require parliamentary approval to deploy their armed forces, the parliamentary conditionality granted to the Bundestag has often been perceived as a potential stumbling block in allied cooperation given the size of the planned-for contribution of the German military to NATO (Aurescu et al. 2008, 24).

In fact, the legal foundation for parliamentary conditionality has been initiated by a political debate questioning the legality of the deployment of a multinational integrated military capability, the NATO AWACS surveillance aircraft. This was decided in a verdict by the German Federal Constitutional Court on the Bundeswehr's contribution to the deployment of AWACS aircraft in 1994 (Bundesverfassungsgericht 2001).[23] The case at the time was brought forward in 1993, in response to the government's decision to allow German soldiers to participate in a NATO mission to secure the airspace above Bosnia-Herzegovina which in turn did so in support of United Nations Resolution 816.[24] Despite the NATO AWACS air wing being a fully integrated military capability with multinational participation, the German personnel working to operate the fleet of aircraft should have sought a Bundestag approval according to the Federal Constitutional Court. Since German pilots and operators make up one-third of the available aircrews and support staff their participation is critical for the full operational availability of the fleet of AWACS aircraft. Hence, NATO allies have been genuinely interested in the German debate concerning parliamentary conditionality as it has a direct impact on their airspace surveillance capability (Interview No. 8).

Since the government took the decision to participate without consulting parliament, the Liberal Democratic and Social Democratic Parties filed a complaint with the Federal Constitutional Court arguing the decision to be illegal and in opposition to Articles 115a and 87a which grant parliamentary control over deployments of the Bundeswehr. The latter was specifically relevant as the deployment was not in response to a NATO Article V attack but categorised as an out-of-area operation. The Federal Constitutional Court decided that German participation in the

[23] BVerfGE 90, 286-394 – German Federal Court of Justice Decision of the 12th of July 1994

[24] UN Security Council Resolution 816 built upon previous UN decisions concerning the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina and established a flight ban for all fixed and rotary wing aircraft over its airspace; allowing all of its members to enforce such ban with force if necessary (UN Security Council 1993)

NATO mission violated Article 87a of the Grundgesetz as the Parliament was not consulted at any time during the decision-making process. A decade later, in 2005, the Bundestag turned this decision of the Federal Constitutional Court into law by passing the *Parlamentsbeteiligungsgesetz* (Parliamentary Participation Law) which established the procedure currently used to authorise the deployment of troops. As part of this approach, the Political Department of the German MoD prepares a mandate describing in detail the deployment of Bundeswehr troops which is then presented to and voted upon by parliament. According to a former official of the German MoD, the entire process is highly politicised, and the draft of the mandate is repeatedly amended to ensure that all necessary votes are attained in parliament (Interview No. 8). This debate about the reliability of Germany as a NATO or EU ally causes a headache for the German MoD, especially because the German political and military establishment is keen on being perceived as a reliable partner in European security affairs (Interview No. 8). In fact, NATO and EU partner nations have asked Germany before, if it could grant a provisional parliamentary mandate to those troops associated with multinational military structures (Interviews No. 8 and 28). However, the court verdicts of the Federal Constitutional Court leave little doubt that such an arrangement would be illegal, given current legislative and constitutional requirements.[25] Nations that have invested in integrated operational defence capabilities with Germany are naturally more at risk of being the ‘victim’ of parliamentary conditionality, and on several occasions, this issue has been debated among the Dutch and German partners (Interviews No. 1 and 28).

Effectively, the requirement for parliamentary approval had put at risk a critical surveillance capability for NATO allies during an ongoing conflict. While at the time, the German court allowed the mission to continue it required the government to seek approval going forward, the situation is exemplary of the reliance of the Dutch armed forces, among other participants, on the German parliamentary approval process. The deployment of their own military capabilities is at the mercy of the approval of the German parliament. In 2011, the Dutch government and other NATO allies would, in fact, encounter a similar situation as in 1994, but this time their German colleagues were ordered to stay on the base. The NATO campaign in Libya, ‘Unified Protector’ was tasked to enforce a no-fly zone over Libya during the Libyan civil war, in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions. However, since the German government and parliament decided not to participate in the operation, German AWACS crews were not allowed to fly missions during the operation. Instead, the government at the time asked parliament to

[25] See for example BVerfGE 90, 286-394 - Urteil vom 12. Juli 1994 2 BvE 3/92, 2 BvE 5/93, 2 BvE 7/93, 2 BvE 8/93 - AWACS-Bundeswehreinsatz

approve an increase in German NATO contributions for Afghanistan so that non-German staffed AWACS aircraft could be freed up to fly the Libya missions (Interview No. 8).

The increasingly integrated multilateral capabilities of the Bundeswehr have even promoted a parliamentary inquiry into whether the parliamentary conditionality should be reformed to become a more reliable partner. The so-called Rühe Commission in 2014, named after and headed by the former German Defence Minister Volker Rühe, studied the legal and operational requirements to make suggestions on how to improve on the existing structure (Ruehe 2015). The commission's task was to 'investigate how the rights of Parliament can be secured on the path to increasing alliance integration' (Kunz 2015). However, in the end, the findings of the commission only advocated in favour of the current arrangements and made few suggestions for changes.

This specific aspect of German domestic politics creates a dependency for the Dutch armed forces that extends all the way into the Bundestag and goes beyond the control of the German government itself. The case of Libya, a mission that was legitimised by the UN Security Council and fulfilled all requirements for a Bundeswehr deployment failed to secure the required approval and severely affected allied surveillance capabilities, is a prime example. For example, the 1st German Rapid Reaction Forces, a military formation that also includes 2,300 Dutch military personnel as a result of bilateral defence cooperation represents one of the most agile and combat-ready fighting units of both, the Dutch and German armed forces. If a deployment becomes necessary for this unit, the Bundestag might curtail the scope of their deployments as they did in Afghanistan for the ISAF mission, these restrictions are also referred to as *rules of engagement* or among NATO members, as *caveats* (Interviews No. 6 and 7). In many instances, the Dutch caveats are significantly less restrictive, even allowing their soldiers to patrol without armoured vehicles (Radio Netherlands 2004). This could mean that the Dutch military personnel might find themselves deployed abroad with a larger partner that cannot leave the base at night, may only travel in heavily armoured convoys, and is only allowed to shoot at the enemy in the most extreme scenarios (Wätzel and Krause 2020, 329–30). Under these circumstances, the Dutch government's military either ends up being restrained in exercising the full power of its coercive force or the German government might wish to accommodate a Dutch request for looser caveats and in turn, deviate from what it considers to be a safe deployment of its forces.

Germany is not exposed to quite as much uncertainty as the Dutch government because of the government's ultimate control over the military. While Article 100 requires the parliament to be informed, the German government can orient itself on the Dutch government's preferences. Interestingly, many Dutch interview partners did acknowledge this issue, but either a) voiced

their trust that the German parliament would agree in most potential conflict scenarios with the Dutch government or b) gave examples of how the integrated capabilities and joint deployments have in the past worked around the issue of a reluctant German Parliament that strongly limits the rules of engagement of the Bundeswehr, as was the case for the Afghanistan deployment (Interviews No 11, 13, and 28). One Dutch military official explained that on occasion the two partner nations coordinate and distribute tasks with the sensitivities of German parliamentarians in mind. In effect, this means Dutch soldiers will often take on tasks that are more dangerous while German soldiers in exchange provide support in areas that require more human resources, equipment, or logistical coordination that the larger partner is better suited to provide while avoiding the dangers of conflict (Interview No. 6).

Conversely, Germany also faces the risk that as part of the Dutch Assessment Framework, the Dutch government might fail to lend its support to the deployment of Dutch-German military units. However, with a view to the past decades of military history, the Dutch have mostly fought alongside the Germans if deployed and have never not committed troops in instances where Germany decided to deploy its armed forces. Furthermore, the requirement to inform the parliament, Article 100, does not apply to the deployment of troops for missions that are responding to Article V of the NATO Treaty, Article 42.7 of the Treaty on European Union, or Article 51 of the UN Charter' (Netherlands MoD 2018, 23). The combination of a Dutch government in ultimate control over the country's coercive force, a track-record of deployments along almost every major German military campaign, and simply the reassurance of having a much larger military were the reasons for fairly limited concerns among German stakeholders when confronted with the question of Dutch reliability (Interviews No. 4, 5, and 15).

Unilateral Availability of Coercive Force?

Other than the joint deployment of Dutch-German forces, there is also the question of unilateral access to shared equipment and weapon systems. It is reasonable to assume that most deployments of either the Netherlands or Germany will occur side-by-side given their commitment to multilateral missions and requirements for mandates from at least one of the three large international organisations the EU, NATO, or the UN. Still, both countries also maintain independent security interests that might not receive priority from their partner. For example, the Netherlands' Caribbean territories are not a region that garners much interest in Berlin but always features as a potential area of conflict in the Dutch military's operational doctrines due to the instability of Venezuela (Woodard 2008).

Can either partner rely on the availability of troops and shared equipment in times of resource constraints? Both Germany and the Netherlands supply transport aircraft to the EATC in Eindhoven which are shared among all participants. Germany also shares a Joint Support Ship,

an important logistical backbone for deployments abroad and the Netherlands is leasing its entire fleet of main battle tanks from the German Army. What happens if the German Navy is deployed in the Mediterranean, a conflict breaks out in Venezuela, and the German Bundestag vetoes the deployment of German tanks to the conflict zone? How does the Dutch government respond if it wishes to deploy its troops? I presented such hypothetical scenarios to interviewees and every military officer, on the Dutch and German side, acknowledged that in such a scenario, the core state power of coercive force might suddenly be heavily curtailed. Interview partners that participated in the negotiations of the defence cooperation agreements admitted that these scenarios have not been discussed in detail at the time the MoUs were signed (Interviews 6 and 7).

Two Dutch officers responded that the limitation on the core state power of coercive force is indeed a worry that is worth considering but also pointed out that many of the Dutch-German cooperation initiatives were launched during times of heavy defence budget cuts in the Netherlands and that the only alternative to sharing one’s core state power might have been to limit one’s coercive force altogether (Interviews No. 15 and 17).

As the smaller partner, with more of its overall capability bound to the integration efforts, there have in fact been stakeholders in the Netherlands that did raise concerns with regard to the control over coercive force but not from within the government (Interview No. 28). For example, the Dutch Royal Association of Naval Officers asked the MoD how the Navy would manage the use of shared equipment; ‘…the JSS is the only Dutch supplier. Every time Germany uses the ship, the Dutch navy cannot be refuelled at sea by the JSS. This has consequences for the flexibility and skill of the fleet’ (Karremann 2016). Of course, the same is true for the Dutch Army. When it sold its entire fleet of Leopard II tanks in 2015 and began to integrate its tank crews with those of the German 1. Panzerdivision, they arranged to lease a fleet of 18 tanks from the German Bundeswehr. This, at the time, ensured the seamless integration of the Dutch tank crews with their German colleagues and eased the financial burden for both partners. When asked about the unilateral availability of this capability to the Dutch armed forces, many German interview partners were unaware of such a possibility or clearly had not considered it (Interviews No. 4, 5, and 15). However, one senior Dutch military official explained that in ongoing discussions guarantees are being made that the Dutch military may use these vehicles at their own discretion as well as a guarantee of 30 days’ worth of material supplies of components for their maintenance since during the day-to-day operation of the integrated military unit the supply chain is completely managed by German engineers (Interview No. 17).

Managing Shared Capabilities

In the two sections above, I outlined examples of the types of conflicts governments set themselves up for when agreeing to integrate parts of their armed forces with a foreign partner. Stakeholder interviews and empirical evidence have not only revealed that these concerns are warranted but also that the two governments have gone into these cooperations woefully unprepared to manage these potential conflicts of interest as they concern the control over a shared military capability. However, a group of Dutch and German parliamentarians have developed greater awareness of the impact the close cooperation has on their control over the armed forces. In 2018, closed-door meetings between the Dutch and German defence committees were initiated to discuss the question of integrated capabilities and their impact on the parliamentary oversight of the armed forces (Interviews No. 15 and 27). Having had the chance to interview some of the participating parliamentarians afterwards, I learnt that it was quickly decided to make the meeting a standing forum to improve communication between the two parliaments in matters of foreign and defence policy (Interviews No. 28, 29, and 30). One of the suggestions coming out of the meeting was to facilitate the sharing of information and intelligence prior to the deployment of Dutch-German units to ensure that both parliaments base their deployment decisions on the same information (Interview No. 28).

Those stakeholders involved from the beginning have long been lobbying for such a parliamentary exchange as they recognised the potential challenges inherent in the ever-deeper integration of military capabilities (Interviews No. 1 and 15). Regarding the unilateral availability of resources, the Dutch-German partnership has yet to encounter a true requirement from one of the governments. However, much work needs to be done to raise awareness regarding the possible unilateral use of foreign equipment. Dutch interviewees responded without hesitation and made clear that they expect full availability of forces if unilateral missions demand it, whereas German stakeholders were surprisingly unaware of the possibility for such a scenario even though they are leasing weapon systems to a partner who is ready to deploy them unilaterally if need be (Interviews No. 27 and 30).

Public Finance – Intentional Limitation of a Core State Power?

One of the government's most important core state powers, the right to direct government spending, is an often underestimated and wrongfully ignored sovereign power that is impacted by international defence cooperations. Typically, the funding of the armed forces is a wholly domestic affair; the MoD needs to vie for budgets in competition with all other ministries. This continues to be the case even when governments do decide to cooperate and integrate parts of their armed forces but with the caveat that now a significant share of the MoD's budget is essentially *promised* to a foreign partner. For example, in the German defence budget

(*Einzelpan 14*) there are hundreds of millions of euros categorised under the title 'Binding Commitments to NATO and other International Security Organisations' (Bundesfinanzministerium 2018, sec. 14). The language in this document is indicative as to how the core state power of public finance is affected by the German military's commitment to international capabilities, such as the AWACS surveillance fleet or NATO's Allied Ground Surveillance programme.

The heated debate among NATO allies about the two per cent of GDP defence budget goal is a good example as to how important budget appropriations are within alliances. The same can be said for the Dutch-German integrated military capabilities. One partner's overall commitment to defence spending and readiness to deploy affects both armed forces. If one partner's military is underfunded, it has direct implications on the readiness of the entire shared force structure. This is particularly true for projects such as the 1st German-Netherlands Corps, which is co-financed and requires both, the Netherlands and Germany, to agree on an annual budget each year (Deutscher Bundestag 1998).

Differences over finances have the potential to escalate and disrupt an otherwise functioning integrated force structure quickly. For example, a German MoD official conceded that this topic is a constant hot button issue for one of the Franco-German operational capabilities (Interview No. 4). The core state power of public finance might not be the first that comes to mind when discussing the impact of defence cooperations. After all, the stated goal of many cooperation initiatives is to preserve budgets and create financial synergies. However, with the exception of a few cooperations (such as the joint use of the Dutch Joint Support Ship), the reality is that most defence cooperations continue to require the same level of funding than prior to integrating with a foreign partner (Interviews No. 11 and 12). Not only does the integration and harmonisation of equipment require funding at the outset of the cooperation, but the increased administrative burden to set up bilateral working groups that coordinate and deepen the partnership over time also does. In the end, many bilateral units have greatly increased their combat readiness and interoperability but have seldom generated substantial costs savings for their governments (Interview No. 15).

In Chapter 2, I have shown that the Dutch and German government have signed an increasing number of defence cooperation agreements in recent years, these initiatives have essentially helped the participating units to shield their defence budgets from future cuts (Interview No. 17). To cut the budgets of a tightly integrated bi- or multilateral military unit would always require an embarrassing discussion with one's partner and often involve the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in addition to the MoD (Interview No. 22). However, at the same time, it is exactly this concern that represents the limitation to the core state power of public finance. The Dutch and

German parliaments have the sovereign budgetary authority in their respective countries, but as a result of closely integrated defence capabilities, they are constricting their control over this core state power.

Military personnel in both Germany and the Netherlands are keenly aware of the fact that their governments have agreed to share the core state power of public finance and, in interviews, have not hidden their appreciation of the fact that their units are benefiting from this dynamic (Interview No. 18). Understandably, personnel directly benefiting from the protection of budget cuts will support such measures, but why should those whose powers are directly affected and limited by these G2G agreements agree to such a limitation? One Dutch parliamentarian told me that ‘the cooperation limits my budgetary decision-making power as a parliamentarian, but I can live with that in exchange for more effective operational capabilities’ (Interview No. 28).

Another reason for agreeing to such intentional constraints of one’s power might be that the motives of the MoD, the members of the Defence Committee, and the government align (Interview No. 26). If all of these parties wish to protect the defence budget from future budget cuts and have made the decision to cooperate, they should not object to enter into deeply intertwined cooperation agreements with international partners. In the following chapter I will discuss the goals and motives of these political stakeholders in both Germany and the Netherlands, and discuss whether there is reason to believe that the two governments decided to share the core state power of public finance with the full knowledge that the committed funds would be much harder to revoke in the future.

Public Administration – Blissful Ignorance?

The third core state power affected by the deep integration of two or more militaries is public administration. Public administration is representative of the government’s prerogative to coordinate and implement policy decisions, for the military domain, the implementation of foreign policy decisions is particularly important.

Before a deployment of the military is voted on in the German or Dutch cabinets, the countries’ Foreign and Defence Ministries need to analyse and debate a security threat and develop a policy recommendation for their superiors. This decision-making process falls under the core state power of public administration, the execution of public policy which directs the action of government (Interview No. 3). The empirical evidence shows that the integration of military capabilities requires that governments share this core state power to a degree. For example, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Berlin generally assumes that the foreign and defence policy goals of the two countries would continue to develop along similar tracks in the foreseeable future (Interview No. 21). However, having mapped the responses from all interviewees and

compared their statements with government communications and foreign policy statements it quickly became clear to me that, at least under the current Dutch and German governments, there are a range of foreign policy differences visible that disprove the suggestion of my interview partners in the German MFA. For example, the strong US-orientation of the Dutch government in the question of military and defence policy versus a German reorientation toward the EU. Similarly, in other foreign policy questions, such as relations with Russia, the loss of hundreds of Dutch lives as a result of the downing of the MH17 passenger jet over Ukraine has led to a stark deterioration of its relations with Russia while the German government continues to retain a role of arbiter to the West (Meister 2014; Van der Togt 2015). In short, militaries are a foreign policy tool and if governments share control over an integrated military unit stark deviation in foreign policy may result in a conflict of interest.

For those stakeholders in charge of developing foreign and defence policies, there are essentially two risks worthy of further investigation. I refer to them in the following sections as *threat interpretation* and *policy path dependency*, the former being the government's risk of independently identifying and interpreting a security threat, and the latter being the risk of pursuing a foreign and defence policy that is guided by the partner's decisions or commitments rather than one's own.

Threat Interpretation

The G2G agreement signed between the Dutch and German governments for Project Taurus talks about the 'intertwined integration' between German unit A and Dutch unit B (Netherlands and German MoD 2016). The language here is indicative of the degree of integration and suggests that more likely than not; the integrated units would be deployed together rather than separately. Some integration efforts might create a higher level of dependency than others, but they all have in common that one is to a degree dependent on the decisions of a foreign government, which might seriously upset one's operational capabilities if disagreement surfaces between its participants. Hence, ideally, the two governments align their understanding of what constitutes a threat. The categorisation of security threats, especially those that prompt the use of coercive force, involve the foreign and defence policy professionals of a country as well as its elected officials. For example, if Dutch and German decision-makers were to disagree if Article 42.7 of the Treaty on European Union should trigger the same response as NATO's Article V, this could impair the deployment of Dutch-German units until they have been disbanded and re-organised with purely national military formations.

The categorisation of a threat is important. For example, the German government is constitutionally bound to not engage in an offensive war. A pre-emptive military engagement would only be allowed if an immediate threat to national security can be proven. Pre-emptive

engagements, such as those allowed under US national security legislation in instances when it is not clear where or when the enemy would attack are unconstitutional (Dörfler-Dierken and Portugall 2010, 32). Any integrated military capability is bound by these articles regardless of whether the partner government considers a mission a defensive or offensive military campaign. Depending on the circumstances, such differentiation is vital.

A defence against a hybrid warfare campaign, for example, maybe interpreted as either defensive or offensive. Ukraine faced such a security threat in 2014. In the beginning, it was very challenging to determine nation-state involvement conclusively, and representatives of the Russian government denied any involvement of their armed forces in the conflict (Demirjian 2015). The Commander of the 11th Airmobile Brigade said in an interview that ‘for any new mission it would be great if political decisions were made at the same time, then all preparations could occur simultaneously’ (Hoogstraten 2017). However, these situations are difficult enough to navigate domestically before deciding to deploy troops. Germany and the Netherlands will both have to await the verdict of their partner prior to engaging their integrated units. In the fall of 2019, the now standing meeting between the Dutch and German defence parliamentary defence committees, will meet again, and this time to discuss how to better align the rules of engagement for those deployments where integrated units are sent abroad together (Interview No. 29).

Policy Path Dependency

A well-aligned threat assessment would help cooperating governments to manage their shared military units better. However, they should also be aware of the risk of creating an obligation to cooperate in all instances. André Bosman, a member of the Dutch Parliamentary Defence Committee, when asked about the cooperation between the two nations and what he thinks will make the cooperation work well said: ‘You should almost be certain that if one side says yes, the other will follow. I think the only way to achieve this political process is that you should almost do it together’ (Atlantische Commissie 2018). His public statement was well-intentioned to promote closer cooperation between the two governments, but it also implies that there is an expectation for one partner to follow the other into combat.

In fact, in 2017, the German Bundestag cleared the mandate for an increase of the German participation for the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). It ordered an additional 350 soldiers and eight MEDEVAC and attack helicopters to relieve Dutch forces who had previously supplied this capability to the UN mission. The German forces also took on the intelligence collection missions previously supplied by the Dutch armed forces and deployed a surveillance UAV for intelligence gathering (DefenceWeb 2017). The deployment came in response to seven Dutch Chinook and Tiger helicopters needing

to be sent home for repairs after three years of operations as part of MINUSMA, a decision taken a few months earlier by the Dutch government (Reuters 2016).

When looking for a replacement for their own intelligence and MEDEVAC operations in Mali, the Dutch first turned to Germany, their close ally and partner in so many other defence cooperation initiatives (Wiegold 2015). Shortly thereafter the German MoD asked parliament to expand its existing MINUSMA mandate to include the resources requested by the United Nations to relieve Dutch equipment and support their remaining soldiers in Camp Goa, the headquarters of the MINUSMA operation (Deutscher Bundestag 2016). Similarly, in Afghanistan, the Dutch and German Ministries of Defence already closely coordinated their operations to an unprecedented degree. One Dutch officer said that: ‘We know that Germany takes longer to approve mandates in the Bundestag, so we plan for a Dutch contingent to pre-deploy to set up the infrastructure for both partners and prepare the arrival of the typically larger German troop component’ (Interview No. 10). This was the case, for example, when both nations jointly took over ISAF’s command in 2003 for a period of six months (Netherlands MoD 2017).

Considering the most recent example in Mali, it appears as if both partners have indeed entered a path dependency for their foreign and defence policies by integrating military capabilities. The Dutch-German partnership moved hundreds of additional German soldiers into the conflict and eight additional helicopters, two of which never returned. This evidence suggests that the risk of having created a path dependency is certainly present for both governments. When asked about it, most stakeholders in Berlin and The Hague answered that this aspect had not been sufficiently considered prior to the integration of capabilities (Interviews No. 23, 28, and 30). The French and British militaries have comparable capabilities to the ones Germany sent to Mali, but the first reaction of the Dutch forces was to turn to Germany, a NATO ally with whom they have integrated more than two thirds of their land forces. To turn down a commitment to a multilateral capability, such as Germany did when the AWACS aircraft were deployed over Libya, is one thing, but declining support to an ally with whom one engages in a deeply integrated bilateral cooperation is significantly more difficult. Interestingly, a member of the Dutch defence committee pointed out that the risk of such a path dependency might be substantially higher for the German partner than for the Dutch because, proportionally, the Netherlands contribute a far larger contingent to the German military, meaning the Netherlands is far more likely to request a joint deployment than Germany (Interview No. 29).

Conclusion

In Chapter 2, I have already demonstrated how the uniquely integrated command hierarchy of the 1st German-Netherlands Corps is indicative of how the integration of capabilities affects the

government's control over its coercive force. In Chapter 3, I discussed the functional scope of these sovereign powers, building on the definition of Genschel and Jachtenfuchs; I introduced in detail the idea of the three core state powers, coercive force, public finance, and public administration (2014). The purpose of this chapter was to demonstrate the saliency of the research question through the analysis of examples that show how these three core state powers of the Dutch and German government have been affected as a result of their close defence cooperation. I showed that while the close cooperation results in a stronger joint operational capability, this comes at the price of having to coordinate in questions of foreign policy, threat identification, and the deployment of armed forces.

The German decision not to allow their aircrew to participate in NATO's air campaign over Libya is exemplary of the risks associated with closely integrated defence capabilities and how one's coercive force is at times dependent on the unique domestic political processes of one's partner (Sperling in Webber and Hyde-Price 2017, 71). Similarly, the budget that is required to operate the Dutch-German units and fund their joint procurement plans enjoys a different degree of protection during times of budget cuts. Interestingly, in this instance, interviewees have suggested that the two partners might have deliberately decided to share control as it would make it more difficult for domestic policy priorities to override such international commitments in the future. Only the core state power of public administration seems not to have been investigated thoroughly before integrating military capabilities. The risk of being pulled into a conflict by one's partner seems to have escaped most stakeholders in The Hague and Berlin. This resulted in one instance in an expansion of the German mandate to increase its presence in Mali. Here, the foreign policy of the Dutch government directly influenced previous German foreign and defence policy decisions because the two states cooperate so closely in defence. The Dutch request for German troops to relief their MEDEVAC and attack helicopter deployment in Mali showed that in close bilateral relationships either participant might be nudged to adapt to the foreign and defence policy decisions of the other.

These findings first and foremost validate the saliency of the research question by showing that governments indeed risk their sovereign control over core state powers (to varying degrees), and that their decision to share control over parts of their armed forces freely is a research puzzle worth investigating. However, I also find that the Dutch and German governments have in recent years grown increasingly aware of the commitments they have made and addressed this by improving the communication between their parliamentary defence committees.

Chapter 5: Policy Preferences and Military Capability Integration

Starting with this chapter, I set out to examine why the Dutch and German governments decided to integrate large parts of their armed forces with foreign militaries. To answer the research question, I analyse why these two governments have decided to share their core state powers. I review those bi- and multilateral defence cooperation agreements of the Dutch and German governments that meet the criteria set out above as *highly integrated operational capabilities*. To analyse these projects, firstly, I will introduce the cooperation projects that were initiated to strengthen the defence capabilities of both militaries by providing more details on just how far the Dutch and German militaries have gone to integrate specific capabilities with foreign partners. For now, this section excludes those projects that are in direct support to the overall capabilities of NATO or the EU, such as the NATO AWACS cooperation for example. These will be the focus of the next chapter.

As of 2018, the Netherlands and Germany have decided to integrate parts of their armed forces with each other in 11 separate instances (six bilateral cooperations directly with each other, and five multilateral cooperations). Furthermore, the Netherlands maintains two, and Germany five, additional operational defence cooperation agreements with other allies that also qualify as highly integrated operational cooperations.[26] Secondly, I will discuss the backdrop against which the Dutch and German governments take decisions to share core state powers, meaning their history, domestic political debates, and foreign policy preferences. I will discuss the two nations’ domestic policy preferences and their influence on the decision to share core state powers and the motivation of relevant political decision-makers. I also compare the foreign and defence policy agenda of the Netherlands and Germany to show similarities and differences between the two states’ approach. Here, the different motivations of stakeholders to pursue defence cooperation offers an interesting insight into how varying drivers on the Dutch and German side have led to bilateral cooperation between the two states. I explain what specific stakeholders expected from cooperating with foreign partners and why it benefited them in selected instances. This

[26] See the addendum for a complete list of the defence cooperation projects under review

discussion provides valuable content to assess the explanatory powers of the individual hypotheses of my thesis.

This chapter finds that the domestic political dynamics of the Netherlands and Germany played an important role in shaping the decision to share core state powers, it also demonstrates that most of the two countries' cooperation agreements address operational or budgetary shortfalls. I further argue that the influence of a transnational community of practice to share core state powers was insufficient to argue in favour of the constructivist hypothesis (H3). The neoclassical realist approach (H1) is partially validated but appears farfetched given the clear alignment between defence cooperation objectives and their contribution to multilateral rather than unilateral military capabilities. Lastly, the foreign policy preferences in the Netherlands and Germany outlined in this chapter were further indicative of the validity of the new intergovernmentalist hypothesis (H2).

Defence Cooperation Initiatives of the Dutch and German Armed Forces

In this section, I will draw on the findings from my field research to assess the origins of the cooperation projects in light of the three hypotheses. Also, I briefly revisit the criteria I developed earlier to analyse the depth of the integration of operational defence cooperation projects and discuss those Dutch and German cooperations that qualify as being *highly* integrated.

As a participant in 16 separate defence cooperation initiatives, Germany maintains the highest number of highly integrated defence capabilities in Europe.[27] This makes the country a compelling case study. Such a portfolio of multiple, highly integrated cooperations, is an indicator that the core state powers of a government are in some form or another impacted. Of these 16 German cooperations, 11 involve the Dutch armed forces. While the main focus of my thesis is on the operational defence cooperations of the Netherlands and Germany with each other, both countries also maintain highly integrated bilateral cooperation initiatives with Poland, Belgium, and France, in addition to some multilateral cooperations with ten participating states or more. I also review these latter agreements to provide further evidence on why the German or Dutch government decided to share core state powers with foreign governments. In addition to analysing the close Dutch-German cooperation, these projects represent interesting examples to validate the hypotheses in a different context.

To reiterate, a defence cooperation project is a *highly integrated operational defence cooperation* if its participants share equipment and the command of the multinational unit is shared or rotated among the commanding officers of the participating militaries. Also, in

[27] See the Addendum for a Table of the relevant cooperation projects.

most cases, a significant number of officers should be based in one of the participating states' territories. This narrower definition confines my research to those military units with the highest degree of mutual dependency and hence the highest potential to affect the core state power of the participating governments. The 1st German-Netherlands Corp is a prime example of such operational defence cooperation; a military corps that has its military base in Muenster, Germany and operates under a rotating command of senior German and Dutch officers, who also share equipment that is interoperable (Deutscher Bundestag 1998). A multinational example would be Germany's participation in the EATC, which is run by seven nations, among them the Netherlands and Germany. I will address both of these examples and those depicted in below table in the following two sections.

Name	**Type of Cooperation**	**Year initiated**	**Countries involved**
Franco-German Brigade	Operational	1989	Germany, France
1st German/Netherlands Corps	Operational	1995	Germany, Netherlands
Benelux Defence Cooperation (BeNeSam) and ABNL Command	Operational	1996	Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg
European Air Transport Command (EATC)	Operational	2010	Germany, Italy, Spain, Luxembourg, Netherlands, France, and Belgium
Dutch-German Project Musketeer *(Integration: 1. Division Schnelle Kräfte and 11. Airmobile Brigade)*	Operational	2013	Germany, Netherlands
Polish-German Tank Cooperation	Operational	2014	Germany, Poland
Dutch-German Project Apollo *(Short-range Air Defence Cooperation)*	Operational	2015	Germany, Netherlands
Dutch-German Joint Support Ship	Operational	2016	Germany, Netherlands

Dutch-German Project Taurus *(Multi-Layered Land Forces Integration)*	Operational	2016	Germany, Netherlands
Dutch-German *Korps Mariners* and *Seebataillion* Cooperation	Operational	2016	Germany, Netherlands
Polish-German Naval Cooperation (Joint Submarine Operating Authority)	Operational	2016	Germany, Poland
Franco-German C-130 Shared Base and Operations	Operational	2016	Germany, France

Figure 8: Dutch and German G2G defence cooperation projects in support of national defence capabilities of its participants

<u>*Dutch and German Bilateral Defence Cooperation Initiatives*</u>

The Netherlands and Germany maintain six bilaterally integrated military capabilities with each other.[28] These have addressed acute capability shortfalls for either partner or created unique political benefits for the stakeholders on either side of the agreement. One of the most prominent examples is the Dutch-German cooperation over a Joint Support Ship (JSS). In 2013, the vessel, worth €400 million, was delivered to the Royal Netherlands Navy and the Dutch Defence Minister at the time, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, announced it would be sold to international buyers as a result of defence budget cuts (2013). Shortly thereafter the Dutch government reversed its decision, and the idea surfaced to maintain the ship together with the German Navy. In fact, Germany had been seeking to procure two Joint Support Ships for many years, but either had to prioritize other capabilities or did not receive sufficient funding from parliament (Boere 2016). Today, the two navies share the transport capabilities of the Karel Doorman and the German Marines train jointly with their Dutch counterparts, the *Korps Mariners*, to revive the Germany Navy's previously dormant amphibious operational capabilities (due to the lack of a ship). With one cooperation agreement, the German Marines were integrated with the Dutch *Korps Mariners* and a naval transport capability was established to be used by either country.

For Germany, the operational utility of having access to a Joint Support Ship was a clear benefit. In fact, since 2008, the Chief of the Navy had already requested that the operational requirements demand the purchase of a JSS (Nolting 2008, 25). In 2016, when the cooperation was announced, this requirement grew even more pertinent as Germany revived

[28] See the Thesis Addendum for a complete overview of all highly integrated operational defence cooperation agreements with Dutch and/or German participation

its amphibious fighting capabilities in 2014 with the creation of the *Seebattalion*. By attaching it to the Dutch *Korps Mariners*, the German Navy gained not only access to a ship but also a renowned training partner that is thought to be one of the best amphibious fighting forces in the world (Interview No. 8). The *Korps Mariners* have a history dating back more than 350 years and are known for capturing Gibraltar in 1704 together with the English armed forces during the War of the Spanish Succession (Netherlands MoD 2014a).

From a foreign policy perspective, the cooperation allowed Germany to bail out one of their close allies whose drastic defence budget cuts would have eliminated its most modern naval platform. At the same time, the German MoD could announce closer cooperation with one of Germany's closest EU and NATO allies rather than having to announce a complicated large procurement programme for a nationally procured JSS (Interview No. 7). Thanks to the cooperation, the funds for the Joint Support Ship are earmarked as funding for international cooperations rather than for defence equipment purchases, politically a far more palatable message in Germany than multi-billion-euro platform acquisitions (Interview No. 1). Therefore, both politically and operationally, the integration project at the time represented a promising deal for the German Navy. The official signing of the Dutch-German cooperation on board of the HNLMS Karel Doorman was a symbolic event, representative of the close partnership of both nations' militaries (Hoffmann 2017). However, while the close friendship, and existing cooperations, between the two nations, were often heralded as the drivers for the cooperation, the lack of sufficient logistical support capabilities for the German armed forces was a real concern for many years and the harsh defence budget cuts imposed on the Royal Netherlands Navy in 2013 came just at the right time (Interviews No. 1 and 11).

A senior Dutch Navy officer described the decision to share funding as a 'relief' to hold on to the JSS even though other stakeholders in the Dutch Navy community immediately voiced concerns with regard to the sovereign control over the vessel (Karremann 2016) (Interview No. 13). The responses of interviewees, the clear financial benefits for the Dutch Navy, and the notable operational benefits for the German MoD suggest that the decision to share sovereign powers (the control over the JSS as well as the budgetary commitments to finance it) were most likely driven by a rational decision-making process by both participants. Hence, the decision to cooperate in this instance is supportive of the first or second hypothesis, which assume a rational behaviour of both governments to cooperate. Also, the domestic budget constraints on both the German and Dutch side could be indicative of the neoclassical realist assumption in the first hypothesis that domestic constraints might have limited the two-government ability to balance against a foreign threat unilaterally. While the commander of the newly established German *Seebatallion* described

the cooperation with the Dutch amphibious forces as 'exceptional', the reality is that prior to the cooperation the two Navies have had trouble to cooperate closely. For the Royal Netherlands Navy, Belgium has historically been its key partner in naval affairs, and for the German Navy, the Royal British Navy has always been the closest cooperation partner in the naval domain (Krüger 2016) (Interview No. 13). The military leadership of the two countries' navies have hardly had a close relationship, a fact that weakens the hypothesis that the elites of the two militaries have formed a community of practice that sought operational improvements for their fleets (H3). The dialogue and frequent exchange that creates the endogenous dynamics that, for example, Adler envisioned to be true for a community of practice to advance a specific issue, such as an improvement in naval capabilities, is therefore unlikely to have influenced the two governments to cooperate and share their core state powers (Adler 2008, 199).

In the land domain, however, the Netherlands and Germany have been cooperating for many years and practised an ongoing exchange of personnel. One Dutch military officer described the Germany Army as the Netherlands' 'natural partner for their ground forces' (Interview No. 13). There are three flagship defence cooperation projects between the Netherlands and Germany, the 1st German-Netherlands Corp, the integration of the Dutch 11. Airmobile Brigade with the German Rapid Forces Division, and lastly the integration of the Dutch 43rd Mechanized Brigade with the 1. Panzerdivision. These three initiatives alone bring more than 30,000 German and Dutch soldiers under the rotating command structures of the two nation's militaries and are the backbone of the strongly intertwined Dutch-German land forces cooperation. Even today, talks are ongoing as to whether the two countries should further deepen the command of these units by establishing a binational peacetime command in Germany that oversees the two nation's armies (Interview No. 17).

The longest-standing cooperation of the three projects is the 1st German-Netherlands Corps, initiated in 1991 and operational since 1995. One could argue that the decline of personnel and capabilities in 1991 could have facilitated the merger of the 1st German Corps and multiple smaller Dutch divisions into one of the Bundeswehr's three Corps. At the time the Bundeswehr shrank from more than 500,000 soldiers in 1990 to fewer than 350,000 in 1995, a similar trend could be observed for the Dutch Armed Forces following the Cold War (Röhn 2016). However, at the time, the foreign and defence policy priorities of the two NATO members played an equally important role in the decision to merge these capabilities according to one stakeholder who was interviewed, strengthening collective defence at a time when the post-Cold War defence budgets of both nations severely declined (Interview No 15).

The Headquarters of the Corps are in Muenster, Germany. Here, 400 Dutch and German military personnel retain the responsibility for the entire Corps, which can include up to 30,000 Army personnel of both nations. Since its inauguration, the Corps deployed more than 6,000 troops to large NATO exercises and deployed its soldiers as the first binational ISAF Command in Afghanistan in 2003 (German MoD 2020). The entirety of the German Army is coordinated by three corps, and these are in turn directly contributing to EU and NATO military capabilities. In fact, each of the three Corps is multinational. The Multinational Corps Northeast in Szczecin, just across the German border in Poland, is under the command of three framework nations, Denmark, Germany, and Poland. It is similar to the Eurocorps in Strasbourg, which is made up of five framework nations, Germany, Spain, France, Luxembourg, and Belgium. However, as highlighted in Chapter 2, only in the instance of the Dutch-German bilateral Corps has the command structure been fully integrated as if it were the corps of one nation (Young 2002, 65).[29]

After the success of the 1st German-Netherlands Corps, the integration of the 9,500 troops of the *1. Division Schnelle Kräfte* (Rapid Reaction Forces) with the 2,300 troops of the Dutch *11th Airmobile Brigade* (Air Assault Brigade) followed in 2014 (Netherlands MoD 2014b). This cooperation greatly aided the two nations' ability to meet the requirements set by NATO for a Rapid Reaction Force agreed upon at the NATO Wales Summit in 2014 (NATO 2020b). One Dutch General plainly pointed out that the NATO requirements and the dawn of a 'New Cold War' were important considerations to initiate these projects (Interview No. 20). Together this integrated capability represents nearly all the air-transportable military capabilities of the two countries, a critical mission for both homeland defence and rescue missions abroad. The project is internally referred to as Project Griffin and is considered the biggest integration efforts since the launch of the 1. German-Netherlands Corps in 1995.

Furthermore, the 1st Tank Division (*1. Panzerdivision*) of the Bundeswehr is one of the divisions under the command of the 1st German-Netherlands Corps, it, in turn, is home of the Dutch 43rd Mechanized Brigade which is made up of nine units in total, one of which is the Dutch-German 414th Panzerbatallion consisting of 100 Dutch and 300 German soldiers (Bennhold 2019). This latter project is named Taurus and has been specifically designed to intertwine the armoured capabilities of both nations to ensure a sense of common leadership

[29] Specifically, the international treaty between the Netherlands and Germany establishing the binational corps states: 'The Commander of the Corps shall be vested with integrated directing and control authority with regard to the execution of the tasks given to the Corps. This authority includes the right to give instructions to soldiers and civilian members of the Corps under his integrated command. It encompasses planning, preparation and execution of the Corps' tasks and missions, including training, exercises as well as logistic competences.' (Bundesgesetzblatt 1998, 42)

and cooperation (Interview No. 16). Project Taurus is a true 'bottom-up' integration of soldiers who also get a say in continuously improving and deepening the capability (Interview No. 16). While the addition of a mere 18 tanks might not have been a significant argument for integration for the German Army that operates more than 400 tanks, in this instance, it saved the heavily armoured capability of the Dutch Army from being cut completely, a fact much appreciated at the Dutch Army Headquarters in Utrecht as well as among other NATO allies (Interview No. 17). Through this cooperation, Germany not only strengthened the operational capabilities of the NATO alliance for collective territorial defence, but it also invested in its diplomatic relationship with the Netherlands (Interview No. 15). Furthermore, from a financial perspective, joint procurements for the integrated units are already generating savings for both participants. For example, in 2016, the two nations jointly procured five military bridging systems (Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal 2017).

When talking to the officers and civilian personnel of both Armies, much of the interview discussion revolved around the close professional relationship on all levels. It was well-known that the Chief of the German and Dutch Armed Forces at the time when most of the defence cooperations were negotiated and launched were close friends (Interview No. 15). Also, the ongoing staff exchange between The Hague, the Dutch Army Headquarters in Utrecht, and Berlin, as well as the German Army Headquarters in Strausberg were described as essential for the progressive deepening of the two nations' defence cooperations (Interviews 1, 6, and 7) (van der Veer 2018). During my research, I was introduced to one Dutch officer who recently wrote his graduating thesis at the German General Staff College on the topic of binational decision making in the integrated structures of the Dutch and German Armies (van der Veer 2018). The individual was taught to operate and navigate in the deeply integrated bilateral military formations of the two countries and advanced through his studies the common goal to improve upon the operational effectiveness of the joint Dutch-German military formation (Adler 2008, 201). As highlighted above, these close interpersonal relationships were described by interviewees as common in the Army but not in the Air and Naval services of the Netherlands and Germany (Interviews No. 13 and 15).

Furthermore, there is evidence that the German and Dutch governments' approach to cooperation has not always followed a purely rational and calculated pattern. While the main focus of this dissertation is on the Dutch-German defence cooperation initiatives, my research interviews offered insights into further cooperation efforts of the German Bundeswehr which allow for an interesting view on how Germany and the Netherlands had engaged with other nations in the realm of defence. One of the first highly integrational efforts of an operational military capability was the creation of the Franco-German Brigade,

which to this day represents the core of the Eurocorps' force structure. France is undoubtedly Germany's brother-in-arms when it comes to industrial or policy cooperation. Many German and French companies maintain joint ventures or subsidiaries in each other's country and both governments are among those EU members that were advocating the advancement of policy initiatives like the CSDP or PESCO (Koenig and Walter-Franke 2015). The recently signed Aachen Accords are proof of this as much as the ongoing working-level meetings between all government ministries (Interview No. 2).

However, the creation of the Franco-German Brigade revealed that the two countries' preferences regarding the use of their armed forces deviate substantially (Dickow et al. 2015). Some believe that the reason for the failure of the cooperation lies in France's preference for expeditionary warfare that, coupled with its political interest on the African continent and lenient weapon export regulations have always been met with much aversion in Berlin (Agence French Press 2013). Equally, Germany's balancing act between NATO and the EU, its territorial defence policy focus, and its wavering commitment to a meaningful defence budget are causing headaches in Paris (The Economist 2019). However, looking at the origin of the cooperation, the driver for integration was political messaging rather than operational, financial, or political considerations. In 1987, President Francois Mitterand and Chancellor Helmut Kohl embraced the political symbolism inherent in the creation of a Franco-German brigade. The integration of the two former foes' militaries was celebrated as a sign of friendship (Fairhall 1988). Mérand and Hofmann equally described the Franco-German Brigade as an example where core state powers were integrated as a result of 'bilateral identities around mutually understandable historical experiences' (Hofmann and Mérand 2020, 156).

Recently declassified German government documents even indicated that the French Defence Minister at the time, Giraud, envisioned an increase of the integrated capability far beyond the original size of a brigade, a goal which was never achieved (MFA Archive Document No. 5). Instead, all French forces associated with the brigade were recalled to French bases in 2014. France withdrew 1,000 of its troops assigned to the Brigade to be re-assigned to other functions domestically because the operational value of the cooperation has not been sustainably proven (Agence French Press 2013 and Interview No. 4). Selected achievements, such as the Franco-German Brigade's deployment to the former Yugoslavia seemed to buoy the project at first, however in my interviews; one government official stated that 'the brigade was the very first operational defence integration project pursued by Germany, and to this day it serves as an example of how *not* to do things in other cooperation efforts' (Interview No. 4). Therefore, the creation of the Franco-German brigade represents an outlier that is worth mentioning as it did not follow a rationalist

approach by the governments, but also because it appears to serve as a lesson that prompted the German government to pursue an inherently less constructivist and more rational approach to future cooperation projects.

For example, the latest Franco-German effort to cooperate operationally follows a strict cost-benefit calculation. In 2018 the French and German governments decided to purchase C-130J transport aircraft from the US government. The reason for this being the constant delays of the Airbus A-400M transport aircraft, which created significant shortfalls for both the French and German air forces (Trevithick 2018). To fill this operational gap, Paris and Berlin decided to purchase the C-130J, a US transport aircraft, and jointly base these at the Évreux-Fauville Air Base in France. In 2017, the defence ministries' of both countries announced that they would each invest €110 million into improving the infrastructure of the base and upgrading its training facilities (Shalal 2017). In this instance, the German government decided to integrate the sustainment, training, and maintenance capabilities of its fleet of six C-130J transport aircraft with the fleet of French aircraft stationed on the same base. The mutual dependency on the readiness levels of this capability is quite clear. In this instance, both governments cited cost synergies and operational benefits as the reason to share this military capability rather than the overt political symbolism that gave birth to the Franco-German Brigade (Bundeswehr-Journal 2018). French and German pilots will operate the aircraft with mixed teams starting in 2021 (BMVG 2018).

The Dutch also cooperate with France, but its closest bilateral partner after Germany is Belgium as the two countries have been cooperating since the end of the Second World War to protect their comparatively small territories against foreign threats (Interview No. 13). For the Dutch Armed Forces, the Belgian Navy was its earliest cooperation partner with whom the Royal Dutch Navy today pursues a near-complete integration. The two Navies operate under a fully integrated command structure, headed by the *Admiral Benelux* (ABNL) (Interview No. 13). Also, both MoD's have ordered identical frigates and mine-sweepers jointly to generate cost savings which also makes it easier to train sailors and support staff at the Belgian-Dutch Operational School (Belgian MoD 2018).

This does not mean that the strictly rational approaches to cooperation have always proven to be successful. When the German government celebrated the signing of a Polish-German integration initiative in 2014, the criteria for an effective cooperation to strengthen NATO's Eastern Forces seemed to be met. After all, the commonality of the threat environment and established commonalities in weapon systems seemed to allow for an ambitious integration agenda. With Poland, the German government initiated a wide-ranging defence cooperation agreement under which the Navy (2014), Air Force (2015), and Army (2014) signed

multiple sub-agreements to cooperate and integrate select capabilities. For example, the Polish Navy maintains a permanent presence in Germany for the shared Baltic Sea Submarine Operating Authority where the command of German and Polish submarines in the Baltic is coordinated. Also, the Polish Army was planning to subsume the German *Panzergrenadierbataillon 411* (Mechanised Infantry Battalion) under the command of the Polish 34th Armoured Cavalry brigade by 2021 (Mueller 2018).

According to a German government official, the motivation to initiate these Polish-German projects was strictly focused on the inherent operational benefits: 'We are expecting to be deployed together in the future. Therefore, we cooperate now to learn how to work together' (Interview No. 22). These operational considerations are reflected in the ambitious training agenda of the German Army for the tank cooperation. In fact, it was mirrored on the tank cooperation structure of Project Taurus in the hopes of recreating the success (Interview No. 22). However, the increasingly diverging foreign and defence policy goals of the two governments, especially regarding the EU and NATO, appear to have become hurdles for the cooperation. While it was clear from the outset that the Polish government heavily favours NATO as its principal defence alliance over the EU, it was not expected that this would slow down cooperation to such a degree (Interview No. 22). Today, the cooperation solely appears to be kept alive by the Polish partner as a 'Plan B' in case the Trump administration withdraws from the NATO alliance (Interview No. 22). So, what happened after the German government had carefully reviewed the costs and benefits of cooperation with the Polish partner? Foreign and defence policy disagreements, mostly after the national-conservative PIS Party came to power in Warsaw, slowed the ambitious cooperation agenda. This shows that despite the decision by the two governments to share core state powers to strengthen their collective defence capabilities, the cooperation failed because the Polish government revisited its preferences as a result of domestic politics. The power of domestic politics is something that also features heavily in the neoclassical realist framework, where it is incorporated as an intervening variable to explain the behaviour of governments (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 1; Dyson 2013, 390). Similar to the new intergovernmentalist framework where domestic preference formation is also considered an important influence in shaping a government's foreign policy agenda (Bickerton et al., Hodson, and Puetter 2015, 17). The French and Polish examples merely served to show that a) the German government has learned from its past experience to share core state powers and b) despite its strict cost-benefit analysis today, there is no guarantee for success if the domestic policy preferences of one partner change over time.

The Dutch-German cooperation projects were initiated long after the launch of the Franco-German Brigade and according to one MoD official were guided by a pragmatic analysis of

the capability shortfalls present in both nations (Interview No. 8). One other such shortfall is the two militaries' Short-Range Air Defence (SHORAD) capability which led to the cooperation project *Apollo*. Both countries operate the Patriot missile defence batteries and have identified the lower levels of air defence as a critical capability shortfall in their contributions to NATO (Gotkowska 2018, 1). According to senior military officers involved in Project Apollo, the immediate goal of the project was to 'address urgent operational shortfalls for both countries through cooperation' (Interview No. 19). The Netherlands and Germany had effectively dismantled their SHORAD capabilities at the end of the Cold War (Gotkowska 2018). In the medium-term, the joint procurement of updated SHORAD weapon systems is the goal, especially as these would likely be deployed in tandem with other integrated Dutch-German Army units, such as the Rapid Response Forces.

In 2018, the German Air Defence Missile Group 61 with its 350 soldiers, was integrated into the Royal Netherlands Army's Ground-Based Air Defence Command with about 750 troops (Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal 2019). The integrated units are preparing the bilateral capability to be jointly deployed with NATO's Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) after 2023 (Gotkowska 2018, 3). Former German Defence Minister von der Leyen described the process as 'moving from cooperation to integration' at the ceremonial signing of the agreement (Schulze 2018). In this example, the obvious gain in absolute operational capabilities for the NATO alliance is strongly supporting the hypothesis that the Dutch-German cooperation efforts are pursued to strengthen allied defence capabilities, such as the NATO VJTF. The 18 Fennek light fighting vehicles of the Dutch Army and its two NASAMs batteries in combination with the 'MANTIS and LeFlaSys Ozelot batteries' together, meet the requirements to protect a NATO battalion as required for the German and Dutch commitments made to the alliance for the VJTF 2023 (Gotkowska 2018, 4). Unlike in other policy areas, the operational synergies and benefits for both participants are clearly delineated and serve the purpose of strengthening collective defence. Project Apollo represents a highly integrated force structure that creates mutual dependencies which at the same time advance the capabilities of each partner.

All of the six bilateral integration initiatives portrayed here have led to further deepening of the Dutch-German partnership that has been coordinated through working group meetings between senior staff members from both countries; the response from interviewees on both sides has been overwhelmingly positive with regards to the cooperation and indicated further ambition to cooperate ever more closely (Interviews No. 10, 16, and 18). According to one Dutch general, the entire integration is structured under the theme 'What is good for a German soldier is good for a Dutch soldier' (Atlantische Commissie 2018). While financial synergies have been limited in some of these cooperation initiatives, all interviewees were

confident that the gains in operational effectiveness had been a key determinant in initiating and continuing these integration initiatives, again supporting the hypothesis that the original decision to share core state powers between governments was driven by inherent operational gains (H2).

In conclusion, decision-makers in the Netherlands seized on the opportunity to integrate parts of the Dutch Armed Forces with the Bundeswehr in multiple instances despite the inherent implications for their core state powers because of the severe lack of funding for their military. For Germany, doubling down on the already successful bilateral cooperation with the Netherlands allowed the German government to meet NATO readiness requirements agreed upon in Wales in 2014. All without having to initiate costly and lengthy procurement procedures for additional air defence or naval transport capabilities which were gained as a result of the cooperation with the Dutch forces. In each of the six projects, the German and Dutch governments decided to share their core state powers of public administration, public finance, and coercive force. This occurred as a result of a rational approach that weighted most of the political and all the operational benefits and disadvantages before committing to these projects. There is limited evidence suggesting that a community of practice actively pursued the advance of the operational capabilities of the Dutch and German forces, but since these findings were rare and limited solely to the land forces, I argue that the role of a Dutch-German community of practice, consistent of military personnel from both countries, plays a facilitating role at most. According to most of the interviewees, the critical determinant of whether or not to integrate has been the result of a careful calculation on behalf of the two governments that indicated an absolute benefit for the multilateral security of NATO and the EU rather than the advocacy of the military personnel in favour of closer cooperation. The 1st German-Netherlands Corp's contribution to NATO's ISAF mission in Afghanistan, the 1st *Panzerdivision's* contribution to NATO's VJTF 2019, and the preparations within Project Apollo to protect NATO's VJTF force in 2023 all suggest that the underlying motivation of both the Dutch and German government was driven by a desire to meet their alliance commitments.

The EATC – Multinational Defence Cooperation with German and Dutch Participation

Outside of the close Dutch and German bilateral partnerships, one specific G2G partnership stands out as an example of a highly integrated *multinational* military capability, the European Air Transport Command (EATC). Based in Eindhoven, Netherlands, it coordinates the air transport requirements of the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, Spain, Italy, France, and Belgium. Established in 2010, it is one of the most advanced defence cooperation efforts in terms of scope and depth (Interview No. 24). Air transport is traditionally the task of the Air Force to help shuttle troops and equipment to their

destinations; typically, national militaries maintain one or multiple *Air Transport Wings* that maintain fleets of large aircraft and command and coordinate the available air transport capacity. In the instance of the EATC, its seven member nations have recognised that idle capacity of their transport aircraft is expensive, while at the same time their national air transport wings failed to meet peak demand during training exercises or actual deployments of their militaries (Interview No. 24).

Rather than deciding to integrate a part of one's armed forces as in the bilateral cooperation efforts discussed in the previous section, for the EATC, Germany and the Netherlands fully eliminated their entire national air transport capability in favour of an integrated command headquarters in Eindhoven. With the exception of France, which continues to maintain a separate national capability to transport its nuclear warheads, all participants have eliminated their previous air transport commands (Interview No. 24). Germany's Luftwaffe closed its air transport command in 2010 and restructured the organisation so that its military and civilian personnel of about 6,000 is now under the operational command of the EATC (Interview No. 24). This particular G2G cooperation, neither associated with the EU or NATO, is exemplary of the high degree of trust that exists between its participants as they have eliminated their national capabilities that would take years to re-establish to full operational capability (Interview No. 24). According to a former MoD official, the perception at the time was that 'sovereignty was preserved, but concessions were made with regards to autonomy', an observation that is true for all the cooperation initiatives under review, on paper the legal sovereignty of the government is maintained in the sense that governments are not ceding any decision-making powers to their partners (Interview No. 8). However, while the EATC expanded the reach and efficiency of the Luftwaffe and all other participating Air Forces, it also required the sharing of its operational command, a concession in relation to their autonomy and independent control over their air transport capabilities.

Similar to the AWACS example discussed in Chapter 4, the lack of a Bundestag mandate for NATO's Libya campaign was the first time that participants began to worry about what it meant to integrate their capability with foreign partners (Interview No. 8). None of the German Air Force's EATC aircraft or pilots were authorised to participate in the mission. At the time, an alternative arrangement was made possible to avoid a complete capability loss for the French military, but it raised questions about the reliability of the German partner (Interview No. 8). So why did governments decide to cooperate with each other in 2010?

Financial incentives for cooperation were important drivers for both, the German and Dutch governments, to join the EATC (Interviews No. 1, 24, and 26). The costs of aircraft fleets

are extremely high and having excess air transport capabilities go unused was simply not sustainable anymore for their air forces. Germany could have acquired the relevant air transport capabilities, and with the A400M programme has also proven that it intends to strengthen this operational capability gap. However, to achieve the same reach and operationally diversified fleet of aircraft as the EATC currently has in its portfolio would have required an outsized investment. Despite savings being a critical driver for the German government to share its core state powers with multiple partners, the political aspects have also been highlighted by interviewees (Interview No. 24). The political benefits of the EATC, though similar to those of the bilateral initiatives are less obvious but are essentially an extension of Germany's commitment to a multilateral alliance foreign policy agenda; one MoD interviewee even described Germany as a 'serial integrator' to underline the strong political desire to cooperate rather than to act unilaterally (Interview No. 8). Every defence cooperation is further integrating Germany in the multilateral security alliances of Western states. Hence, any political opposition to the budgets dedicated to these multilateral efforts or the requests for support of the Netherlands for German material or personnel turns what would normally be a domestic policy debate into a question of 'alliance loyalty', or at least one that requires a diplomatic justification vis-à-vis the Dutch partner, and I will discuss this argument further in the following sections on the role domestic politics plays in the launch of defence cooperation initiatives (Interview No. 30).

Germany - Designed for Multilateralism?

In this section, I examine the domestic political dynamics in Germany and how these might have influenced or encouraged the German government to share control over its core state powers with the Netherlands and other partners. Having reviewed the defence cooperation agreements of both states above and highlighted the inherent operational and financial benefits of cooperation, I turn here to the political considerations of the relevant stakeholders that might have motivated their decision to cooperate with a foreign partner. Firstly, I will examine the relevant political actors and their offices' role in the initiation of defence cooperations, then discuss the domestic political circumstances that shape their decisions, and lastly, I will review each nation's foreign and defence policy orientation and its potential impact on the decision to pursue bi- and multilateral defence cooperation agreements.

Particularly, the neoclassical realist and new intergovernmentalist frameworks (H1 and H2) highlight the importance of domestic preference formation as a key variable for analysing government decision-making processes (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 11; Bickerton et al., Hodson, and Puetter 2015, 23). In the new intergovernmentalist framework, domestic policy preferences are thought to heavily influence the process of foreign policy

decision-making; in the context of this thesis that means that the German government's decision to share core state powers and *how* to share these might just as well be a result of domestic preferences rather than systemic pressures (Bickerton et al., Hodson, and Puetter 2015, 34). In fact, I argue that Germany's legal and political system actively encourages the integration of military capabilities with foreign partners and rewards those decision-makers who support such initiatives. Of course, Germany's unique history also impacts its policy agenda and further encourages cooperation or integration with foreign partners. Germans are keenly aware of their tainted history and thus oversee all military affairs with extreme caution and reservation, often to the dismay of their closest allies (e.g. Sikorski 2011). The country's history is omnipresent in the minds of stakeholders and the regulatory landscape which guides foreign and defence policy decisions has been created for the express purpose of integrating the Bundeswehr into the alliance structures of NATO and EU (Interviews No. 23 and 27).

Political Stakeholders and Domestic Politics

The four most relevant institutions for the integration of military capabilities are the Ministry of Defence, the Defence Committee of the Parliament, the Office of the Chancellor, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). Depending on the type of integration, different parts of the armed forces are involved; however, they are always subordinated to the Ministry of Defence. Similarly, the German Embassy in the Netherlands and the Dutch Embassy in Berlin are relevant stakeholders who also play a facilitating role but are subordinated to their respective Ministries of Foreign Affairs. Few other stakeholders outside of government have influence on the integration of capabilities. In a few cases, there might be a commercial interest hoping to benefit from an alignment of equipment standards between the two militaries, but in the German-Dutch projects under review, the private sector has not been a noteworthy influence on the political decision to integrate (Interview No. 15).

In Germany, the Ministry of Defence is the most influential player as it oversees the execution and day-to-day affairs of all military cooperations. In fact, most integration initiatives originate in the MoD and are only then presented to the other stakeholders to gather the necessary political support. As the most powerful political actor in any government, the Chancellery is often the first government entity included in the decision-making process. Then, the Parliamentary Defence Committee is informed, as well as the Foreign Ministry, before official negotiations begin with a foreign partner (Interviews No. 10 and 30). The interviews suggested that the MFA stays mostly on the side-lines of the process, especially as the working level relationship between most MoDs within NATO and the EU is already quite strong (Interviews No. 2, 13, 21, and 30). Some stakeholders have

also highlighted the role of individuals and the importance of personal relationships but mostly with regard to ongoing cooperations rather than as an impetus for new initiatives, a finding that weakens the explanatory power of the third hypothesis (Interviews No. 1 and 15). In other diplomatic communities, scholars found that frequent interactions and participation in diplomatic seminars have been a driving force behind government decisions but not so in the instance of the Dutch and German governments as the focus of the community of practice appears to only have shifted to the cooperations once they were initiated, meaning it was not involved in the decision to share core state powers (Adler-Nissen and Pouliot 2014 and Interviews No. 1 and 15).

Within the German MoD, the department in charge of political affairs (*Abteilung Politik*) typically takes the lead on managing all international defence cooperation partnerships: it initiates, negotiates, and oversees all cooperation. Once a project is established, it often spins-off a project office, as was the case with the European Air Transport Command which now coordinates all high-level political issues related to the multilateral project; although, its day-to-day operations are of course managed on-site in the Netherlands (Interview No.24). Typically, one member of staff will oversee one or more countries and coordinate all activities with those partners at a political level (Interview No. 4).

Multiple interview partners also said that new ideas to deepen existing integration initiatives might come from within the ranks of officers who are part of the integration projects (Interviews No. 1, 4, and 22). These interview findings align with the definition of communities of practice by Wenger, who wrote that ‘members [of communities of practice] build their community through mutual engagement’ (Wenger 2000, 229). The engagement of officers is not only formalised in the high-level working groups for the management of the bilateral cooperations but also secured by allowing the input of those officers working on a daily basis with the troops in shared Dutch-German military bases (Interviews No. 10 and 17). It is an aspect of the cooperation that has been highlighted by the responsible working group participants who prioritise these requests for improvements and introduce them to the decision-making workshops (Interviews No. 1, 10, and 17).

Such requests for improvements often touch upon simple aspects of the cooperation, such as allowing paratroopers of one country to fly in the helicopters of the partner nation (Interview No. 16). Since most national safety standards and licences for armed forces have not been developed with international cooperations in mind, they tend to be a big hurdle to overcome for the German-Dutch partnership. Once a request is filed, each level of the military hierarchy needs to approve the suggested changes and forward these suggestions to the project working group. These working groups meet two or four times a year and include the

highest-ranking officers involved in the cooperation project as well as the representatives from the Political Department of the MoD (Interviews No. 4 and 5). At this level, the operational advantages and implications for the Bundeswehr are reviewed and the decision made to approve or deny what is, in most cases, ends up being a further deepening of the relationship via the development of joint standards.

Additional departments, especially the legal and military planning offices of the German MoD, also support cooperation initiatives from the very beginning by providing guidelines on command structures and answers to the complex international legal questions, ranging from international and military, to constitutional law, that might affect the planned integration of defence capabilities (Interview No. 9). Finally, the highest political echelons, namely the Minister's office in the MoD, is briefed for strategic discussions with their foreign counterparts and to present updates to the Parliamentary Defence Committee and the Chancellery, as necessary (Interviews No. 22 and 30).

As an institutional actor, the goal of the MoD is to maintain an effective fighting force which requires a significant defence budget to maintain its expensive equipment and retain its personnel. To achieve this goal, the MoD essentially has three options: 1) lobby domestically for budget increases, a difficult endeavour as it is competing against all other ministries; 2) commit to Germany's political headline goal of advancing EU defence cooperation and aiming to cooperate on a multilateral level, an ongoing effort for many decades with questionable success to date; 3) identify G2G cooperation partners to increase operational effectiveness or share the defence cost burden jointly. This latter option is in many cases, the path of least resistance for the MoD as it avoids the political complications often associated with large supranational initiatives or domestic political debates (Interview No. 22).

Each of the actors mentioned above takes on responsibilities in the process of initiating and maintaining the integration of capabilities while simultaneously pursuing their own sets of goals. For example, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has clear guidance to foster EU cooperation at large and to improve the relationship between Germany and the Netherlands in all policy areas (German MFA 2020; Maas 2020). While the bilateral integration of military capabilities falls short of such ambitious EU plans to integrate capabilities on the way to an independent European military capability, it still represents a stepping-stone towards a more integrated military capability among two EU member states. The Chancellery and the Bundestag Defence Committee's goals are mostly reflected in the programmes of the governing political parties but need to be carefully balanced with the preferences of their voters. Since most defence and military debates are low on the list of

vote-winning topics in Germany, this represents a real hurdle for governments wishing to foster the capabilities of the armed forces. However, while increases to the defence budget are not popular among the German public, international cooperation with European allies in many policy areas is viewed positively by voters (Wiegold 2019). This is why integration initiatives, such as those between the Netherlands and Germany, represent opportunities for the German government to advance their defence and foreign policy agenda without risking re-election.

To avoid the domestic policy debate around budget increases, the MoD and those political stakeholders in favour of strengthening the military's operational capabilities often turn to defence cooperation initiatives. Merging capabilities with foreign partners essentially turns what would normally be a domestic policy debate on defence into one about alliance commitments and international cooperation, two policy areas that receive much more support from a nation that perceives itself as a civilian rather than a military power (Forsberg 2005, 223). One recent example is the planned replacement of the country's Tornado fighter jets which are dual-capable aircraft that can carry nuclear weapons, a 'vital contribution to NATO's nuclear mission' according to the organisation's Secretary General (Stoltenberg 2020). Domestically, large parts of the Social Democratic party along with the Greens and the Left have all spoken out against the replacement acquisition programme of these dual-capable aircraft (Siebold 2020). However, the MoD and its political allies in the defence committee have all pointed to the statements of the NATO Secretary General and other NATO allies who have asked Germany to retain its capability to deliver nuclear warheads and believe the capability to be an important military deterrent (Vates 2020). While this is just one example of how the government defends its defence policy decisions by pointing to alliance commitments, it is an argument that essentially applies to every defence cooperation project under review in this thesis.

In the neoclassical realist framework, the decision of the German government to share its core state powers can, therefore, be explained as threat balancing as it would not be able to unilaterally develop the operational capabilities in light of domestic opposition. Whether it is Germany's contribution to NATO's nuclear mission or its commitment to support its allies in Mali or Afghanistan, without the international pressure for a German engagement its domestic political landscape would be far less inclined to strengthen or deploy its military. For the first hypothesis, the country's unique domestic political process is the intervening variable in the decision of the government to share some of its autonomy with a foreign partner.

Therefore, for the central stakeholders highlighted above, defence cooperation initiatives represent an opportunity to strengthen the military's operational readiness. The MoD can address operational shortfalls of the Bundeswehr. The Chancellery and Bundestag may wish to strengthen the Bundeswehr as a foreign policy tool, and the Ministry of Foreign affairs seeks to deepen intra-European cooperation across policy fields. Therefore, at a very basic level, the incentive structure is in place for each actor to at least consider proposals for the integration of military capabilities despite the often adverse domestic political debates with regards to a strengthened military capability.

However, why do the relevant decision-makers in Germany opt to share their core state powers rather than simply strengthen the country's unilateral capabilities? As suggested above, the answer might be found in the country's unique domestic political landscape and voter preferences. Germany's preference for a multilateralist, and often pacifist, foreign and defence policy has already been discussed. The country's dilemma between allied requests for more involvement to bolster international security and frequent domestic critique of the country's military activities is well mirrored in its domestic policy debates (Kirchner and Sperling 2010, 43). In Parliament, the two staunchest critics of any military involvement are the Left and Green Parties (Hemicker 2017). Both are strong voices for pacifism and actively advocate for limited military deployments and defence expenditure. However, within German society, the recognition 'for a controlled and legally sanctioned use of force and [..] the value of multilateralism' have been firmly established through the political practices of the West German government (Harnisch and Longhurst 2006, 51). As a result, the deployment of the Bundeswehr or MoD procurement decisions tend to be viewed critically in the press (Richter 2015). A research survey in 2016 found that only 34 per cent of Germans were in favour of defence spending increases and a mere 29 per cent thought that the use of force to fight terrorism is warranted (Pew Research Center 2016). Nevertheless, 62 per cent of the German public approved of humanitarian missions and endorsed non-violent humanitarian deployments with the goal of protecting civilians (Pew Research Center 2016).

The voter preferences highlighted in the paragraphs above result in an interesting domestic political environment. Unlike in France or the UK, the government in Berlin needs to position itself as a multilateral partner with a clear priority for defensive or humanitarian missions if it wants to meet the electorate's expectations. At times, this set of preferences creates conundrums for the Chancellery because multilateralism only functions if allies can rely on each other, regardless of whether the task at hand is dangerous or not. Chancellor Schroeder's decision to oppose the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 caused severe damage to the transatlantic relationship at the time (NPR Morning Edition 2002). Hence, in recent

years, German government officials have slowly tried to communicate to the German public that multilateralism for a country of Germany's size does not work if it does not take on responsibilities in support of its allies (e.g. Von der Leyen 2019).

To address this dilemma of alliance commitments and a domestic political environment that is reluctant to strengthen national military capabilities, defence cooperation has, in fact, become an important tool for German governments on both sides of the political spectrum. Essentially, the clear voter-mandate for multilateralism and reluctance to strengthen national defence capabilities unilaterally creates an ideal political environment for the integration of military capabilities with a foreign partner. Therefore, if the relevant political stakeholders wish to sustain Germany's role in the international community without risking a domestic political backlash, dedicating resources to the integration of capabilities is an excellent way to strengthen military capabilities; albeit at the cost of sharing control over the integrated force structures.

Additionally, the country's principal legal document, the *Grundgesetz* (Basic Law), also encourages the German government to cooperate closely with foreign partners. It effectively creates an institutional incentive for the German government to integrate capabilities with foreign partners. For example, Article 24 (2) of the Grundgesetz explicitly states that the government may, 'to guarantee peace among the European and international community of states', integrate the Federal Republic of Germany into a system of collective defence and that it may consent to constrain its core state powers to do so (Grundgesetz, 1949, sec. 24). While Germany's post-war Parliamentary Assembly had NATO in mind when writing this article in May 1949, it became a guiding principle for the general foreign and defence policy of West Germany - and the unified republic - until today. It serves as a legal argument in favour of increasing defence cooperation and integration with European partners.

The Grundgesetz is rife with articles which facilitate the integration of military capabilities. Article 23 (1) contains a clause that allows the government to transfer, with the permission of the Federal Council (Bundesrat), core state powers to the European Union if it advances the integration of the EU.[30] Even though this article is not directly referencing integrated defence capabilities, it is worth mentioning because it allows the government to transfer core

[30] *Artikel 23 (1): ‚Zur Verwirklichung eines vereinten Europas wirkt die Bundesrepublik Deutschland bei der Entwicklung der Europäischen Union mit, die demokratischen, rechtsstaatlichen, sozialen und föderativen Grundsätzen und dem Grundsatz der Subsidiarität verpflichtet ist und einen diesem Grundgesetz im wesentlichen vergleichbaren Grundrechtsschutz gewährleistet. Der Bund kann hierzu durch Gesetz mit Zustimmung des Bundesrates Hoheitsrechte übertragen. Für die Begründung der Europäischen Union sowie für Änderungen ihrer vertraglichen Grundlagen und vergleichbare Regelungen, durch die dieses Grundgesetz seinem Inhalt nach geändert oder ergänzt wird oder solche Änderungen oder Ergänzungen ermöglicht werden, gilt Artikel 79 Abs. 2 und 3.‘* (German Federal Government 1949, para. 23)

state powers to a supranational entity, the European Union. While the Government-to-Government agreements do not require such a *transfer* of core state powers, this article does set precedence for a general openness to share such powers with foreign partners. Both Article 23 and Article 24 offer a legal foundation which would allow any German government to pursue the integration of capabilities. In combination with the above discussed domestic policy preferences for multilateral and non-violent foreign policy, it offers any government an ideal argument in favour of the integration of capabilities with a European partner. The authors of the Grundgesetz envisioned the post-war multilateral alliances as ways to keep any aggressive unilateral actions on behalf of the German government at bay, articles 26 and 115 clearly communicate their intention. Today, these same articles can also be interpreted to support the integration of capabilities.

Article 26 (1) explicitly denies the government the right to pursue any activities which might disturb the peaceful coexistence of the international community and highlights that the use of the armed forces to wage a war of aggression is punishable by law (German Federal Government 1949, sec. 26).[31] Article 115a (1) regulates the decision-making processes should a ‘state of defence’ arise (German Federal Government 1949, sec. 115a). In great detail, it explains that only the German Parliament may declare the ‘state of defence’ after the government has initiated a vote on the matter.[32] It is the responsibility of the parliament to determine whether the country is under attack. Crucially, this article confers the sole right to deploy the Bundeswehr to the German parliament.

In summary, the German legal system, as well as Germany’s societal preference for multilateralism, represent an institutionalised incentive for any government to integrate capabilities with foreign partners. In essence, the constitutional legal texts of the Federal Republic of Germany encourage governments to pursue the cross-border integration of military capabilities and it further protects the government from critique against their decision to cooperate with foreign partners. In fact, the internationalisation of the Bundeswehr in recent years is generally viewed positively by moderate political parties and their electorate (Interview No. 27). International commitments to integrated structures, even if this entails expenditure increases, enjoy domestic political support under these

[31] *Artikel 16 (1): ‚Handlungen, die geeignet sind und in der Absicht vorgenommen werden, das friedliche Zusammenleben der Völker zu stören, insbesondere die Führung eines Angriffskrieges vorzubereiten, sind verfassungswidrig. Sie sind unter Strafe zu stellen.‘* (German Federal Government 1949, para. 16)

[32] *Artikel 115a (1): ‚Die Feststellung, daß das Bundesgebiet mit Waffengewalt angegriffen wird oder ein solcher Angriff unmittelbar droht (Verteidigungsfall), trifft der Bundestag mit Zustimmung des Bundesrates. Die Feststellung erfolgt auf Antrag der Bundesregierung und bedarf einer Mehrheit von zwei Dritteln der abgegebenen Stimmen, mindestens der Mehrheit der Mitglieder des Bundestages‘* (German Federal Government 1949, para. 115a)

circumstances than direct investments into national defence capabilities. This creates a political environment which strongly encourages deeply intertwined forms of cooperation, such as the Dutch-German cooperation. Policymakers in different administrations have leveraged this predisposition of the German political and legal environment to integrate military capabilities with the Netherlands (Interview No. 8).

Foreign and Defence Policy Orientation

Having discussed the importance of the domestic policy environment of Germany, I will now turn to the foreign and defence policy of the country to map the decisions and preferences of the government in relation to their allies and adversaries. For example, the Russian annexation of Eastern Ukraine is representative of a novel threat that was partially addressed by the German government by deepening its cooperation with the Netherlands and other partners thereby strengthening the collective operational capabilities of NATO.

The Cold War essentially reinstated the reputation of Germany's armed forces after the Second World War and shaped the defence policy of the young republic. Germany's alignment with both the EU and NATO allowed the country to rebuild its economy and create a military force. Fully aware of the reservations of its European neighbours to let it re-join the ranks of European military powers, Germany has since pursued a defence policy that shuns unilateral action and is fully dedicated to multinational alliance structures. This is even mandated in the German Grundgesetz, which only allows the use of the armed forces for national defence and forbids the offensive use of military power unless Germany joins a broader coalition of international partners whose goal it is to 'foster the peaceful coexistence of the global community of states'.[33]

The relationship of the German nation to their armed forces is significantly influenced by the country's history and participation in the two World Wars. The devastation and destruction of the Second World War, in particular, is an omnipresent influence in any debate concerning the country's armed forces. The creation of the German armed forces after the Second World War and its position in society has occurred with the goal to guarantee the territorial defence of West Germany and to contribute to deterrence against the Soviet Union. Today, the entire organisational culture of the Bundeswehr, down to the type of military equipment it procures, is driven by a desire to strike a balance between effective territorial defence and an effort to avoid the type of militarisation the country experienced under the Nazi regime (Interview No. 23).

[33] *Artikel 16 (1): ‚Handlungen, die geeignet sind und in der Absicht vorgenommen werden, das friedliche Zusammenleben der Völker zu stören, insbesondere die Führung eines Angriffskrieges vorzubereiten, sind verfassungswidrig. Sie sind unter Strafe zu stellen'* (German Federal Government 1949, para. 16)

During the Cold War, the Bundeswehr's primary role was to defend Western Europe and counter a potential Soviet threat originating from Eastern Germany. After the Cold War ended, the German government capitalised on the so-called peace dividend by cutting the defence budget significantly and shifting investments to other policy areas (Longinotti 2018). The figure below depicts the defence budget of the Dutch government, in constant 2015 USD. These savings allowed the government to invest in other domains of politics, such as infrastructure, social services, and subsidies to support its economy. Despite continually rising costs for personnel and equipment, the country consistently lowered its defence spending in real terms.

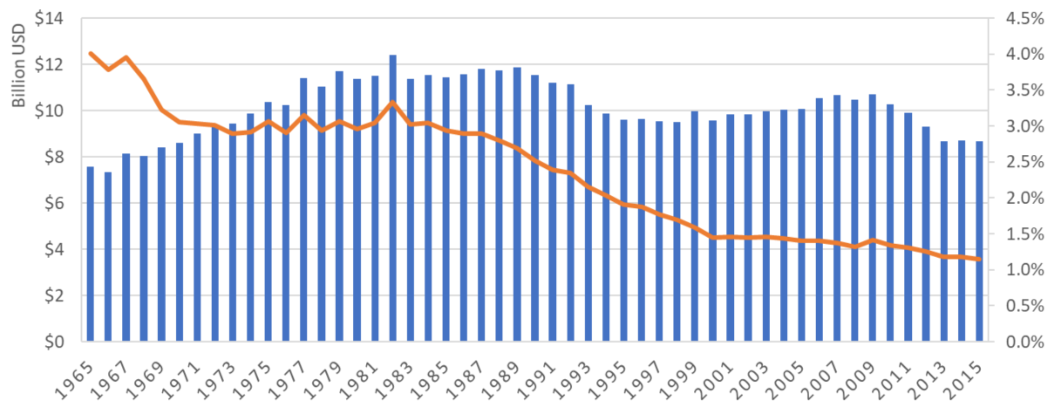

Figure 9: German defence spending in constant 2015 USD millions (blue bars) and per cent of GDP (orange line) – SIPRI Military Expenditure Database 2017, https://www.sipri.org/databases/milex)

The decrease in spending preceded a time in which the Bundeswehr's mission also shifted from a purely territorial defence responsibility to that of expeditionary peace-keeping missions. Deployments to the former Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Mali, and other regions have hence occupied much of the Bundeswehr's operational capabilities. However, these multinational engagements have mostly proved that the Bundeswehr is hardly capable of operating outside of an international coalition. Deployments to the Eurasian and African continents were only possible by concentrating all available equipment, personnel, and support on those troops sent abroad and even those had trouble with faulty equipment (Unger 2018). Critical operational capabilities, ranging from air transport to weapon systems, are hardly or not at all available as a result of the low readiness levels of the Bundeswehr (Karnitschnig 2019). This was, for example, the case when the decision was made to jointly use the Dutch Support Ship Karel Doorman (Interview No. 24).

The severe readiness shortcomings of the Bundeswehr did not go unnoticed by Germany's NATO partners, and it has since been routinely criticised because the lack of equipment is perceived to endanger the alliance as a whole (Rogan 2019; Wintour 2019). The US

administration under President Trump has been criticising Germany's lack of commitment to the NATO spending goal of two per cent of GDP on defence (Herszenhorn 2018). For many years this commentary was ignored until in 2018 the German government decided to increase defence spending after years of stagnant budgets (Riedel 2018; Heinrich 2020). However, these increases still fall a good 0.6 - 0.8 per cent short of the 2 per cent of GDP spending goal for NATO members.

At times, Germany also selectively began to experiment with what some authors describe as 'a normalisation' of its foreign and defence policies (Harnisch and Longhurst 2006, 49). Two of the most well-known examples of such foreign and security policy activism are Germany's participation in the NATO-led Kosovo intervention in 1999 and Chancellor Schroeder's decision to oppose the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. While for a country of its size and economic capabilities, these do not appear to be major foreign policy actions, they were regarded as such by the German public. Similarly, the decision to deviate from its typical transatlantic foreign policy orientation in 2003 was often described as an 'emancipation' from US foreign policy (Forsberg 2005, 227). However, Germany was part of a coalition during the Kosovo intervention and was not the only European country opposing US military action in 2003. While these instances are examples where Germany took on a contrarian policy position, they are hardly examples of true unilateralism.

The conflict in Eastern Ukraine triggered a serious review of NATO's territorial defence capabilities that had not been touched since the end of the Cold War (Michaels 2018). This again led to a review within the Bundeswehr and the Dutch Armed Forces with regards to their organizational imperatives and future challenges (Interview No. 18). Therefore, 2014 can undoubtedly be described as a pivotal year for both case studies, the Netherlands and Germany. These events forced politicians and military planners to review their troops' readiness in case of a NATO Article V conflict and to consider cooperation projects to address operational shortfalls. Under the leadership of Defence Minister Ursula von der Leyen, a strategic review of the country's defence policy with the *Weißbuch 2016* (Defence Policy White Paper) initiated the slow and ongoing process of converting the Bundeswehr into a professional military force with a focus on contemporary threats, such as cyber-security (BMVG 2016b). These reforms started a slow modernisation process and prompted an increase in the German defence budget. In Berlin, the hope is that these will help Germany re-establish its standing among NATO nations (Interview No. 30).

Among many objectives, one was to improve the capabilities of the Bundeswehr both to participate in allied missions abroad and strengthen its former role of territorial defence; at all times though, the Bundeswehr is only a part of multinational coalitions. At no time does

the white paper suggest the Bundeswehr should pursue independent military operations. This insistence on international cooperation is a noteworthy differentiator, as key allies of Germany, namely the US, UK, and France, all aim to achieve a high degree of independence so that their armed forces can always deploy without allied support if necessary. Additionally, Germany increased its involvement in NATO by initiating several policy initiatives to demonstrate its continued commitment to the alliance. Among them, for example, the Berlin Plus Agreement and the Framework Nation Concept. The former improves EU-NATO military planning, and the latter facilitates closer cooperation of operational capabilities between NATO member states (Saxi 2017, 173).

The German government's preference for cooperating in defence is not only a product of its domestic and defence policy preferences but also a mirror of its strong preference for a multilateral foreign policy outlook. Germany's post-war foreign policy objectives have equally supported a multinational and cooperative vision of global diplomacy (Merkel 2017). The EU, NATO, UN, and other international organisations play important roles in shaping German foreign policy decision-making. This multilateral agenda results at times in an interesting domestic dynamic for the government. If the MoD suggests the integration of a specific military capability with a partner, such as the Netherlands, the foreign ministry first tests if it can be done under the umbrella of the European Union instead to ensure no opportunity is wasted to further deepen the ties of European multilateralism (Interview No. 21). The entire Foreign Ministry operates under a directive that requires all departments to test whether any bilateral cooperation could equally be achieved under the auspices of the EU (Interview No. 21). This constitutes an approach that at times is frowned upon by the MoD, given the exponential increase of complexity if one cooperates closely with more than one partner, particularly in an international organisation such as the EU (Interview No. 26).

The combination of a reformed defence policy agenda that seeks to transform the Bundeswehr from an underfunded military of conscripts to a professionally managed and equipped fighting force, in addition to the country's strict preference for a multilateral foreign policy only further encourages the defence cooperation initiatives of the government. Furthermore, the country's institutionalisation of multilateralism in its Basic Law and the clear preferences of its electorate for such a foreign and defence policy further enable any government to share their core state powers with foreign allies. Clearly, the domestic political dynamics of Germany play an important role, one that supports both the neoclassical realist and new intergovernmentalist hypotheses. While the role of selected MoD stakeholders that form a community of practice with their Dutch counterparts bears some validity as an argument, the foreign and domestic policy dynamics of the country

appear to outweigh the power of these communities as the key determinant for the decision to share core state powers.

The Netherlands - Restrained Agility?

Dutch foreign and defence policies differ in two important aspects from those of Germany. Its government maintains that NATO is the country's primary security organisation and opposes a strengthened EU role in the field of defence. From an operational perspective, the comparatively small Dutch armed forces are mostly geared toward expeditionary missions with a strong emphasis on naval and air-transportable capabilities rather than on territorial defence as is the case for the Bundeswehr. A mere quarter the size of the Bundeswehr, the Dutch armed forces have an even longer history of defence cooperation and integration that arguably dates back to 1948 with the signing of the first Belgian-Dutch naval cooperation (Belgium MoD 2017). As in the preceding section, I will discuss the country's stakeholders, domestic policy dynamics, and foreign policy preferences. I find that while the domestic opposition to defence spending is not nearly as pronounced as in Germany, the MoD continuously lacks sufficient funding and even more so than in Germany relies on defence cooperation to contribute effectively to NATO and generate cost synergies. This is an argument that further validates the explanatory power of the second hypothesis.

Political Stakeholders and Domestic Politics

The stakeholders in The Hague are quintessentially the same as those in Berlin. The Prime Minister's office, the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Parliamentary Defence Committee (representing the Parliament), are the relevant stakeholders who approve and review the integration of military capabilities. In conversations with interviewees, the role of the MoD stood out prominently, as stakeholders from the other organisations mostly referenced the decisions made by MoD staff in deepening both bilateral and multilateral cooperations (Interviews No. 2, 25, and 26). While the MoD's political division has a small team dedicated to bilateral cooperation with Germany and other partners, a much larger team of Dutch officers and German exchange officers at the Army Headquarters in Utrecht oversees the processes to continuously improve and deepen the existing integrated capabilities (Interviews No. 11, 16, 17, and 20).

Within the Dutch Army, the service that maintains the most extensive integration projects with Germany, the members of the High-Level Steering Group oversee the semi-annual review of the integration initiatives (Netherlands MoD 2019, 5). This group meets regularly, and it delegates tasks to binational committees which address interoperability concerns raised by Dutch and German soldiers or convene to develop future suggestions to improve existing procedures (Interview No. 10). Such bottom-up efforts have generated important

advances and resulted in the subsequent deepening of the integrated capabilities. The best example being the latest Declaration of Intent signed in 2019 by Germany and the Netherlands which lists ten pages of specific tasks which will help to improve the existing bi- and multilateral defence cooperation projects of the two nations (Netherlands MoD 2019). Unlike in the multinational and highly politicised EU environment, governments here managed to create *de novo* institutions that represent a shortcut to requirements created by both NATO and the EU, similar to the argument brought forward by Bickerton et al. with regards to EU integration post-Maastricht (2015).

In its 2018 Defence White Paper, the Dutch MoD outlined goals that are consistent with those of the German Defence White Paper 2016: its headline goals are to protect Dutch and NATO territory, promote the international legal order and support civil authorities (Netherlands MoD 2018; BMVG 2016b). To achieve these goals, the MoD seeks to increase its overall readiness and have all of its forces be rapidly deployable, invest in modern technology and warfighting equipment, and develop an agile organisation that can effectively meet NATO capability requirements (Netherlands MoD 2018, 7). Keenly aware of the operational shortfalls created after ‘decades of budget cuts’, the MoD states that it will only achieve these ambitious goals through the close cooperation with allies, and where Germany and the NATO Framework Nation Concept are specifically mentioned as a ‘means’ of achieving the MoD’s goals (Netherlands MoD 2018, 25). A foreign and defence policy formulation suggestive of a rational and highly multilateral approach to the decision to share core state powers.

The role of the Dutch Defence Attaché in Berlin, and his counterpart in The Hague, are important to help each government better understand what the underlying dynamics are that drive a specific decision in the partner’s capital (Interviews No. 1 and 15). At the same time, lobbying with their own government as well as with the partner nation often brings the participants of defence cooperation closer together. For instance, it was one of the defence attachés who actively advocated that the members of Dutch and German defence committees come together to discuss the extent to which core state powers are shared between the two governments (Interview No. 15). Similarly to what Adler-Nissen and Pouliot found when they analysed NATO’s communities of practice, the interactions of diplomatic staff can create the momentum for a specific government decision (2014, 905). Often, the questions specific to the ongoing management of the cooperation are discussed directly in the above-mentioned working groups (Interview No. 10). These bi- or multilateral working groups are essentially a mechanism to formalise the input of the community of practice to deepen existing cooperations (Interview No. 10). Bueger considered such issue-specific working groups a ‘platform’ or ‘accountability mechanism’ for transnational communities of practice

(2013, 53–54). While the transnational communities of practice have the power to deepen existing cooperation efforts in both Germany and the Netherlands through their participation in the working groups, they are not the point of origin of new cooperation efforts (Interviews No. 1, 4, 6, and 7). This means that these communities of practice operate within the intergovernmental structures that were created through the G2G negotiations establishing defence cooperations.

The power to initiate cooperations rests with the leadership of the MoD, including the most senior officers of the military. In the Netherland's even the Prime Minister's office, which maintains substantially more powers over the military than the German Chancellery, is largely excluded from the development of defence cooperation agreements; it is merely kept informed through the Defence Minister (Interviews No. 11 and 12). While the Dutch Prime Minister, together with his Cabinet, holds power to deploy armed forces, in most instances he grants much control to the foreign and defence ministries in questions of international cooperation and the execution of foreign policy (Kreijger 2010).

Lastly, the Defence Committee of the *Tweede Kamer* der *Staden-Generaal*, the Dutch House of Representatives, plays an important role in the oversight of the integrated capabilities and deployments of the Dutch military. While the mandates for deployments originate from the government, the Parliament is kept well informed on most activities and has in the past actively campaigned to amend mandates, an example being the inclusion of additional capabilities for the Dutch MINUSMA deployment in Mali (Interview No. 29). Compared to the Bundestag, the Dutch Parliament enjoys limited constitutional powers over the armed forces, but since the massacre at Srebrenica and the controversies surrounding Dutch support of the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the Parliament has been a much more active participant in decisions concerning the military and foreign affairs (Hirsch 2010).

The political debate in The Hague on defence and security differs slightly to the discussion in Berlin, as the government does retain more control over the armed forces and hence is less bound by parliament and other oversight bodies when deciding to share core state powers with foreign allies. With 13 parties and one independent member of Parliament, the Dutch House of Representatives' political discussion is far more diversified than the debates among the six parties represented in the Bundestag. The governing coalition often consists of four or more parties and must ensure agreements across party lines. Similar to Germany however, the Left and Green parties in the Dutch Parliament are critical of military engagements and defence budget increases. The current conservative-liberal coalition government of the Christian Union, Christian Democrats, The People's Party, and

Progressive Liberals, on the other hand, follows that is comparable to the foreign and defence policy agenda of the German government.

For the domestic political debate on military and foreign affairs, there were three events in recent history that are shaping the national debate to this day. Firstly, the massacre at Srebrenica, which became 'a watershed in Dutch thinking about participation in military operations in general' (van Willigen 2016, 703). Srebrenica led to far greater involvement of the Dutch Parliament in foreign affairs leading to an entanglement of domestic political priorities and differences with foreign affairs. One important procedural change that occurred in response to Srebrenica was, the Article 100 amendment to the constitution requiring Government to inform Parliament about military deployments. Compared to the control of the Bundestag over deployments this might seem like a weak control mechanism, but the custom has become a de facto control mechanism since all Dutch governments have requested majority support from Parliament for military engagements since its introduction (van Willigen 2016, 708). This parliamentary oversight mechanism was later strengthened with the creation of the formal review framework (*Toetsingskader*) with the goal to 'improve the quality of decision-making' of the government with regards to military deployments (van Willigen 2016, 708). This framework has then been refined again after the deployment of Dutch troops in Iraq was found to be unconstitutional (Hirsch 2010).

The Dutch participation in the US-led coalition which invaded Iraq in 2003 was a reason for the public and parliament to re-evaluate the oversight of its military again; an engagement by the Dutch armed forces, that was later declared to be illegitimate by an internal Dutch government audit. This resulted in a healthy scepticism toward the involvement of the armed forces as a tool of foreign policy and together with the economic impact on government budgets during the financial crisis of 2007 led to the strict budget cuts imposed by the Parliament on the Dutch military. However, in 2014 public sentiment shifted again, in response to the downing of flight MH17 with 193 Dutch citizens on board. Suddenly, the Ukrainian conflict in Eastern Europe struck a nerve and voters were reminded of the Cold War, the importance of NATO for Dutch security, and the need for territorial defence. In opinion polls after the event, 50 per cent of the Dutch public was in favour of defence budget increases, an unusually high number of the electorate compared to the rest of Europe (Pew Research Center 2016).

<u>Foreign and Defence Policy Orientation</u>

Compared to Germany, the Dutch armed forces have a notably different historical background and raison-d'être. As a colonial power, the Kingdom of the Netherlands demanded a military doctrine that traditionally focused on expeditionary warfare as well as

the defence of its core territory. While this military posture underwent significant reform during the loss of the Dutch colonies in Asia, as well as during the Cold War, the Dutch military arguably has retained a more global perspective than the German armed forces. One reason for this is the continued responsibility for the security of its Caribbean territories.

Toward the end of the Cold War, the Dutch defence budget decreased by about 20 per cent, but its most severe decreases came in 2010 after the Netherlands went through a political crisis which resulted in the complete withdrawal of all Dutch forces from the Middle East. These budget cuts threatened to severely impact the operational capabilities of the armed forces, such as the Army's only armoured brigade (Hennis-Plasschaert 2013). In 2016, the Dutch government merely spent 1.16 per cent of its GDP on defence, far below the European NATO average of 1.46 per cent (Bentinck 2018). The Netherland's defining military campaigns included the operations in Bosnia and Kosovo, Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, brief participation in the US-led coalition that invaded Iraq in 2003, and currently the MINUSMA and EUTM Mali missions together with several of its European partners.

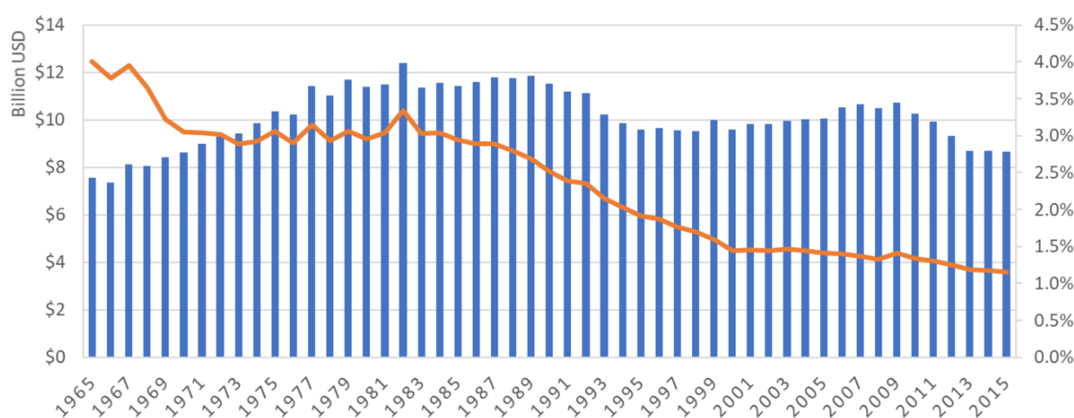

Figure 10: Dutch defence spending in constant 2015 USD millions (blue bars) and per cent of GDP (orange line) – SIPRI Military Expenditure Database 2017, https://www.sipri.org/databases/milex)

Apart from their active participation in NATO and the EU activities, the Dutch armed forces have also heavily invested in bi- and multilateral cooperation outside of these two organisations. In fact, the ongoing push to improve NATO readiness, EU defence initiatives (e.g. PESCO), and the demand to advance the cooperation with its two key bilateral partners Belgium and Germany are putting much pressure on the small state's capabilities and budget (Bentinck 2018).

The 2018 Defence White Paper of the Dutch forces written in an effort to generate more transparency and acceptance for proposed defence budget increases states as the main objectives of the armed forces: 'to [maintain the] safe[ty] in the Kingdom of the Netherlands

and Europe, foster security in Europe's neighbouring regions, and secure connections from the Netherlands as a hub and its lines of communication' (Netherlands MoD 2018). While these objectives are based on a legal foundation, Article 97 of the Dutch constitution, they also represent a modern take on the responsibilities of the Dutch military that is driven by the country's position at the heart of Europe and as an international trade hub.

As a result of these guidelines and the small size of the Netherlands compared to its allies, a national security strategy that only revolves around the Netherlands, outside of an international context, does not exist. The Dutch population is keenly aware that its economic success is built on international trade and that multilateral institutions provide the necessary regimes to safeguard and coordinate international trade (Interview No. 14). In no other European member state is approval for NATO as high as in the Netherlands, 72 per cent of citizens view the alliance favourably (Pew Research Center 2020). Therefore, the Netherlands prioritize multilateralism, which at first glance seems like a clear overlap in foreign policy preferences with Germany's foreign policy agenda. Also, in questions of international trade or Eurozone economics, the two countries more often agree with one another than many other countries in the EU (Zunneberg 2017). In the realm of defence, both countries are adamant supporters of NATO as well as participants in the EU's CSDP. Their commitment to the transatlantic alliance has consistently been at the core of their defence policies, even though both countries have it in common that they regularly miss the NATO defence spending target of two per cent of GDP.

However, there are three important discrepancies in the two countries' foreign and defence policies. For the Netherlands, NATO is the supreme and only defence organisation and alliance (Interviews No. 1, 28, and 29). Unlike Germany, the Netherland's military leadership and many politicians of the conservative ruling party do not support a stronger role of the EU in defence (Interviews No. 28 and 29). From a Dutch perspective, the defence and security activities of the EU are not yet mature enough to entrust them with critical missions or territorial defence (van der Veer 2018, 21). For Germany, the vision of a European Army is a stated goal and integrating armed forces on a small scale with partners that pursue the same goal represents the first step toward this vision (Rankin 2018). In my discussions with senior policymakers and officers of the Dutch armed forces, it was made abundantly clear that this is a frequent point of contention between the two partners (Interviews No. 6, 7, 10, 15, 17, 28, and 29).

One Dutch parliamentarian said that 'more cooperation on bi- and multilateral efforts are likely to evolve [between the two countries] but no ceding of control to Brussels' (Interview No. 29). According to a senior Dutch officer, even among the tightly integrated Dutch and

German militaries, there is no agreement whether the ongoing integration of capability represents a stepping-stone to a European military capability (Interview No. 1). The Dutch take a much more cautious view on the idea of transferring coercive force to the EU versus sharing it with Germany (Interview No. 28). Ironically, and despite the strong opposition of the Dutch government to an EU Army, a 2017 Eurobarometer found that more Dutch citizens (74%) are in support of an EU Army then German citizens (55%) (Eurobarometer 2017).

Also, there is a willingness for early intervention if the security interests of the Netherlands are at stake that is simply not present with the German public (van der Veer 2018, 20). Deployments outside the European periphery of the Mediterranean Basin are topics of contention in German politics but would not much influence the political debate in the Netherlands, a country that has a truly global outlook with far-flung security interests. The Karel Doorman’s trip to Aruba, shortly after its commissioning, is a show of why the Royal Netherlands Navy maintains such naval capabilities: to project military power to regions of interest far away from home (St. Martin News Network 2017). Germany’s military is instead focused on resupplying forward-based troops in the European periphery. Furthermore, the Royal Netherlands Navy considers the United Kingdom and Belgium its preferred naval partners for this specific reason (Interview No. 13).

Finally, while both countries fervently subscribe to multilateralism their motivation to pursue a multilateral foreign and defence policy agenda is significantly different. Germany’s motivation to act in concert with allies is driven by its historical failings and a sense that a deployment approved by international organisations affords its participants a moral high ground. The Netherlands, on the other hand, acts multilaterally because its size and limited global influence requires a loyal alliance commitment to guarantee its own national security and economic prosperity. This critical difference came to light in 2003, when Dutch Prime Minister Balkenende followed the US and UK into the Iraq War while Germany insisted on a United Nations mandate for a less violent or diplomatic intervention (Hirsch 2010). Therefore, while both governments seek to strengthen allied capabilities, their decision to share core state powers are the result of either a calculated analysis of either a lack of capabilities (Netherlands) or a powerful domestic political agenda that highly incentivises governments to pursue multilateral cooperation (Germany).

Conclusion

In the previous chapter, I demonstrated that defence cooperation projects do affect the core state powers of the Dutch and German governments and discussed to what extent the relevant stakeholders were taking potential limitations to their decision-making powers into

account when sharing their core state powers with each other. While financial commitments appeared to have been made with a clear understanding of dependencies, foreign policy and coercive force commitments have largely been ignored. In this chapter, I built on this analysis by introducing much of the empirical evidence collected for this research project to explain the circumstances under which the two governments decided to share core state powers and then test the three hypotheses against the evidence.

The findings have been suggestive of a rational approach in the respective governments' decision to cooperate. The detailed discussion on the domestic political dynamics and motivations of decision-makers in both countries supported the assumption that defence cooperation projects generate tangible political and operational benefits for all decision-makers involved. One particularly descriptive comment at an expert panel in The Hague came from General Jan Swillens, commander of a shared Dutch-German unit who said: 'If we do not think Project Taurus is a viable project, we should kill it in an instant' (Atlantische Commissie 2018). The chapter began with a review of the bilateral defence cooperation agreements between the Netherlands and Germany as well as the multilateral EATC cooperation to test the validity of my findings and test the hypotheses.

Even though the empirical evidence seemed to support the existence of a community of practice among the Dutch and German land forces that are jointly trying to fulfil their professional responsibilities to the highest possible standard, this constructivist hypothesis could not be validated to have prompted the decision of the two government to cooperate. While the neoclassical realist hypothesis assumes that domestic politics constrain unilateral strengthening of the military and encourage cooperation, the evidence also showed that the inherent political benefits of cooperating are part of the rational decision-making process one would expect from the liberal new intergovernmentalist answer to the research question. Overall, the neoclassical realist hypothesis already appeared weaker in light of the evidence from Chapter 4 which demonstrated the high degree of dependencies created between the two governments, a rather uncommon behaviour of governments in the neorealist understanding of government actions.

Furthermore, this chapter demonstrated the two nations' strong multilateral foreign policy focus, indicative of interest to strengthen the absolute security of alliances. The benefits of cooperation clearly emerged upon closer investigation of the evidence and suggested that the two governments must have pursued a calculated approach, in line with the new intergovernmentalist theoretical framework of the second hypothesis. The EATC, the Dutch Joint Support Ship, and Project Taurus, among others, were key examples discussed in this

chapter of how the two governments addressed long-standing capability shortages with the help of their partner.

While the empirical evidence above has been suggestive of the explanatory power of the second hypothesis, I have not yet reviewed the deeply integrated defence cooperation projects that were initiated by both countries in direct support of the EU's defence and security objectives or, more importantly, NATO's Defence Planning Process. I will do so in the following chapter, analysing two projects under EU auspices and the three highly integrated NATO defence cooperation initiatives, to which Dutch and German forces both contribute, to further validate the strength of the second hypothesis.

Chapter 6: The Role of NATO and the EU for G2G Defence Cooperation

For the Netherlands and Germany, their membership in the EU and NATO forms the backbone of their defence and security relationships with other nations. As discussed in Chapter 2, alliances that include mutual security assurances are often the foundation of defence cooperation agreements. The purpose of this chapter is twofold. On the one hand, I build upon Chapter 2 and explain what EU and NATO membership entails for the Netherlands and Germany. I demonstrate that alliance membership has been critical in initiating the deeply-integrated defence cooperation projects under review in this thesis. However, I also show that most of the EU's own operational cooperation efforts, namely in the form of the Battlegroups, are no more than a lightly integrated military capability with at-best limited impact on participants' core state powers. This is particularly so in comparison to the deeply integrated defence cooperation agreements reviewed in the previous two chapters. This chapter finds that the supranational EU efforts have made very limited advances in terms of integrating the military capabilities of EU member states' militaries.

On the other hand, this Chapter demonstrates that the EU and NATO have performed an important role as coordinating frameworks for the G2G cooperation projects of the Netherlands and Germany. The empirical evidence discussed in this section is in direct support of the second hypothesis that the two governments shared their core state powers to strengthen the absolute military capabilities of the EU and NATO. It draws on the empirical evidence from stakeholder interviews to show that most of the defence cooperation projects under review are set up to meet the commitments of member states to the EU and NATO, even though, the initiation and management of these occurs wholly separate from either organisation.

I begin by exploring the EU's cooperation efforts under the banner of the CSDP, such as its *Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO)* initiative and specifically those operational capabilities that have been stood up to be deployed jointly or act on behalf of participating member states, namely the *EU Battlegroups* and the *Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC)*. This is followed by an analysis of a relatively recent NATO effort that seeks to achieve closer operational cooperation among its member states, the *Framework Nations Concept*. All these initiatives have advanced closer operational cooperation among NATO and

EU members, but they are not defence cooperation agreements in a sense that they permanently integrate parts of member states' armed forces, as in the case of the Dutch and German cooperation projects. I argue that the EU and NATO initiatives are mostly coordinating frameworks that encourage G2G cooperation among member states, but as organisations, they have little or no impact on core state powers. The EU and NATO do not share core state powers with its members, but they are the operational requirements-setters for bi-lateral and multilateral G2G cooperation. Some EU and NATO members, including the Netherlands and Germany, have decided to share core state powers with each other to meet the operational readiness requirements of these two organisations.

EU Cooperation Initiatives

What role does the EU play for the defence cooperation projects of the Netherlands and Germany? Is the organisation indispensable for bi- and multilateral defence cooperation in Europe or are its efforts in security and defence simply a facilitating mechanism? In this section, I seek to answer these questions and analyse what role the EU plays for the defence cooperation efforts of the Netherlands and Germany and their decision to share core state powers with each other and other European allies.

In 1998, the French-British St Malo declaration significantly elevated the EU's role in security and defence and envisioned an ambitious agenda for what was at the time the WEU (Koutrakos 2013, 18). The two European states that were at the time most active in matters of defence and security forged ahead with a vision that would have ripple effects in the following EU Treaties of Nice and Lisbon or the Defence Headline Goals 2010 which launched the EU's first operational capability, the EU Battlegroups (Koutrakos 2013, 19; Major and Mölling 2011, 5). The Lisbon Treaty fostered the institutional relevance of CSDP and set the stage to become a much more versatile and established policy tool. However, the impetus of the St Malo declaration is also indicative of the strong intergovernmental decision-making driving the integration of EU defence policy at one of its most critical junctures (Koutrakos 2013, 20). All of the CSDP's decision-making occurs in a consensus format among the participating member states. The CSDP developed as the EU's umbrella structure to coordinate, plan, and execute all its defence and security activities. It not only incorporates a collective self-defence clause like NATO's Article V for all EU member states but it is also home to defence-related agencies or bodies, such as the European Defence Agency, or the EU Military Staff. Based on the Lisbon Treaty's Article 42.6, 25 member states also decided to launch the EU's PESCO initiative which includes multiple projects 'aimed at incentivising cooperation among member states in the field of defence capability development and operations (Fiott, Missiroli, and Tardy 2017, 8). At the same time, the EU's Military Staff added a permanent operational command to its

facilities which can command CSDP missions, for example, if the EU Battlegroups were to be deployed in a non-combat mission (Barnes 2017).[34] Both the Netherlands and Germany are principally participating in the entire breadth of the EU's defence-related activities, albeit not in all missions and activities. Understanding to what extent their commitments to the EU affects core state powers and what role the EU plays in advancing their G2G defence cooperation projects is important prior to analysing the validity of the hypotheses in the second part of the thesis.

Permanent Structured Cooperation

PESCO is the latest notable initiative in EU defence and security cooperation. In 2017, Germany, France, Italy, and Spain initiated the activation of PESCO to foster EU cohesion in security and defence at a time when multiple conflicts at Europe's periphery emerged as security risks to the Union. The Syrian and Libyan civil wars, the rise of ISIS, the Russian annexation of parts of Eastern Ukraine, and increasing terrorist threats all contributed to a radically different perception of the threat environment by European governments (Quencez and Billon-Galland 2020). Simultaneously, this sense of insecurity overlapped with the scheduled exit of the United Kingdom from the EU in 2020 and continuous US criticism and serious threats to withdraw from NATO commitments if European governments fail to deliver on defence spending (Herszenhorn 2018; Barnes and Cooper 2019). In light of these events, the group of four countries activated a hitherto 'sleeping' paragraph of the Treaty of Lisbon, 42.6, that envisioned a commitment by EU member states to strengthen the Union's defence capabilities by integrating and cooperating in a range of military activities (The European Union 2008, para. 42).

Outside of Malta and Denmark, all other 25 member states participate in PESCO and have committed to the goals of the initiative and initiated 47 different cooperation projects under the PESCO banner (European Union 2019). However, participation is voluntary and intergovernmental in nature; no part of PESCO requires states to share core state powers with each other. The 47 cooperation projects are structured to include one lead nation and multiple supporting nations. For example, while Germany leads seven projects, the Netherlands only leads one project (Blockmans and Macchiarini Crosson 2019, 7). Project types are very diverse and include for example the creation of a Maritime Unmanned Anti-Submarine System, the

[34] The EU Battlegroups are a military formation established in 2004 to allow the EU to rapidly respond to crises independent of NATO or the UN. Often two or more member states contribute two brigades for a period of six months that are readily deployable should the EU Council unanimously decide to deploy them (Major and Mölling 2011, 14). To date, they have never been deployed. If two or more member states contribute forces to a battlegroup their temporary involvement with each other does not represent an example of a highly integrated defence cooperation by the definition in my thesis, but countries that do cooperate closely often decide to contribute these integrated formations to the EU Battlegroups, such as the Franco-German brigade in 2006 or the Dutch-German contributions in 2007 and 2011.

development of the European MALE RPAS, or the launch of an EU Cyber Academia and Innovation hub (The European Union 2020a). The projects are further supported by the simultaneous launch of the EU Defence Fund that will finance many of these initiatives with multi-million euro contract awards for multinational industrial projects (Brzozowski 2019; The European Union 2020b).

Both the Netherlands and Germany participate in multiple PESCO cooperation projects. The flagship project for both militaries is the *Military Mobility* project, a PESCO initiative that seeks to enhance the mobility of armed forces within the EU (European Parliamentary Research Service 2020). While the goal of the project to improve the movement of troops and equipment across the continent appears to be a very tangible advance of operational capability, the project is, in fact, a purely bureaucratic exercise. The core of the work consists of reducing EU-wide red-tape that today hinders the movement of troops and equipment across borders. For example, by speeding up the issuing of visas and approvals required to ship soldiers and weapons from one country to another. (European Parliamentary Research Service 2020). Such light-touch cooperation hardly impacts the core state powers of either participating state. While one could argue that their regulatory regimes (part of the core state power of public administration) are impacted by the decision to coordinate their requirements with those of allied partners, the actual control over their armed forces or ultimate decision-making powers over highly critical national security assets are not touched by this cooperation. Military Mobility is just one example, but if one analyses PESCO projects more broadly, there are no instances of operational cooperation that bring together thousands of troops under one command structure. The focus is rather on facilitating infrastructure functions of armed forces; I described such cooperation as *joint force generation* projects in Chapter 2. Each participant retains their independent capabilities but benefits from the joint investment in infrastructure or, as in the case of the Military Mobility project, in the reduction of bureaucratic hurdles.

One recurring difference in the Dutch and German approach to EU defence cooperation is the long-term vision of each government as to what the future holds for a permanent EU military capability. While the communicated goal of PESCO is to strengthen ‘European Strategic Autonomy’, various member states have interpreted this objective differently (Fiott, Missiroli, and Tardy 2017; Fiott 2018). While ‘strategic autonomy’, is often referenced in Brussels, Germany, or France, it is conveniently ignored by the Dutch government’s communication to its parliament about the Dutch participation in PESCO; there it says the Netherlands seeks ‘concrete results’, and hopes to improve European contributions to NATO (Zandee 2018, 3; Major 2019). Dutch participation in ‘PESCO is not placed in the context of a grand design for European defence’ but is rather considered a pragmatic operational enhancement to its military readiness without the need to commit to serious limitations of the government’s core state

powers, even the government's choice to support the PESCO Military Mobility project is driven by its value-add for NATO's territorial defence mission (Zandee 2018, 7). The third governing coalition of Dutch Prime Minister Rutte is made up of four parties whose members are eager to preserve NATO's primacy in defence matters on the European continent; therefore, participation in EU missions or defence cooperation initiatives is generally played down (Interviews No. 28 and 29). In Berlin, on the other hand, PESCO was met with 'enormous enthusiasm' (Major 2019, 2). Not surprisingly, as both France and Germany were among the key advocates for the initiation of PESCO in 2017. Unlike the Netherlands, though, Germany considers PESCO not just a pragmatic capability improvement for NATO but as a means of strengthening European strategic autonomy overall (Major 2019, 6). From a German perspective, the 'America First' rhetoric of President Trump's administration has led to the recognition that the EU needs to be groomed to take on territorial defence capabilities if necessary (Interviews No. 21 and 26). Nevertheless, other PESCO projects it participates in also help its NATO commitments, such as the European Medical Command, a PESCO project that directly strengthens Germany's Wales commitment to foster 'Medical Support' capabilities within the NATO alliance (Bundeswehr-Journal 2017).

Essentially, PESCO is addressing an inherently difficult problem for the EU, which is to coordinate capability shortfalls within the organisation's member state militaries across 25 participating states. It addresses a lack of investment in emerging technologies, lowers administrative hurdles, and improves sharing of information across military domains. PESCO generally enables better communication and an exchange of ideas without requiring a high degree of integration between participants. However, compared to the Dutch-German tank crews training together in a shared military base in Northern Germany, PESCO's projects are still far from what one would consider highly integrated.

The EU's Battlegroups and Military Planning and Conduct Capability

I have already referred to the MPCC, the non-executive military command that has been established within the EU's Military Staff to oversee CSDP training missions. To date, it has no authority to oversee combat operations, as such a degree of authority would have duplicated existing NATO structures that are being used for the command of combat operations, particularly since the Berlin Plus agreement allows for the use of NATO headquarters for EU missions (Barnes 2017; Marchi Balossi-Restelli 2011, 162). However, its launch in 2017 was an important step indicative of EU member states' willingness to enable the EU's mission planning capabilities for military operations (Koenig and Walter-Franke 2015, 10). Together with the EU's already existing battle groups, the EU is slowly acquiring the range of capabilities necessary to manage the full scope of CSDP missions abroad while also strengthening its members' territorial defence contributions to NATO.

The EU Battlegroups concept was approved by the European Council in 2004, among the many EU defence cooperation initiatives it comes closest to the integrated G2G operational capabilities reviewed in this thesis, as it represents a rapidly deployable battalion that on occasion is made up of the troops of more than one nation (Reykers 2017, 459–60). At all times two battlegroups are on ‘stand by’ for a duration of 6 months at a readiness level that allows for deployment in about two weeks’ time (Marchi Balossi-Restelli 2011, 161). The troops may be provided by a single member state, typically those countries with larger militaries, or by a host nation that takes on contributions of smaller member states with niche capabilities. However, despite various opportunities to leverage this unique EU military capability, the EU Battlegroups have never been deployed. The existing literature has discussed at length why this might be the case, arguments lay blame on the unanimity requirement for deployment decisions, fear of relinquishing command over troops, their comparatively small size, or the costs associated with such deployments, among many others (e.g. Jacoby and Jones 2008; Marchi Balossi-Restelli 2011; Reykers 2017; Vincent 2018).

On paper, the EU Battlegroups appear to be a strong military and foreign policy tool at the disposal of EU leaders, despite their limited size and operational versatility. In the rotations were two or more nations come together to form a multinational battlegroup, they are, in a sense a temporarily integrated military unit that trains together and prepares for deployment. Hence, in these instances, the EU Battlegroups are similar to the direct G2G defence cooperation agreements of the Netherlands and Germany. The participating governments could technically face similar constraints on their core state powers if there ever were real momentum behind an EU mission to deploy the EU battlegroups rather than a combination of member states’ armed forces. Also, participants need to make real financial commitments to keep up the readiness of the battlegroups during the six-month rotation, marginally impacting their core state power of public finance (Reykers 2017, 460). However, the dependencies highlighted here are very limited, as participation in the EU Battlegroup rotations is voluntary, financial constraints are comparatively low, and even if a consensus vote does deploy the Battlegroup, it would be relieved after six months by its successor. Most of the time, at least one member state will have reason to object to a deployment, Germany opposed the Battlegroups’ deployments on multiple occasions, as for example to the Democratic Republic of Congo (Chappell 2014, 145). Furthermore, the first time the Netherlands contributed forces to the EU Battlegroups it actually did so by committing its *Korps Mariniers* who supported the UK’s Royal Marines as the UK served as the host nation. Both units are elite infantry forces that already lock back on long-standing cooperation in the field of amphibious warfare.

Essentially, the Dutch government leveraged the years of joint operational enhancements gained from cooperating with the UK armed forces bilaterally to provide a high-readiness fighting

force to the EU Battlegroups. It is not surprising then that the existing intergovernmental operational cooperations were often described as the seeds or foundation for ambitious EU and NATO objectives (Interviews No. 13 and 23). Similarly, in 2006, Germany and France's first joint EU Battlegroup contributions built on the experience the two states have had with the Franco-German Brigade, a longstanding Franco-German operation cooperation that is closely integrated since its inception. In 2007 and 2011, the Dutch and German armed forces together stood up another battlegroup together with Finish, Lithuanian and Austrian troops (European Defence Information 2020).

Unlike the EU Battlegroups, the 1st Dutch-German Corp has been deployed to Afghanistan multiple times, and the German Rapid Reaction Forces which are integrated with and in command of their Dutch counterpart are scheduled to be deployed to NATO's VJTF in 2023 (Brasser 2019). Plainly speaking, the EU's actual and realistically deployable operational capabilities still fall short of seriously impinging on its member states' core state powers. Also, PESCO does not stand up military formations; it only creates cooperation on niche technology and industrial topics or at the most generates operational improvements at an administrative level, as is the case with the military mobility project led by the Netherlands. While the intention for the EU Battlegroups is to deploy a brigade-size unit to a conflict, the political hurdles to do so have so far proven to be rather challenging (Marchi Balossi-Restelli 2011). The majority of EU activities should still be considered as facilitating frameworks for multinational missions, PESCO projects seek to fill capability gaps, Battlegroups are a symbolic force structure to encourage interoperability, and the two deeply integrated military capabilities supplied by the EU, the EU Satellite Centre and the Galileo Satellite Constellation's military-grade navigation system are important operational backbones, but their effect on core state powers is shielded as they represent a *pooling and sharing* capability that member states can leverage without the consent of fellow participants. Lastly, the EU Battlegroups are the capability that comes closest to an integrated operational force, but one that is unlikely to be deployed given its current structure. In the event of a conflict, national capabilities or only the most closely intertwined shared military units will be deployed under the command of a NATO-supplied headquarters.

EU-Specific Multilateral Cooperation

In this section, I present two multilateral defence cooperation projects that are institutionalised as military operational capabilities in direct support of the participating EU members, among them the Netherlands and Germany. These are highly integrated capabilities that meet this thesis' definition of a highly integrated operational capability. However, the dependencies created are not quite as severe as those of the bilateral examples as the structure of these initiatives follows the pool capabilities for all participants allowing and hence limit the policy

coordination required to leverage the joint capability. Nevertheless, they are examples of instances where the Dutch and German government prioritised the integration of a military capability over the development of an independent national capability.

Name	Type of Cooperation	Year initiated	Countries involved
EU Satellite Center	Operational	1992	EU Member states
European Union's Global Satellite Navigation System (GNSS) Galileo	Operational	2001	EU Member states + Switzerland

Figure 11: EU-specific multilateral defence cooperations with Dutch and German participation

Since 1992, the EU Satellite Centre operates to support European countries with the collection of geospatial intelligence. Initially, it was formed as an institution of the Western European Union. When the organisation dissolved, the centre became an official EU agency in support of the EU's CSDP missions in 2002 (EU Satellite Centre 2020). Ground-based satellite centres are expensive to maintain and operate, which makes them ideal candidates for defence cooperation projects that create financial synergies. The geospatial intelligence collected is crucial to military operations, and not all countries can afford a sovereign satellite data collection centre. Germany does maintain indigenous geo-intelligence capabilities; however, its participation in this project strengthened these without significantly impacting its national defence budget or initiating a domestic political debate around the widening of its military surveillance capabilities.[35]

The second project is also space-related, the European Union's Galileo satellite constellation. It is a large undertaking, a €10 billion project that is financed by the EU's member states and executed by the European Space Agency (Fernholz 2018). Only the United States, Russia, and China maintain similar sovereign geospatial positioning systems, technologies that not only have significant economic benefits but which also represent a critical operational military capability. Germany's participation in the project provides it with access to the classified military channels of the constellation that are highly accurate and can be relied upon if other systems, such as GPS, are not operational. Similar to the EU Satellite Centre, the funding for this militarily relevant navigation capability does not originate from the national defence

[35] Germany's national contributions to the EU Satellite Centre are paid for by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Bundesfinanzministerium 2018, sec. 05)

budget.[36] Politically speaking this project is communicated primarily as civilian infrastructure despite its clear military applicability. Given the required funding for this project, the financial synergies, together with the operational benefits of an independent navigation capability, were key drivers for the German government to move ahead with this integration initiative. The disagreements around national workshares prior to the launch of the project are indicative of the important role financial synergies played in governments' decision to cooperate in this instance (Deutsche Welle 2007).

Financial incentives for cooperation were important drivers for the German government to participate in these multilateral capabilities (Interviews No. 1 and 26). The costs of space infrastructure are far higher than those related to the integration of one or two army divisions. However, despite finances being a critical driver for the German government to share its core state powers with multiple partners, the operational gains have been equally important (Interview No. 24). Simply put, Germany would not have access to a dedicated satellite navigation constellation for its military were it not for Project Galileo. While Germany would likely have maintained its own satellite centre, any unilateral approach would likely be more limited in reach and technical sophistication.

Both projects directly support the new intergovernmentalist hypothesis (H2) that the two governments have pursued a calculated approach to the sharing of core state powers. While the impact on core state powers in these two examples is rather limited compared to integrated military formations, they are highly integrated in the sense that ultimate control over the capability does not rest with the German or Dutch government alone. Similarly to the EUMS, they represent intergovernmental 'ad-hoc' institutions of the EU that are necessary for the EU's CSDP missions but have broader operational applicability for all participating member states (Bickerton et al., Hodson, and Puetter 2015, 116).

NATO's Cooperation Initiatives

While the EU's role as a security actor was frequently referenced by civilian stakeholders whom I interviewed, this was not the case with most of the Dutch and German uniformed personnel (Interviews No. 2, 21, and 30). Among the military personnel whom I interviewed, NATO is undisputedly considered the primary security organisation for the Netherlands and Germany (Interviews No. 1, 5, 6, 7, 10, 19, and 20). For questions of interoperability, technical standards, defence planning, and of course territorial defence, the German and Dutch MoD heavily rely on coordination among NATO partners. Particularly for the Netherlands, it is hard to overstate how NATO-centric its defence doctrine is, but even for Germany, a continuous proponent of a more

[36] Germany's national contributions to the Galileo Satellite constellation are paid for by the Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure (Bundesfinanzministerium 2018, sec. 12).

powerful EU role in defence and security, the adhesion to NATO as the primary defence actor is strongly rooted in the MoD's day-to-day decisions (Interviews No. 1, 20, 26). Given the centrality of the organisation to both nation's defence establishments, I use this section to analyse the role it plays for the bi- and multilateral G2G cooperations under review and to analyse to what extent the defence cooperation projects of the Dutch and German armed forces contribute to the absolute operational strength of the alliance.

NATO has accumulated significant high-intensity combat mission experience over the decades, in and outside of Europe. Its continuous deployments in Afghanistan and the Mediterranean Basin are a testament of the organisation's ability to command and control global military operations among the armed forces of its member states. That being said, its members take on responsibilities in a way that isolates their operational procedures and respects their unique government mandates. For example, the Bundeswehr is deployed in Northern Afghanistan where it takes on only those operations that are in line with its parliamentary mandate. If combat requirements arise that fall outside of what the troops are authorized to do, other NATO members have to step in (Interview No. 6). For example, German soldiers are only allowed to patrol streets in heavily armoured vehicles and are not allowed to leave the base at night, limitations that were unique to their government mandate (Morelli and Belkin 2009). Some observers stated that Germany's political leadership at the time was simply not willing to accept the combat realities in Afghanistan and instead overtly stuck to the idea of peaceful state-building without weapons (Allers 2016, 1171). This shows that while NATO members coordinate closely with regard to requirements, technology, and deployments, they are not integrated to a degree where one member states' military could not function without the capabilities of others. At least with regard to the defence of a member's basic range of military capabilities for territorial defence, more complex missions abroad have always heavily relied on the air transport, stand-off weapons, and aerial refuelling capabilities of NATO's best-equipped member states (Nielsen 2012). Clearly, there is a variance in the degree of integration witnessed in the alliance compared to the German or Dutch decision to relinquish their air transport command to fully rely on the EATC or the German decision to share a naval vessel with the Dutch Navy; NATO itself does not seek such levels of integration among its members.

As a truly intergovernmental organisation, NATO does not enjoy many decision-making powers over its members' militaries during peacetime; however, it does encourage close cooperation amongst them. In fact, its members, including the Netherlands and Germany, often cooperate with the express purpose of meeting the operational objectives set out in the NATO Defence Planning Process (NDPP). In the following sections, I will discuss multiple examples of NATO member initiatives to coordinate their operational capabilities to meet NDPP requirements, namely the Framework Nations Concept, initiated by the German MoD or the Joint

Expeditionary Force, led by the British MoD. Furthermore, I will analyse a set of defence cooperation initiatives that have led to highly integrated structures, as defined in Chapter 2. These include NATO's very-own AWACS fleet and Alliance Ground Surveillance system as well as its member-run Multinational Multi-Role Tanker Transport (MRTT) and Strategic Airlift Capability (SAC). Unlike the EU initiatives, the latter are integrated operational capabilities that imply tangible dependencies on the core state powers of their participants. However, just like PESCO and the EU Battlegroups, their goal is to strengthen the absolute military capability of the NATO alliance.

Framework Nations Concept

The Framework Nations Concept was introduced by the German government to other NATO partners in 2013 and quickly adopted by multiple member states after its official launch at the NATO Wales summit in 2014 (Major and Mölling 2014). The idea is that one of the larger member states serves as a lead nation and smaller alliance members plug into their overall operational capability with niche expertise. For example, Germany will be the lead nation for NATO's Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) in 2023 in the Baltics, with the Netherlands and Norway as supporting nations to achieve the desired capability of 5,000 troops that are deployed within 48 hours (Fiorenza 2019). While its initial launch was accidentally leaked before the German MoD had fully developed the concept, it quickly recovered from this difficult start and now counts 18 NATO members as participants, including the Netherlands and Germany, as well as the non-NATO members Switzerland, Finland, and Sweden (Interview No. 8).

Importantly, the ultimate goal of the FNC is to meet the operational objectives set out in NATO's Defence Planning Process (NDPP) (Allers 2016, 1186). The NDPP has gained in importance since the 2014 Wales summit as NATO leaders noticed that their armed forces, particularly in the field of territorial defence, suffered from significant capability gaps. The FNC is supposed to address these shortfalls of individual member states by merging their capabilities in a hub and spoke model; these multinational teams of NATO militaries then stand ready to fulfil a specific requirement of the NDPP. FNC members cooperate to meet NDPP goals and address capability shortfalls in the areas of C2, Effects, Joint Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (J-ISR), and Protection. These were identified as critical categories within which many European NATO members required further capabilities to meet NDPP requirements agreed-upon in Wales (Frisell and Sjökvist 2019, 18).

The general consensus has been that Germany initiated the FNC to demonstrate its reliability as a NATO ally after its reputation among allies had been severely hurt due to its half-hearted ISAF participation, its opposition to the Libya intervention, and its unwillingness to meet the

organisation's two per cent defence spending target (e.g. Major and Mölling 2014, 2; Allers 2016, 1168; Saxi 2017, 180). The FNC nicely balances the German MoD's desire to re-establish its reputation as a reliable partner without the need to increase defence spending, which at the time did not enjoy domestic political support. Furthermore, it created a platform in which Germany could prove its leadership and NATO engagement without awakening historical fears of German hegemony among its European partners as the FNC is structured as a collaborative framework that is a truly multilateral foreign policy tool to meet the requirements set out by the NATO alliance (Allers 2016, 1173). However, FNC participants continue to be solely responsible for their NATO commitments and deal with NATO and their NDPP obligations unilaterally, essentially for NATO it does not matter whether they gain these capabilities individually by means of defence budget increases of via the FNC framework (Frisell and Sjökvist 2019, 18).

> 'NATO force generation will continue to deal with NATO members and partners equally and individually. All participating states retain the right to decide on the development and deployment of their armed forces. Just as they can choose to "plug in" capabilities and forces, participating states are able to "plug out" at any point in time. They can also change their status from participant to observer in individual capability development projects.' (Frisell and Sjökvist 2019, 17–18).

In 2016, when Germany already developed close bilateral G2G cooperation with various partners, such as the Netherlands, Norway, and Poland, the government decided to fold these projects into the NATO Framework Nation Concept. The goal was to establish large military formations that are closely linked to NATO's territorial defence mission rather than just capability development (Frisell and Sjökvist 2019, 22). This shifted the initial focus of the FNC to meet *functional* capability shortfalls through the creation of capability clusters, to one that creates large multinational military formations (Frisell and Sjökvist 2019, 16). This allowed NATO to meet better the ambitious readiness targets of the NATO Readiness Action Plan agreed upon at the NATO Warsaw summit in 2016 and dovetailed nicely with the German MoD's recently concluded Strategic Defence Review that highlighted the Bundeswehr's role as a facilitator of multilateral operational capabilities (BMVG 2016a; 2016b; Saxi 2017, 184). This decision by the High-Level Group, the FNC's steering body, to expand the FNC's use-case interestingly occurred just before PESCO was launched and some of its capability-building projects began to overlap with those clusters already established in the early days of FNC, for example, logistics cooperation (Frisell and Sjökvist 2019, 22; Palmer 2016, 13). Under the expanded FNC objectives to also encourage the integration of military units, the goal was to set up two or three large Army Divisions, one Multinational Air Group (MAG), a Baltic Maritime Component Command, a Multinational Joint Logistic Support Group Headquarters, and a

Multinational Medical Coordination Centre (Frisell and Sjökvist 2019, 19). For example, Project Griffin, the Dutch-German umbrella initiative that coordinates their Army cooperation, directly feeds into the FNC's goals for the land domain.

The FNC's hub-and-spoke model has proven to be particularly effective for cooperation in the land domain. For Armies, much more than Navies or Air Forces, it is essential to command a cohesive fighting force with a large number of soldiers. Language, military culture and operational standards are very important to fight together effectively, and in the FNC model, there is one standard-setting nation by default. The FNC concept has the German Bundeswehr setting the standards and providing the necessary infrastructure where other, smaller nations, simply plugin, a model that creates a more cohesive fighting force then if two larger militaries were to cooperate (Saxi 2017, 184). For example, if France and the UK Armies cooperated, there would likely be an ongoing debate as to whose military doctrine to follow, an issue avoided in the FNC model.

Furthermore, the addition of the FNC *formations* to the previously established FNC *capability clusters* allowed NATO members whose readiness commitments to NATO have been lacking (such as the Netherlands and Germany) to create operational synergies that directly feed into the NDPP (Schelleis 2018, 67). With the FNC, the close defence cooperation of some member states truly found a home within the alliance, or as one NATO Research Report put it:

> "This over-lapping and expanding web of mutually-supporting, cross-institutional and functional ties […] among Allies that constitute approximately two thirds of NATO's European membership, represents a natural extension of an already impressive record of bilateral and multilateral partnerships that pre-dated Germany's FNC initiative. These now often provide the functional or operational frameworks, or complementary anchors, for implementing a variety of capability development or force integration measures."- (Palmer 2016, 17)

Of course, these existing 'bilateral and multilateral partnerships' represent defence cooperations that feature varying degrees of integration (Palmer 2016, 17). FNC formations, such as the UK-led Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) are not integrated to the same extent as the German-Dutch cooperation projects. JEF participants seek harmonisation of operational standards as far as possible, but 'partner nations are not allocating forces 'to the UK', they are allocating forces for a specific operation' (UK MoD 2018, 8). However, those highly integrated Dutch-German cooperation projects of interest to this thesis have made significant contributions to the FNC structure and leveraged the framework to support the NDPP directly. For example, the German 1st Tank Division which is in command of the Dutch 43rd Mechanized Brigade already contributed to the 2019 NATO VJTF mission and the long-standing Dutch-German Rapid

Reaction Forces are preparing to lead the VJTF in 2023 (Laubenthal 2018). Together, these highly integrated bilateral force formations are standing up operational capabilities that neither one of them could have fielded alone. Furthermore, the fact that their staff literally works together on a daily basis has strengthened their operational effectiveness (Interview No. 20). The link between these highly integrated Dutch-German defence cooperation projects and their direct contribution to strengthening NATO's operational capabilities is further evidence directly supporting the second hypothesis which suggests that the Dutch and German decision to share core state powers with foreign partners was motivated by the rational decision to increase the capabilities of NATO.

NATO-Specific Defence Cooperations

In this section, I analyse a set of four multilateral defence cooperation projects of the Netherlands and/or Germany that directly contribute to the collective operational capabilities of NATO. In these instances where both governments decided to share their core state powers their intention to strengthen alliance capabilities is very obvious, and hence I find that the cooperation efforts here were the result of a rational intergovernmental effort rather than the product of elite socialisation or a threat balancing effort in lieu of unilateral capabilities.

Name	**Type of Cooperation**	**Year initiated**	**Countries involved**
NATO AWACS E-3A	Operational	1982	18 NATO Member states
NATO Strategic Airlift Capability	Operational	2008	Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, the United States of America, Finland, and Sweden
NATO Alliance Ground Surveillance (AGS)	Operational	2012	15 NATO Member states
NATO Multinational Multi-Role Tanker Transport Fleet	Operational	2016	Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Germany, Belgium, and the Czech Republic

Figure 12: NATO-specific multilateral defence cooperation projects with Dutch and/or German participation

Germany and the Netherlands both participate in the fleet of AWACS aircraft based at a NATO airbase in Germany, the NATO Multinational Multi-Role Tanker Transport Fleet, and NATO's Alliance Ground Surveillance Programme, an airborne ground surveillance capability made up of five unmanned RQ-4D Global Hawk aircraft (NATO 2019a). Each of these cooperation projects meets the criteria set out in this thesis for highly integrated capabilities that create dependencies on the core state power of their participating states. The fact that they impinge on the core state powers of the participating governments is not often discussed as they are often misrepresented to be the assets of NATO as an organisation or portrayed as surplus capabilities to existing national capabilities. However, neither is correct: they are intergovernmental capabilities that operate in support of NATO missions, and none of the participating states maintains enough similar capabilities not to be reliant on them. The example discussed earlier when Germany withdrew its AWACS crews for NATO's operation in Libya is representative of the reliance of other participants on these capabilities.

The fleet of 16 Airborne Early Warning and Control Aircraft (AWACS) which are based in Geilenkirchen, Germany is financed by 17 NATO member states and supports NATO missions abroad with airborne intelligence. For Germany, participation in this mission-critical capability is one of its most prominent and tangible contributions to NATO but at the same time an integration initiative that constantly draws the wrath of the opposition parties who consider it a military contribution to missions that goes beyond the Bundeswehr's parliamentary mandates. The reason being that its surveillance data can be used for identifying military targets, a task that is often not included in the Bundestag mandates to avoid German involvement in collateral damages (Interview No. 30).

This project is an excellent example of a jointly recognised capability gap among participating nations that were addressed with the joint purchase of aircraft. The fleet's radar-based surveillance capability is currently in the process of being significantly expanded by the addition of five remotely controlled High Altitude UAVs, NATO's Alliance Ground Surveillance, a programme where 15 member states decided to station these aircraft at the NATO base in Sigonella, Italy. Again, high-altitude surveillance of the type that the Global Hawk can deliver had been an acute shortage during the ISAF mission, an alliance shortfall that has now been addressed through the acquisition of aircraft which are expected to reach initial operating capability in 2020 (NATO 2019a). Of the two governments, only Germany contributes to this NATO initiative; the Netherlands is not one of the 15 participants (NATO 2019a).

A group of European states has also joined forces in the field of air transport which is called the Strategic Airlift Capability, this programme launched in 2009 and has 12 participants who

shared the acquisition costs of three C17 Globe Master transport aircraft (Dunlop 2020). The Netherlands, one of the participants, has access to a share of the flight hours of these aircraft, in line with its financial contribution to the initiative. While the idea for the initiative originated in NATO organisation due to a constant shortage of air transport capabilities among many of its members, it also includes Sweden and hence has no association with the alliance (SAC 2020).

In the same vein as the two projects described above, a group of NATO members also decided to address another long-standing shortfall in aerial refuelling capabilities by purchasing eight tanker aircraft as part of the NATO Multinational Multi-Role Tanker Transport Fleet. Together with the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, and Norway, Germany contributed to the acquisition of eight Airbus A-330 MRTT aircraft which are pooled between these member states for both training missions and deployments (OCCAR 2020). Nevertheless, the control and acquisition of these aircraft is an intergovernmental effort despite the fact that all of its members are acquiring this capability in direct support of NATO missions and operational requirements. All of these cooperation projects directly strengthen allied capabilities as force multipliers of the national contributions of NATO members.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I analysed the role the EU and NATO play for the highly integrated defence cooperations under review in this thesis. While both organisations are frequently mentioned in the interviews I conducted, I found that they are not active stakeholders in the decision-making process to share core state powers. Most interviewees referenced NATO, and the EU as important umbrella organisations whose equipment standards (e.g. the NATO Standardization Agreement) or political forums facilitate G2G cooperations but as organisations do not lead such initiatives. Their ‘brands’ were described as helpful reassurance that the broader foreign policy objectives of partners are aligned, but they do not function as supranational bodies that manage the core state powers of the participants of defence cooperation initiatives associated with their organisation, such as the AWACS fleet of aircraft (Interviews No. 11 and 12). However, as hypothesised (H2), their requirements, either for CSDP missions, EU Battlegroups, or VJTF deployments are important guidelines for member states, and most cooperation projects under review are directly earmarked to fulfil the national commitments made to the EU and NATO.

NATO itself does not seek the integration of its members’ militaries under its own organisational control. To achieve the organisation’s goal of territorial defence, the regular training among the independent armed forces of its member states would be sufficient. However, for its members’ militaries, NATO standards matter, and NATO Defence Planning sets their national targets for readiness levels. Also, pressures within the alliance have solicited

a response by its members, to initiate projects that strengthen the absolute firepower of the alliance. The EU, on the other hand, often serves as a political reference point to gather domestic support for defence cooperations in Germany. For some German interviewees, the EU has grown in importance in response to US isolationism during the Trump administration, but NATO's pragmatism at both the working level and political level is very much favoured by both the Dutch and German MoDs; which is why NATO's operationally-driven impact on cooperation has been far more significant than the EU's comparatively weak influence on G2G defence cooperation (Interviews No. 22 and 23). After all, PESCO is not a deployable military formation, and the EU's battlegroups have never been activated.

Ironically, much of the literature on EU defence and security activities often overly focuses on the idea of a European Army or the (potential) transfer of core state powers to Brussels but instead misses the deep integration of core state powers occurring at a bi- and multilateral level to fulfil the objectives set by the EU and NATO. One senior leader at the German MoD even described the Bundeswehr's bi- and multilateral cooperation efforts as a glimpse into the future of PESCO and the EU Battlegroups, suggesting that the EU should aim to replicate the integration success of these G2G agreements (Interview No. 23). This is an interesting anecdote, particularly as I have demonstrated above that the cooperation efforts in support of NATO are far more integrated than those under the auspices of the EU, and especially, with the decision to use FNC to create multinational hub-and-spoke formations in addition to the capability clusters, NATO really encouraged G2G cooperation among its members. This effort is also the strongest evidence in support of the second hypothesis as it shows the absolute increase in operational alliance capabilities that is sought after by both the Dutch and German governments in exchange for sharing their core state powers and autonomous control over a military capability with foreign governments.

Part III – Shared Core State Powers, a Multilateral Balancing Act to Strengthen Collective Security

Chapter 7: Conclusion – G2G Defence Cooperation and Shared Core State Powers

This research project was prompted by the observation that the Netherlands and Germany increasingly integrated important operational military capabilities. It appeared as a worthwhile research effort since most of the relevant International Relations literature focused on the integration of core state powers at the EU level rather than on the G2G cooperation initiatives between states (e.g. Howorth 2014; Giegerich 2006; Mérand 2008; Posen 2006, among others). Understanding why governments decide to share their core state powers and placing this understanding in the context of NATO and EU collaboration offers a new view on this debate that previously had placed little emphasis on the role G2G cooperation plays in the security of European states. Thanks to extensive interviews with stakeholders, this thesis could develop a well-differentiated view on the research question: *Why do states share their core state powers by integrating their operational defence capabilities?*

International Relation's existing theoretical frameworks served as a suitable point of departure for the analysis of the empirical evidence at hand. Initial findings suggested that the frameworks of neoclassical realism, new intergovernmentalism, and the constructivist approach of communities of practice would be intriguing foundations to hypothesise why the Dutch and German governments share core state powers. These led to the development of the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: The Dutch and German governments agreed to share their core state powers because domestic resource constraints prevented unilateral threat balancing.

Hypothesis 2: The Dutch and German governments agreed to share their core state powers to increase the collective military capabilities of the EU and NATO.

Hypothesis 3: The Dutch and German governments agreed to share their core state powers due to the socialisation of key stakeholders in international security organisations.

With the Dutch and German governments as my case studies, I tested these hypotheses against empirical evidence from field interviews and secondary research in archives and expert

publications. A narrow definition of which defence cooperations are *highly* integrated allowed me to filter a large array of global defence cooperation initiatives to identify those most likely to impact the *core state powers* of governments. This process also confirmed the selection of the Dutch and German governments as case studies, given their extensive commitment to such G2G defence cooperation projects and the extensive dependencies these two governments have with their defence cooperation partners.

In this final chapter, I will briefly recapitulate the premise of my thesis, its key definitions, and my assessment of how the integration of military capabilities affects the core state powers of the Dutch and German governments. This summary of my research approach will then be followed by a review of the most relevant arguments made for or against each of the three hypotheses following the empirical evidence brought forward in earlier chapters. Lastly, I will discuss the implications of my findings for future research efforts on the topic of European defence cooperation.

Defence Cooperation and Shared Core State Powers

The objective of this thesis is to explain the motivation of the German and Dutch governments in sharing their core state powers with each other and other partners in bi- and multilateral defence cooperation projects. In this section, I briefly revisit terminology, my research methodology, and explain how I leveraged existing research to analyse the empirical evidence from my field research independently.

The research puzzle of this thesis posits that it is uncommon for governments to simply share control over their armed forces without concern for control over the newly integrated force structures. I reviewed hundreds of cooperation initiatives globally and identified a set of 18 defence cooperation projects of the Dutch and German government that led to an unprecedented degree of integration between their armed forces and their allied partners. Each of the bilateral and multilateral projects reviewed met the criteria for a highly integrated capability but also showed that the operational benefits for the German and Dutch armed forces were significant. These included, for example, the preservation of Dutch main battle tank capabilities, the addition of an amphibious transport capability for the German Navy, or the acquisition of air refuelling and surveillance capabilities for a larger group of NATO members, including the Netherlands and Germany.

Initially, I examined three types of defence cooperations: policy, industrial, and operational cooperations. Compared to other regions in the world, Europe is home to most of these defence cooperations. Its industry operates across borders with conglomerates like Airbus and MBDA among the key equipment manufacturers for European militaries. The same accounts for policy

cooperation. The EU has subsequently strengthened its coordinating role on the continent to streamline defence and foreign policy goals among its member states; multiple EU deployments on the European periphery are a testament to its success. However, after a careful review, I decided to focus on operational cooperations exclusively. Solely those cooperations in which the participating troops of one nation are under foreign command and share equipment, infrastructure, or supply chains have been considered to arrive at the 18 projects I analyse in the second part of the thesis. The reason being that only tightly integrated capabilities which are intended to be deployed together create the type of partner dependencies between governments that affect their core state powers.

Following the review of defence cooperation initiatives, I discussed the concept of sovereignty and its continued relevance for governments and the field of International Relations (Bartelson 2011, 464). While leading scholars disagree over an adequate definition of the concept of sovereignty, I have shown how central it is to the field at large (e.g. Krasner 1999; Wendt 1987; R. Jackson 2013). I also introduced the concept of core state powers, the autonomous control of governments over functions of governance (Genschel and Jachtenfuchs 2014). Given the constantly evolving definition of sovereignty in IR literature, core state powers offered a more neatly defined alternative which I decided to leverage in the analysis of what exactly governments share with foreign partners when they cooperate in defence. Overall, the concept of core state power proved to be a more detailed and relevant concept for the analysis of defence cooperation agreements. It allowed for the analysis of the effect of defence cooperation agreements on the core functionalities of the government while sovereignty, a much broader and malleable concept, would not have afforded the same precision needed for the analysis.

The three core state powers, coercive force, public administration, and public finance are well suited to analyse the impact of integrated military capabilities on these critical functions and decision-making powers of governments. They proved to be easily explained when interviewing stakeholders. Moreover, leveraging the concept of core state powers also facilitated a better cross-country comparison of the different political systems of Germany and the Netherlands. Lastly, I demonstrated that governments are going out of their way to defend or strengthen their grip on core state powers. Despite a multitude of modern-day challenges to these powers, clearly, governments are hesitant to relinquish control and continue to assign immense importance to core state powers. Hence, understanding why governments would share their core state powers is a relevant inquiry.

In the second part of the thesis, I then demonstrated how defence cooperations are, in fact, impacting the core state powers of participating governments. The fourth chapter established that the sharing of core state powers comes at a price. For example, the deployment of joint

Dutch-German military formations is subject to both the German parliamentary conditionality and the Dutch Article 100 process as well as the Dutch Assessment Framework for military deployments. The control over the core state power of coercive force is essentially dependent on the decision of a foreign government for all integrated Dutch-German military formations. Furthermore, government representatives have acknowledged in interviews that the funding for the integrated capability is less likely to be the subject of defence budget cuts then purely national defence capabilities. Also, they understand that their partner's possible unilateral deployments might endanger the readiness of the integrated capability but have hardly considered this prior to most cooperation projects.

In the second part of the thesis, I also assessed the bilateral and multilateral defence cooperation projects of the Netherlands and Germany, highlighting the high degree of integration between the joint Dutch-German army units. Cooperations such as the Rapid Reaction Forces that have been deployed to Afghanistan together or the shared use of a Joint Support Ship or airborne and space-based surveillance capabilities are representative of the dependencies created among the participants of these cooperations. The evidence further suggests that the domestic political systems of both countries, the preferences of their electorates, and even their legal systems influenced the governments' decision to share core state powers. Finally, the second part of the thesis also reviewed the role of the EU and NATO with regards to G2G cooperation and showed that rather than absorbing control over core state powers, their requirements are what prompted the integration of operational capabilities among their members. The empirical evidence analysed in the second part of the thesis allowed for the testing of the three hypotheses and led to the findings discussed in the following section.

Threat Balancing in Exchange for Core State Powers

This section revisits the reasons for the development of the first, neoclassical realist, hypothesis, assesses its explanatory power, and reviews key pieces of empirical evidence that supported or weakened its validity.

The German and Dutch governments have a shared interest in deterring Russian military actions in Eastern Europe and share a largely common threat perception with regards to other contemporary security issues, such as terrorism, cybersecurity, and maritime safety (Interviews No. 2 and 14). I initially developed the neoclassical realist hypothesis because several interview partners described Russia's conflict with Ukraine as a pivotal event for the threat perception of both governments (Interviews No. 1, 2, 20, and 23). For the Netherlands particularly, the downing of Flight MH17 over Ukraine created awareness on the possible implications of an increasingly aggressive Russian military doctrine. My review of the European threat environment, the continuous modernisation of the Russian armed forces, their increased number

of exercises at the borders of NATO's eastern European member states, and the conflict with Ukraine all supported the development of a neorealist, threat-balancing, explanation to answer the research question.

Since neither the Netherlands nor Germany pursued the unilateral strengthening of their armed forces to balance the threat but instead deepened existing defence cooperations via the FNC and other mechanisms, the *neoclassical realist* theoretical framework specifically appeared to be a valid hypothesis to explain the government behaviour to share their core state powers. The neoclassical realist framework allowed to evaluate the possibility that the two governments were hindered from balancing the threat directly due to domestic constraints. I followed the neoclassical realist framework of Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobel whose methodology does account for the preconditions of anarchy and the desire of governments to balance threats while recognising that domestic politics can lead to different outcomes (2016, 14). This could have explained the decision of both governments to share their core state powers through defence cooperation. The hypothesis assumed that the domestic stakeholders, the German public, and opposition parties, successfully blocked unilateral defence budget increases over time and hence forced the two governments to cooperate with each other as an alternative option to improve their national security.

This assumption of domestic resource constraints could only partially be confirmed; I identified the domestic political landscape's scepticism toward national defence budget increases as an important variable that indeed hindered such a unilateral response to the threat in the past. However, Germany's decision to increase its defence budget in the aftermath of the Russia-Ukraine conflict already indicated that the domestic opposition to funding increases might not be an all-powerful hindrance to improving operational capabilities unilaterally. This finding weakened the influence of the intervening variable and suggested that an alternative explanation might be more powerful to explain the decision to share core state powers. The same accounts for the Netherlands. While the Dutch government did free up fewer budgetary resources for its defence capabilities than Germany, indicating a domestic preference to spend less on deterrence, public support for defence spending is not as low as in Germany, particularly in the aftermath of the Ukraine crisis. In essence, the intervening variable of domestic constraints does exist in both instances but has proven to be a lot weaker than expected, and therefore it needs to be asked if the government really decided to cooperate because they were constraint in their desire to act unilaterally or whether they cooperated for other reasons.

More importantly, though, the strongly multilateral foreign policy outlook of both countries is indicative of a liberal theoretical explanation rather than a neorealist approach to security. Not only are the Netherlands and Germany strongly entrenched in the multilateral alliance system of

Western Europe, but their entire domestic political systems are geared to support and encourage the types of bi- and multilateral cooperation analysed in this thesis. Therefore, the neorealist notion of governments cooperating to solely advance their individual security seemed increasingly farfetched. Governments that seek so vigorously to strengthen the absolute security of the EU and NATO rather than strengthening unilateral military capabilities are unlikely to adhere to the neorealist worldview that presumes states' self-centred security concerns.

While selected evidence for unilateral foreign policy decisions exists with both governments, such as the German involvement in Kosovo, there is no evidence that either the German or Dutch government wishes to establish a practice of unilateral foreign or defence policy decisions without the clear mandate from the EU, NATO, or UN. These circumstances create a domestic political environment that strongly encourages the integration of defence capabilities. Furthermore, the constitutional requirements for deployments require close coordination and cooperation with foreign allies, further facilitating the creation of integrated capabilities. Under these circumstances, any German government that wishes to strengthen the capabilities of the military without risking a domestic political backlash and scrutiny from the opposition parties must seriously consider the integration of military capabilities with foreign allies as an alternative option to strengthen its national security.

Furthermore, while neoclassical realism's recognition of systemic threats could have explained why the two governments opted to cooperate with foreign partners, it also gave rise to the question of why the integration initiatives went above and beyond to integrate capabilities to the degree that seriously impacts a state's sovereign powers. Sharing sovereign powers in bilateral or multilateral arrangements contests the realist notion of global anarchy and self-preservation of states (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 179). Governments that follow a 'realist' agenda are hardly known for ceding powers to foreign partners. Therefore, the hypothesis appears weak, given the two governments' decision to share their core state powers and limit their unilateral control over their core state powers.

In light of the empirical evidence from many interviews, I argue that the limited relative capability gains that have occurred for each nation's military as a result of cooperation are simply too small to support the neoclassical realist hypothesis. However, the absolute gains generated for the alliances of the Netherlands and Germany are far more relevant and much harder to ignore. The operational efficiencies and collective capability gains of these integration efforts simply superseded the need for relative gains or threat balancing vis-à-vis other powers. Stakeholder speeches, interviews, and secondary sources all support the liberal notion of strengthened collective defence capabilities. Furthermore, the highly cooperative approach to pass specific laws for the sharing of command structures with the Dutch armed forces are

diametrically opposed to the value realist theories places on sovereignty and independence from multilateral regimes (Deutscher Bundestag 1998; Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016, 114). The balancing of threats could have been achieved in much less intertwined cooperation formats, then those deeply integrated capabilities developed by the Netherlands and Germany, for example, via those capability pooling arrangements described in Chapter 2.

Finally, while the hypothesis superficially appears to be a good fit considering the deteriorating European security environment since 2014, it fails to hold up if one reviews the timeline of most integration efforts. Multiple projects, such as the 1st German-Netherlands Corps, Project Griffin, the EATC, or Galileo, were launched prior to 2014. Those cooperations that support the Bundeswehr in defence of conventional threats were initiated in the (near-) absence of such dangers even though some interview partners talked of a 'new Cold War' or highlighted the need to improve territorial defence to deter Russia (e.g. Interview No. 20). Threat balancing might have provided a good reason to justify further deepening of the cooperation projects, but its causal link to the decision to share core state powers is comparatively weaker than that of the new intergovernmentalist hypothesis. The two governments did not cooperate because their domestic political systems blocked their unilateral armament but because their domestic political systems encouraged cooperation and sought to strengthen their multilateral alliance structures.

Calculated Multilateralism

This section demonstrates why the analysis in the second part of the thesis has led to the conclusion that the second hypothesis, the *new intergovernmentalist* theoretical framework based on the work of Bickerton et al., represents the most applicable answer for the research question (2015). It also revisits the argument that the Dutch and German governments decided to share their core state powers to strengthen the collective defence capabilities of the EU and NATO.

The review of the German-Dutch cooperation initiatives revealed that most of the collected evidence, including the statements by interview partners, support the second hypothesis that the German and Dutch governments decided to share their core state powers with foreign partners to strengthen the collective defence capabilities of NATO and the EU after careful consideration of the potential political and operational benefits. Based on the empirical evidence, the three core priorities of the stakeholders in government who supported the integration of military capabilities were as follows:

Firstly, there is a clear foreign policy agenda within the German and Dutch governments for closer European defence cooperation to strengthen both EU and NATO defence capabilities.

Regardless of the vehicle, policymakers try to pursue cooperation initiatives that improve collective defence capabilities and maintain multilateralist foreign policy coordination to ensure a collective foreign policy response among allies. I found that the German domestic political system incentivised its government to cooperate with foreign partners and that the Netherland's comparatively small military and economic power increasingly requires a system of collective defence to effectively meet the threats of the 21st century. I found the foreign and defence policy preferences of the German electorate to be strongly in favour of multilateral over unilateral foreign and defence policy actions. While the German foreign policy apparatus has always been geared towards international cooperation, it was the Netherlands' 2013 defence budget cuts that drove the cost-benefit calculations of both governments to truly deepen the integration of their military capabilities. Importantly, both governments pursued a strictly rational cost-benefit calculation preceding the integration of their militaries. While the political benefits for Dutch decision-makers are not as clear cut as for their German counterparts, the operational shortfalls of its military as a result of the 2016 budget cuts were so acute that policymakers and the armed forces benefited greatly from the integration with their larger neighbour.

Secondly, both governments have performed a calculated analysis of their operational shortfalls and financial burdens in the realm of defence and security before negotiating which cooperation efforts would yield the greatest operational return for both sides (Interview No. 8). The negotiations leading up to any cooperation initiative were not rushed by the need to balance or counteract a threat or power disequilibrium. Most of the 18 cooperation initiatives I reviewed went through multiple working-level exchanges discussing operational capability shortfalls on both sides, the equivalent of an operational cost-benefit calculation. Furthermore, I outlined the implicit financial and operational benefits of their highly integrated bilateral defence cooperation initiatives. For both Ministries of Defence, locking these defence capabilities into G2G agreements with foreign allies has proven to be an effective means of protecting these capabilities from future budget cuts. Ironically, this obvious limitation of the core state power of public finance is generally perceived to be a benefit by most stakeholders, as discussed in Chapter 4.

However, the hypothesis also highlights differences between the two governments and the interplay of domestic policy preferences and operational requirements that predetermine the two governments' decisions to share core state powers with partners. The Netherland's most recent defence budget cuts were far more aggressive than the gradual underfunding of the German Bundeswehr since the Cold War. Germany, on the other hand, required a timely and effective solution to its capability shortfalls without upsetting the delicate political environment in Berlin by racking up national defence spending. Furthermore, the review of both governments'

relationship to the core state powers of coercive force, public finance, and public administration specified the implicit costs for each partner when integrating their military capabilities.

Lastly, the creation of standing working groups for every defence cooperation of the Dutch and German government mimics the idea of '*de novo*' institutions proposed in the new intergovernmentalist framework (Bickerton et al., Hodson, and Puetter 2015, 4). In this framework, governments are thought to create these governing bodies to avoid ceding powers to the supranational EU institutions (Bickerton et al., Hodson, and Puetter 2015). Given the difficulties associated with the serious integration of military capabilities in the EU's organisational structures, the decision of the German and Dutch governments to instead create agile expert institutions, such as the High-Level Working Groups commonly coordinating G2G cooperations, represents an effective way of pursuing integration. In essence, these G2G cooperations in defence represent the 'integration paradox' observed by Bickerton et al. of ever deeper cooperation (as witnessed by the cooperations' impact on core state powers) during times of slowing EU-level integration.

The key finding of this thesis on German-Dutch cooperation is that Germany and the Netherlands are rational actors and share core state powers due to the political and operational benefits from integrating military capabilities. While the changing threat environment and the socialisation of high-ranking officers have been given consideration in my analysis of documents and stakeholder interviews, every step to further integrate existing structures was preceded by a review of capability shortfalls, potential synergies, and political benefits. The two governments' desire to better meet NATO and EU obligations further advanced their interest in deeply integrated operational capabilities. In short, the two governments' reasoning to cooperate was guided by a clear assessment and trade-off of operational benefits as much as political advantages. In the end, only the clearly identified political and operational benefits offered empirical evidence that the Dutch and German partnerships were driven by the calculated multilateralism of the Dutch and German governments. Since all G2G cooperations are directly supporting the requirements of NATO and EU, the intention to strengthen these multilateral alliances has proven to be the critical objective for governments when ceding control over core state powers to foreign partners.

An Influential Community of Practice?

The third hypothesis followed a constructivist framework based on similar works in the field of security policy by Adler and the organisational analysis of *communities of practice* as described by Wenger (Adler 2008; Wenger 1998). The close relationships between the Dutch and German decision-makers, as referenced in many interviews, was what prompted the hypothesis that a transnational community of practice emerged among Dutch or German government officials and

those officials of their foreign partners who then jointly advocated for the integration of operational capabilities and the sharing of core state powers by their respective governments. Personnel exchanges, joint officer training, and interview testimony of close personal relationships among the most senior MoD staff of both countries led to the initial development of this hypothesis that assumed that a transnational community of practice caused the decisions of the Dutch and German government to share their core state powers.

One notable example was the statement of a Dutch General who said that 'strategy follows people', hinting at the close bonds between selected members of the Dutch and German Ministries of Defence (Atlantische Commissie 2018). In my research, at least two interview partners had underlined this statement and let me to develop the third, constructivist, hypothesis (Interviews No. 1 and 15). The evidence I collected demonstrated that the good relations between the two Defence Ministers, Ursula von der Leyen and her Dutch counterpart Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, as well as between General Jörg Vollmer, the highest-ranking officer of the German Army and his counterpart, the Commander of the Royal Netherlands Army, General Martin Wijnen, have indeed facilitated the deepening of the close Dutch-German cooperation (Interviews No. 11 and 15). The frequent personnel exchanges between the two militaries and the cross-border coordination, even of lower ranks within the MoDs of both countries have been suggestive that a powerful community of practice emerged to shape the identity of its participants, as suggested by the theoretical frameworks of Adler and Wegner (2008; 1998). Essentially, my findings resemble those of Graeger, whose analysis showed that the community of practice between NATO and EU officials *deepened* the existing relationship between two organisations (Græger 2016). However, in neither instance, did these communities of practitioners *initiate* the defence cooperation projects reviewed; they merely operate within existing structures that were initially created through intergovernmental negotiations.

Furthermore, it turned out that similar relationships exist among the stakeholders of many other allied nations of Germany and the Netherlands. Then, when some interview partners stated that the relationship between the German and Dutch Navies and Air Forces is in fact not that strong, this prompted me to reconsider whether the cooperations that occur nevertheless between these two services of both nations could have really originated from a transnational community of practice (Interviews 8, 11, and 13). For example, the German Navy generally considers the Royal Navy its closest allied partner but hardly integrates military capabilities with the UK military (Interview No. 4). While the land forces of both the Netherlands and Germany indeed maintain close relationships on all levels, Germany also plans to cooperate with the Czech Republic and Romania, countries whose stakeholders have far less-established relationships to the German military than the Netherlands, but these integration projects move ahead regardless (NATO 2017). These observations indicate that for the initiation of defence cooperation

projects, communities of practice have little influence, despite their existence and influence in the deepening of ongoing cooperation efforts.

The constructivist community of practice framework might find stronger arguments when applied in defence *policy* cooperations, such as the procedures related to CSDP or NATO policy decisions (e.g. Mérand 2008; Adler-Nissen and Pouliot 2014; Græger 2016). The creation and management of bureaucratic procedures do require close interpersonal relations; however, in the context of very tangible operational shortfalls, as was the case in Germany for the Joint Support Ship or for its SHORAD air defence capabilities, I have found that the personal relationships do not supersede hard operational requirements. The clear financial benefits and operational synergies described in the review of bi- and multilateral cooperation initiatives of the Netherlands and Germany provide ample evidence that cooperation projects were initiated after a careful review of their impact on the overall capabilities of the Dutch and German armed forces.

The one example I introduced earlier that appeared to support a constructivist approach is the Franco-German Brigade. Here, arguably, the relationship between Helmut Kohl and Jean-Francois Mitterrand was critical to the creation of this symbolic act of friendship between the French Fifth Republic and the then recently reunified Germany (Hofmann and Mérand 2020, 157). However, none of the following integration initiatives have been approached in this top-down manner, and the relationship of two heads of states represents hardly a professional community of practice. All following cooperations of both states were developed following working-level exchanges discussing operational capability shortfalls on both sides. In these discussions, the analysis and final decision to integrate was always based on the cost-benefit calculation of both military and political stakeholders who had an interest in strengthening the collective defence capabilities of NATO and the EU (Interviews No. 10 and 17). The socialisation of a transnational community of practice between the Dutch or German armed forces and their partners has in most instances only focused on a specific cooperation effort once the cooperation agreement was signed rather than being the impetus for such a cooperation to occur (Interviews No. 10 and 15). In fact, in most of the existing literature the focus of scholars is on the power of established communities of practice, such as NATO staff members or diplomats, and how they navigate their professional environments and advance the goals set within these boundaries rather than on the creation of completely new environments as would be the case when a new defence cooperation project is initiated. The scholarly debate analyses diplomatic interactions among EU diplomats, inter-organisational relations, coordination among defence officials across borders in response to Brexit, or how to coordinate burden-sharing in EU crisis management operations (Adler and Pouliot 2011; Græger 2016; Adler-Nissen and Pouliot 2014; Svendsen 2019; Mérand and Rayroux 2016). In all these instances, the

communities of practice operate within existing formal G2G arrangements that were created in an intergovernmental format; they are not the origin of these cooperation agreements.

Finally, the constructivist hypothesis' explanatory power fell short of the rational response to the acute operational shortfalls, and the comparison to the Franco-German Brigade showed the difference of the pragmatically planned Dutch and German initiatives in comparison to a cooperation that was the result of elite socialisation. While the professional community of soldiers, officers, and civilian bureaucrats has been engaged in the progressive deepening of the two countries defence cooperation projects, their influence on the original decision to cooperate has been limited at best according to the empirical evidence highlighted in the previous chapters.

Implications for Future Research

European defence cooperation has always presented an interesting puzzle for scholarly inquiry. With the EU and NATO, the topic offers two protagonists with a colourful history who challenge the perception that the defence of the nation is a wholly national affair. As this thesis has demonstrated, the review of systemic variables, domestic preferences, or relationships among decision-makers can help to further advance our understanding of government behaviour. This last section briefly outlines the implications of my research findings for the study of European defence cooperation in the field of International Relations and discusses potential avenues of future research.

The study of European defence cooperation is inherently focused on the advances of EU integration in security and defence or the cooperation under the auspices of NATO (e.g. Weiss 2011; Posen 2006; Giegerich 2006; Græger 2016; Howorth 2014, among others). Most often, these authors seek to explain why governments transfer sovereign powers to the EU. Genschel and Jachtenfuch's concept of core state powers while initially applied to multiple policy areas sought to answer the same line of questioning: how much sovereign power is ceded to Brussels (Genschel and Jachtenfuchs 2014). However, since the Lisbon Treaty, few advances have been made in defence and security cooperation through the symbolic signing of multilateral EU treaties. In fact, multiple track integration and what Bickerton et al. described as the 'integration paradox' has been quite common in recent years; continuous advances in niche areas, or among selected member states, often formalised through the creation of institutions under the strict intergovernmental control of participating governments (Bickerton et al., Hodson, and Puetter 2015). The findings of this thesis suggest that G2G cooperation agreements in defence represent an alternative approach to integration in defence that has hitherto been insufficiently analysed by the existing literature despite its serious implications for governments' core state powers. For example, the 1st Dutch-German Corp, with its novel command structure that grants extremely

high command authority to the rotating commander of the formation is a development that has not yet occurred within the EU or NATO. Despite strict opposition to transferring control to Brussels among Dutch political and military leaders, the obvious limitations to their own powers were accepted in bilateral arrangements with Germany (Interviews No. 28 and 29). While core state powers are not transferred to foreign governments and each government rightly claims full sovereign control over *their* assets, my narrow definition for integrated capabilities showed that core state powers have effectively been shared between the two governments. These commitments were made fully aware of the fact that the dependency might result in serious limitations to autonomous control over the joint capability, as was the case when the German Bundestag hindered the deployment of integrated military capabilities during NATO's Operation Unified Protector over Libya.

To be fair, the analysis of defence *policy* cooperation continues to be dominated by NATO and the EU and is unlikely to be as easily undermined by direct G2G discussions in the near future. However, as this thesis has demonstrated, Ministries of Defence are in search of pragmatic forms of *operational* cooperation that produce tangible operational, financial, and political benefits for their governments. Therefore, in this important niche of defence cooperation, it might be worthwhile for the literature to further explore the nature of the many G2G agreements being signed in Europe presently and in the near future. This thesis is limited to the cooperations pursued by the Dutch and German government, but a study analysing the Belgian or Polish governments' motivation to share their core state powers could challenge or confirm the findings of this dissertation. Furthermore, as one interviewee hinted, the G2G cooperations among NATO and EU member states might be the intergovernmental path to pursue an organic development of a European Army, a political vision that is continuously pursued by the German and French governments (Rankin 2018) (Interview No. 23).

It is difficult to predict though if the approach of this thesis will withstand the test of time as political developments could just as well shift again in favour of alternative explanations. President Macron and Chancellor Angela Merkel have recently reiterated their vision of a European Army, and if they were to vehemently pursue this idea the French-German partnership in the EU might just be strong enough to achieve this goal in exchange for concessions in other policy areas (Rankin 2018). Such a development would likely roll-up the intergovernmental G2G agreements that are the focus of this thesis and refocus the debate onto the EU as a pivotal actor for defence integration in Europe. At the other end of the spectrum of possible outcomes, the resurgence of voters with 'exclusive political identities' and nationalist parties in European parliaments might stop any further bi- and multilateral cooperations in a questionable attempt to 'restore sovereignty' (Börzel and Risse 2020, 22; Bryant 2018). As discussed in Chapter 5, the domestic constituencies of governments are powerful influencers in the decision to share core

state powers, a swing in voter preferences in favour of unilateral foreign policy agendas in Europe, might mean the end for sustained G2G cooperation. However, barring these developments, it will be worthwhile to observe how far other governments will go in sharing their core state powers. Already, Belgium, Norway, Poland, the Czech Republic, the Baltics, and Nordics are actively pursuing or negotiating deeper operational cooperation to meet their alliance commitments (Interviews No. 11, 22, and 25).

Addendum

Highly Integrated Operational Defence Cooperation Projects with Dutch and German Participation				
No.	**Name**	**Type of Cooperation**	**Year initiated**	**Countries involved**
1	NATO AWACS E-3A	Operational	1982	18 NATO Member states
2	EU Satellite Centre	Operational	1992	EU Member states
3	1st German/Netherlands Corps	Operational	1995	Germany, Netherlands
4	European Union's Global Satellite Navigation System (GNSS) Galileo	Operational	2001	EU Member states + Switzerland
5	European Air Transport Command (EATC)	Operational	2010	Germany, Italy, Spain, Luxembourg, Netherlands, France, and Belgium
6	Dutch-German Project Musketeer *(Integration: 1. Division Schnelle Kräfte and 11. Airmobile Brigade)*	Operational	2013	Germany, Netherlands
7	Dutch-German Project Apollo *(Short-range Air Defence Cooperation)*	Operational	2015	Germany, Netherlands

8	Dutch-German Joint Support Ship	Operational	2016	Germany, Netherlands
9	Dutch-German Project Taurus *(Multi-Layered Land Forces Integration)*	Operational	2016	Germany, Netherlands
10	NATO Multinational Multi-Role Tanker Transport Fleet	Operational	2016	Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Germany, Belgium, and the Czech Republic
11	Dutch-German *Korps Mariniers* and *Seebataillion* Cooperation	Operational	2016	Germany, Netherlands

Figure 13: Highly integrated operational defence cooperation projects with Dutch and German participation

Highly Integrated Operational Defence Cooperation Projects with Dutch or German Participation				
No.	**Name**	**Type of Cooperation**	**Year initiated**	**Countries involved**
1	Franco-German Brigade	Operational	1989	Germany, France
2	Benelux Defence Cooperation (BeNeSam) and ABNL Command	Operational	1996	Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg
3	NATO Strategic Airlift Capability	Operational	2008	Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, the United States of America, Finland, and Sweden
4	NATO Alliance Ground Surveillance (AGS)	Operational	2012	15 NATO Member states

5	Polish-German Tank Cooperation	Operational	2014	Poland, Germany
6	Polish-German Naval Cooperation (Joint Submarine Operating Authority)	Operational	2016	Germany, Poland
7	Franco-German C-130 Shared Base and Operations	Operational	2016	Germany, France

Figure 14: Highly integrated operational defence cooperation projects with Dutch or German participation

Title / Role *(at time of Interview)*	**Organisation**	**Country**
Defence Attaché at the Embassy of the Netherlands in Berlin, Germany	Dutch MoD	NL
Head of the Defence and Security Policy Unit at the German Federal Foreign Office	German MFA	GER
Professor of European and Global Governance	University	N/A
Head of Bilateral Defence Cooperations at German MoD Desk officer: France, the Netherlands, and Nordics	German MoD	GER
Advisor Political Department of the German MoD	German MoD	GER
Advisor Political Department of the German MoD *(Dutch Exchange Officer I)*	German MoD	NL
Advisor Political Department of the German MoD *(Dutch Exchange Officer II)*	German MoD	NL
Former Civilian Advisor to the Political Department of the German MoD	German MoD	GER

Legal Advisor to German MoD on International Law and Defence Cooperation Agreements	German MoD	GER
Head of Army International Branch (Royal Netherlands Army)	Royal Netherlands Army	NL
Coordinating Policy Officer at the Dutch MoD's Political Department	Dutch MoD	NL
Senior Policy Officer at the Dutch MoD's Political Department	Dutch MoD	NL
Defence Staff – Intl. Military Cooperation at the Dutch MoD - Desk officer: Germany, Poland, Czech Republic, Switzerland, Norway, Finland, Iceland, Sweden, and Denmark.	Dutch MoD	NL
Director for Operations, Military Strategic Element at the Dutch MoD	Dutch MoD	NL
Defence Attaché at the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in The Hague, Netherlands	Dutch MoD	GER
Graduate Student Employee at the Royal Netherlands Army *(Final Thesis on DE-NL Army Cooperation)*	Royal Netherlands Army	NL
Advisor on International Cooperation Royal Netherlands Army	Royal Netherlands Army	NL
Royal Netherlands Army Branch *(German Exchange Officer)*	Royal Netherlands Army	GER
Royal Netherlands Army Project Apollo *(German Exchange Officer)*	Royal Netherlands Army	GER
Director Operational Readiness Dutch Armed Forces at the Dutch MoD	Dutch MoD	NL
Head of the German Federal Foreign Office's Western Europe Division (incl. NL and FR relations)	German MFA	GER

Advisor Political Department of the German MoD (*Responsibility for bilateral relations w/ Poland)*	German MoD	GER
Deputy Director General Security and Defence Policy Matters at the German MoD	German MoD	GER
Coordinator of the German MoD for the European Air Transport Command	German MoD	GER
Coordinator German-Norwegian Defence Cooperation at the German MoD	German MoD	GER
Military-Political Adviser, Policy Planning Staff of the Federal Foreign Office	German MFA	GER
Parliamentary Armed Forces Commissioner and Former Member of the Bundestag	German Parliament	GER
Member of the House of Representatives of the Netherlands and the Parliamentary Defence Committee	Dutch Parliament	NL
Member of the House of Representatives of the Netherlands and the Parliamentary Defence Committee *(former Army Officer)*	Dutch Parliament	NL
Director of the German Parliamentary Defence Committee	German Parliament	GER

Figure 15: Table of interview partners

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