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**The Ukraine Trigger: Collective Securitization and National
Commitment in Response to the 2014 Ukraine Crisis - A Case Study
on German Military Logistics Reform**

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Table of Contents

- I. Introduction..... 3
- II. Literature Review 6
 - II. i. Crisis and Reform Theory..... 6
 - II. ii. Threats and Securitization 8
- III. Research Design 11
 - III. i. Case Study Assessment and Sources 11
 - III.i. Comparative Assessment 12
 - III.ii. Process-Tracing..... 13
- IV. Analysis Part One: CS and German Military Logistics Reform..... 13
 - IV.i. The Precipitating Event and Securitization Move 14
 - IV.ii. Audience Response and NATO Policy Output 14
 - IV.iii. From Summit Statement to Strategy 15
 - IV.iv. German Strategic Shift 16
 - IV. iv. i. Germany’s Geostrategic Role 18
 - IV. iv. ii. The 2016 Reform Impact on Military Logistics 18
- V. Analysis Part Two: Comparative Approach 26
 - V.i. Reform Structure..... 27
 - V.ii. Framework Documents and Strategic Goals 28
 - V.iii. Logistics Down-Scaling 29
 - V.iv. Investments 29
- VI. Analysis Part Three: Process Tracing..... 31
 - VI. i. German Strategic Culture and the Pressure of the Collective 32
 - VI. ii. Correcting Misalignments 33
- VII. Conclusion 34
- VIII. Bibliography 35
- IX. List of Abbreviations and Acronyms..... 44
- X. Annex..... 46

I. Introduction

In November 2013, Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich rejected an agreement that would have paved the way for integration with the European Union (EU). In consequence, the country experienced a national crisis highlighted by public unrest. The mass protests and political schism in combination with external political pressure triggered wide-ranging instability. A few months later, in February 2014, Russia exploited that instability and mobilized troops to seize territories in Eastern Ukraine and to annex the Black Sea Peninsula Crimea, in what many called a “hybrid” operation.

Russia’s actions in Ukraine sparked major discussion and condemnation around the world. Even today, it is the reason for suspension of relations with Russia by Western states along with sanctions, and it provides justification for NATO’s enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) in the Baltic states and Poland, as the fighting in Eastern Ukraine continues. Some experts argue that the annexation of Crimea triggered a major strategic shift and even (re)securitization in the Transatlantic Alliance (Major, 2015; Nünlist and Zapfe, 2014; Sperling and Webber, 2017). NATO’s standing forces in the East are only one of many consequences of its recalibration. The alliance had previously considered the European continent largely safe, and had focused on exporting stability through training, advisory and capacity-building efforts (e.g. to the Middle East). Russia’s actions in 2014, however, put NATO’s Eastern Flank and collective defense at the center of future action. The Wales Summit of the same year was the first indication of a strategic shift, with larger importance placed on the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF), the consideration of hybrid warfare threats in NATO forecasting and capability development, as well as contingency planning. These changes indicated NATO’s first efforts since the Cold War to refocus on the defense of the alliance, as they began to imagine and prepare for scenarios in which Russia could potentially harm the member states (Sperling and Webber, 2017). At the Warsaw Summit in 2016, NATO implemented eFP, which demonstrated its commitment to strategically refocus on its Eastern border.

*“11. NATO has responded to this changed security environment by enhancing its **deterrence and defence posture**, including by a forward presence in the eastern part of the alliance [...]*”

*“40. [...] They will be based on four battalion-sized battlegroups that can operate in concert with national forces, present at all times in these countries, underpinned by a viable **reinforcement strategy**.” (NATO, 2016)*

Hereby, the alliance called for strategic enhancement of its deterrence and defense posture, and consequently a clear commitment of its member states to contribute the required force strength and capabilities. The expectations that came with the above mentioned “*reinforcement strategy*” were linked to the overarching goal of maintaining readiness and ensuring sustainable mobility of troops, equipment, and supplies. Readiness can be considered basic operational readiness, meaning the functioning of forces to achieve the effect for which they are organized or designed, as in this case to *deter* and *project power* (U.S. JCS, 2021). However, considering the urgency of the action NATO called for at the summits that followed the annexation of Crimea, the terminology should be understood in relation to *time*. VJTF was established in 2015 as a potential “*rapid reinforcement capability*” in the event of crisis. It supplements NATO’s Response Force (NRF) – considered a *high* readiness force - in its duty to provide “*immediate collective defense response capability, crisis management & peace support operations, plus disaster relief and the protection of critical infrastructure*” (JFCBS, 2020). Through that it functions as the first responder or expeditionary unit ahead of troop reinforcements, equipping NATO with the ability to respond instantly, before it is presented with a *fait accompli* yet again.

The strategic goals NATO defined at the Warsaw Summit were tied to logistical capabilities and infrastructure. These logistic requirements were not only applicable for the movement of the NRF and VJTF, but also general reinforcement and mobility needs of the eFP Battlegroups (BG), as well as the management of supplies and stocks. While these demands are expressed on a NATO level, the execution and capability development results in a distribution of responsibilities amongst nations. These national forces are faced with challenges of uncertainty and pressure, considering the need for fast action in case of crisis. Many of the militaries were suddenly required to undergo major reform. One of them was Germany, a country that had previously ended conscription and reduced defense spending and overall troops but agreed to act as a framework nation to eFP. At the same time, Germany committed to providing host nation support (HNS) to allied troops and increasing NATO readiness at home through efforts like infrastructure reform - in support of rapid troop deployment - and hosting of NATO’s Joint Support and Enabling Command (JSEC) following the Warsaw Summit.

Considerable amount of research has focused on the overall strategic change of NATO following the events of the Ukraine Crisis. Few, however, go deeper and analyze the changes

collective securitization (CS) triggered in national military reform. Especially those countries that had downsized their militaries over the previous decade make for an interesting case, which goes beyond the members' commitment of capability development. Since there is a lack of research dedicated to securitization through international organizations, the research at hand aims to analyze the impact of CS on Germany. The case study's focus is on German reforms undertaken to respond to logistic demands in the time frame from 2014 to 2020, considering the high-stake demands posed by "*enhancing deterrence and defense posture*", and the creation of a "*viable reinforcement strategy*" for NATO.

The Federal Republic of Germany, with its unique geostrategic role in the logistical planning and mobility of the alliance serves as a case study, with the aim to provide insights into national level developments and the reasoning behind the commitment to NATO's strategic shift. The question guiding the research at hand is: **How has Germany contributed to NATO's collective securitization following the Ukraine Crisis?**

To address this question, Germany's role in CS is analyzed through the model provided by Sperling and Webber. This qualitative approach will not only outline the development from collective to national reform but will also assess its scope and strategic coherence in relation to previous military reform. The intention of this comparative analysis is to fill the research gap identified by Sperling and Webber concerning military strategic processes in securitization theory and analyze the impact of the respective reform. The research claim guiding this paper is as follows: **NATO's collective securitization has created pressure on national securitization and accelerated Germany's military logistics reform process.**

By studying the effect of CS on national military reform, insights on NATO's influence and an acumen of possible vehicles for transformation in member states can be gained. As such, it is of importance for future NATO strategic planning, to understand hindrances in national reform processes and to identify instruments to stimulate military reform in the interest of the collective.

This document starts with a literature review to provide an overview of academic work on the following topics: i. crises and reform theory, and ii. threats and securitization. This *tour d'horizon* lays the theoretical foundation for the subsequent research design, and the main part of the paper – the analysis. Here, the process differences compared to Germany's previous military reform are depicted and causes for the extensive national commitment that

followed CS are identified through process tracing. The research closes with a conclusion to elaborate on the most important finding of the analysis.

II. Literature Review

A revision of the available literature on the Ukraine Crisis has revealed a variety of contributions analyzing Ukraine-Russia relations. Most authors approached the relationship from historic, cultural, as well as political angles. Others focused on the operational particularities of the Russian deployment (Kofman et al, 2018), or more specifically, the terminological debate about Russian intervention as hybrid and respective assessments of military action (Erol, 2015; Renz, 2016; Kilinskas, 2016; Chivvis, 2017).

When it comes to the consideration of NATO's role in Russian-Ukrainian relations and the Ukraine Crisis itself, authors agree, that Russia posed the military threat that triggered NATO action (i.e.: Oliker et al, 2015; Kofman et al, 2017; Takacs, 2017). According to Sokolsky, there are three different reasons: military modernization reform since the early 2000s, the willingness to use force as means to an end, and aggressive foreign policy towards the West, characterized by provocation (Sokolsky, 2017). The impact of Russia's aggression in Ukraine on the security perception of individual states and the subsequent reform remain widely omitted.

There is a gap in focus on I. Crisis and Reform Theory, as well as II. Threats and Securitization in popular discourse on the topic. While the wordings are almost regularly used without terminological distinction in media discourse, the separation between the terms as well as an adequate understanding of the connection between threat perception, crisis, and securitization and reform need to be understood before proceeding with the analysis.

II. i. Crisis and Reform Theory

The unrest, violence, and military engagement in Ukraine were closely followed around the globe. The sudden gambits of the Russian Federation and the armed conflict that developed in Eastern Ukraine were continuously labeled as crisis by journalists, scholars, and politicians alike. Boin et al (2016) considered the chance for learning and structural improvement through crises in their work called "*the politics of crisis management*". Boin et al. argue that a

crisis is more than a puzzle or a challenge, and that there are “*clear-cut opportunities for learning and adapting*” when a crisis occurs (p. 115). They argue that the challenge is the identification of errors and the need for adaption to prevent future occurrence. Consequently, it can trigger major policy and institutional reform (p. 122). However, he points out, that “*many different and sometimes contradictory lessons are often distilled from one and the same crisis experience*”, therefore raising questions about a coherence in a multinational response to crisis as well as the effectiveness of reform (p.116). Boin et al. manage to outline the chances linked to a crisis, and the realities of a political system recognizing it as such. Crises signal that pre-existing plans, policies, or organizational practices have failed. Institutional renewal becomes a possibility.” (ibid, p.122). Further, crisis can be perceived as an opportunity, enabling leaders to push through reform that otherwise would have been impossible without proper incentive (ibid, p.132) and allows rapid action for the signaling of political determination (ibid, p.133). Although their research mentions the possible fallout and aftermath of crises with a long-term pressure on political action, and the high risk of mismanagement, they do not provide for explicit examples. It remains unclear to the reader what the exact long-term repercussions can be on a system, and what is meant by “collective learning” and “good governance”. The authors’ considerations of coherence and opportunity through reform will be taken in consideration during the analysis of this paper.

Similar to Boin et al. (2016) Smart and Vertinsky (1977) analyzed the link between crisis and change, as they argued that defining developments as a crisis is relevant due to its impact on decision-making processes. They developed a model for a crisis decision process intended to help organizations cope in the event of crisis, by identifying factors responsive to the triggered changes, and with a focus on coping mechanisms. Their research provides crucial reference for analysis of dormant crisis mechanisms, and overall efficiency questions (Smart and Vertinsky, 1977). Smart and Vertinsky’s work compiles a variety of findings on the matter but remains original in its practical recommendations for organizations to enhance structures for improved coping. Regarding the typical features of a crisis, the authors drew from Hermann (1972), who clarified that decision making in a crisis is subject to a small group of people, experiencing extreme stress, and who have restricted amount of time to act. Additional, Hermann created a model of crisis perception, incorporating the elements of “*threat*”, “*decision time*” and “*surprise*” and applied it to a situation of officer level decision-making. Albeit empirical tests of Hermann’s model indicate shortcoming for the variable of surprise,

his model incorporates actors' interests into crisis perception and the notion of a threat as obstacle to a desired goal, and thereby serves as a utile model for research. Billings et al (1980) modified his model later on, through the incorporation of the "*triggering event*", and analyzed it against the desired goal or end state.

The characteristics of crisis and respective decision-making, as outlined by Billings et al (1980) are used for the subsequent research, together with the consideration of crisis in the shape of a particular event as a trigger for reform to foster efficiency.

II. ii. Threats and Securitization

Theoretical approaches to threats and threat analysis are well studied in this field, yet gaps remain. While scholars like Giddens (1991) and Mitzen (2006) have focused on the ontological threat and the role of security for the individual and state identity, academics like Wolfers (1952) have focused on the normative threat. Wolfers analyzed the relationship between national security and threat perception, from the perspective of a scholar who experienced the Second World War. Consequently, he argues that the national interest frequently equals national security. In his 1952 work, he acknowledges that the Cold War and the threats of external aggression led to the national prioritization of security instead of welfare matters (p.482). Based on his argument of reforms and the importance of security based on a certain threat environment he lays out a comprehensive theoretical framework. He also provides the definition of security: "[...] *in an objective sense, [security] measures the absence of threats to acquired values, in a subjective sense, the absence of fear that such values will be attacked.*" (p. 485). His definition, however, is not easily applicable, since a country's values and understanding of security are difficult to grasp and define. Accordingly, the characterization of a threat and its extent should rather be extracted as explicit statements from official government accounts.

A notable argument by Wolfers is made on the level of security a nation strives for, though. He argues that factors that influence efforts for security are two-fold. Firstly, the extent of the external threat and how the impact of the threat is perceived. Secondly, domestic factors like national character, tradition, as well as national preferences supposedly influence the decision on action (p. 488). Through this, Wolfers provides useful variables for the critical analysis of a

country's reforms in relation to threats, which can be utilized in tracing causes for security reform efforts.

Buzan et al. (1998) elaborated on the relationship between external threats and the military: *"When securitization is focused on external threats, military security is primarily about the two-level interplay between the actual armed offensive and defense capabilities of states on the one hand and their perceptions of each other's capabilities on the other"* (Buzan et al, 1998). They shed light on diverse characteristics of threats, which may range from fear of the destruction of the state to external pressure and intimidation through policy. While the threats and responses to a threat, as part of the securitization process may vary, Buzan et al. (1998) highlight certain constants. For instance, they conclude, that the military agenda does not work in isolation because military capabilities are subject to political relations (ibid, p.52). This draws on the Clausewitzian idea of the military as an instrument of politics and indicates a clear link between political action in response to a threat, and the military as a tool for securitization. Buzan et al. (1998)'s understanding of the dynamics between a threat, the political level and the military serve as theoretical basis for the analysis of the reform process and impact in this paper.

Understanding collective action and CS has a long history in the discipline – from the bipolar worldview and security relations during the Cold War to the rise in security alliances and multinational military operations worldwide. Buzan and Weaver (2009) presented the idea of *macrosecuritization*, where a *collective political unit* was able to construct a threat jointly, e.g. nuclear weapons during the Cold War. Thereby, they furthered the original Copenhagen School of Thought towards a more sophisticated consideration of the "systems-level" beyond the declared focal point of the "middle level". Buzan and Weaver (2009) find, that while actors remain selfish in securitization processes, it is solely the construct of an alliance, that provides opportunity for numerous parties to join together in securitization (ibid. p.256). Unfortunately, the discussion on macrosecuritization remains on the theoretical level and draws from only few historical examples. While Buzan and Weaver (2009) did not use them as examples, NATO and the EU have become prominent examples of collective securitization. Most recently, such research on the EU has given special attention to morality of collective securitization and normativity (Floyd, 2019; Cecorulli, 2019; Lucarelli, 2019). Only few publications are concerned with specific examples of securitization, like Miholjic (2017), who

analyzed the EU's securitization of migration. Similar to Buzan and Weaver, she suggests that collective securitization can materialize through shared fears. However, she uses the case of Hungary to illustrate divergence in actions despite shared ontological influences, thereby alleviating the prior display of relevance to similarities within the collective.

In 2017, the British International Studies Association published the research of Sperling and Webber on NATO's CS following the Ukraine Crisis. Their work is motivated by the understanding that although NATO securitization is taking place regularly, the case of the Ukraine Crisis and the consecutive securitization is unique concerning the alliance's shift of purpose. They call the process "*resecuritization*" and consider NATO's strategic shift a reorientation to Cold War threat perceptions, undertaken in a persistent and decisive manner that managed to reach consensus amongst all members, and resulted in joint military action.

Sperling and Webber's research focuses on securitization within an institutional framework and claim that an organization like NATO is able to initiate and define a process of securitization. They build their arguments on the securitization theory (ST) of Haacke and Williams (2008), for a systematic assessment of ST, as well as the development of a five-stage circular model for the CS-process (Figure 1). They illustrate the link between threat perception, securitization, and policy by walking the reader through the actions of NATO from "*status quo*" to "*policy output*". Sperling and Webber (2017) consider the special characteristics of an international organization capable of CS; e.g. its political authority and a common security narrative. Yet, their application of the model to CS remains deficient in explaining the process of transforming audience response to policy action. In addition, their research lacks consideration of national contributions and political processes, including military reform, triggered by CS. A serious neglect, considering the large-scale dependency of NATO regarding national contributions ranging from general agreement, over financing, to troop deployments and capability development. Although, the CS impact on national reform remains largely disregarded, their model provides the foundation for understanding collective threat perception and the impact of a crisis on the strategy of the alliance. Thus, it can be used as a starting point for analyzing reform developments on the national level, which originate from commitments to NATO. In the following, Sperling and Webber's model is utilized and expanded for the analysis of Germany's logistical reform following NATO securitization of the

Ukraine Crisis. The aim is to counter the deficiencies previously identified through a thorough enhancement of the model.

III. Research Design

At the core of this research lies the qualitative analysis of German military logistics reform following the Wales Summit. With the focus on the illustration of the scope of the reform, its unique characteristics can only be illustrated by considering it in comparison to previous processes. Therefore, a comparative assessment will be applied as a second part of the analysis. In the third part of the analysis the process tracing method is applied. This section intends to outline the scaffold of these methods. Further, this section serves as an opportunity to define specialized terminology.

III. i. Case Study Assessment and Sources

Case studies are a widely accepted research approach throughout academia, enabling a comprehensive exploration of complex processes by resorting to exemplary analysis. With its qualitative character, the case study further allows for a thorough consideration of social dynamics in processes (Zainal, 2007). With respect to collective securitization, a case study on NATO member state provides useful insight into the effects of the Ukraine Crisis on national military reform. Based on the five-stage Collective Securitization (CS) Model of Sperling and Webber (2017), and their previous application to the Ukraine Crisis, the ensuing analysis will shift the focus of the model's policy stage to the national agent. The behavioral and social component of decision-making are quantitatively assessed with a focus on the actions of German reforming authorities. By focusing on logistics reform from 2014 to 2020 the research is further narrowed down to a specific disciplines and time frame. This timely limitation encompasses the actions after the Wales Summit over the course of a six-year period until the large-scale exercise Defender Europe in 2020. The latter is of interest because it aims to train and demonstrate capabilities of aforementioned discipline. According to the NATO Logistics Handbook (2012), military logistics is defined as the planning and carrying out of movement and maintenance of troops, including actions across a wide range of operational responsibilities (p.20). The operational aspects at the center of this research are acquisition

and construction of infrastructure and facilities, service provision structures and capability development, as well as efforts for multinational collaboration and coherence (ibid). For the conduct of this research, mostly primary sources are analyzed to explore the scope of reforms and military transformation and for the gathering for in-depth information on the national reform process and its impact. This is crucial in consideration of the research claim, and the expectation of additional pressure on the *usual* process, as created through the CS. Overall, the source selection can be summarized in two categories. Firstly, official government documents, by NATO and Germany. The latter encompassing parliamentary motions on military transformation and capabilities, resolutions, laws, official statements, and strategic documents. The other group consists of secondary sources, ranging from expert journals and research papers to articles on the subject matters of military reform and logistics.

III.i. Comparative Assessment

A comparative consideration contributes to an improved understanding of a larger dynamic by positioning structures and routines of one system against that of another or under varying circumstances, to determine similarities and differences. It is primarily an approach to reveal discrepancies between theory and data (Rihoux, 2006, p.681). Consequently, it allows for the testing of theories and the identification of theoretical shortcomings, eventually contributing alternatives, terms of potential relativization and generalization to a conceivably improved theory (Esser and Vliegthart, 2017). Further, a comparative approach increases attentiveness of structural and social differences and generates a critical and qualitative assessment that can reveal previously undetected factors of influence. Therefore, the analysis will scrutinize the component of military logistics reform as part of Germany's broader reform efforts following CS in comparison to previous reform, for the depiction of differences in strategic coherence and reform depth. The reform efforts that require parliamentary approval are not further examined, as they are highly dependent on the political landscape and party politics.

The focus of the comparative analysis lies on the actual process that took place in response to the Ukraine crisis, comparing practices witnessed through CS and in the *regular* process. The analysis is intended to be process-centric and considers neither effectiveness nor efficiency of presented reforms. In the following, reform is defined as political efforts for the enhancement

of capabilities, resources, and overall forces. Further, the terms reform and military reform are used interchangeably throughout this paper.

III.ii. Process-Tracing

In the final stage of the analysis, process tracing is used as qualitative method for the interpretation of the comparative analysis findings. In general, this method serves the purpose of determining causes for identified trends. In this case, the findings of the comparative analysis are traced back to Germany's strategic culture, by acknowledging its relationship to NATO. According to David Kilcullen (2019), strategic culture influences government processes and structures, which in sequence drive military strategy. He argues that national circumstances lead to a specific approach to national power, in the perception of it and its use. It further follows Wolfers (1952) recommendation for the incorporation of national factors (p. 488). Consequently, strategic culture links national identity to the relation with its military and the use of military force, thereby providing a suitable lens for the outlined interpretation.

Although strategic culture encompasses a combination of aspects, the process tracing of this case will concentrate on historical factors. While this paper will not assess whether aspects of Germany's strategic culture are real or imagined, it depicts the reality of actors and processes in contemporary military logistics reform. Eventually, the interpretation aims to ascertain the overall significance of the research.

IV. Analysis Part One: CS and German Military Logistics Reform

In 2013, NATO was still making use of open communication channels with Russia. Despite the Georgia-Russia conflict in 2008 and the lasting distrust between the two parties, the Russian Federation had become a dialogue partner to the alliance. Especially through the NATO-Russia Council, established in 2002 as a cooperative discussion forum where rapprochement and conflict prevention were sought (Antonenko and Giegerich, 2009). The *status quo* was still characterized by misperceptions and deterrence efforts, the latter largely originating from Russia at that time (Suslov, 2012), - but there was no imminent threat identified. In fact, the

vanished Cold War notion of the enemy in the East had moved NATO's strategic focus to crisis management and cooperative security abroad (*Marrone, 2011; Koster, 2018*).

IV.i. The Precipitating Event and Securitization Move

Previously peaceful demonstrations of the Ukrainian public at Central Kyiv's Maidan square first escalated into violence on February 18th (Kofman et al, 2017). The international community, not expecting active third-party interference and limited risk of escalation, publicly denounced the violence. When the situation further destabilized and unrest prevailed, the EU announced sanctions and supported the proposition for new elections. However, it was not until February 27th, when thousands of soldiers in unmarked green uniforms arrived on Ukrainian territory and reports on Russian intervention accumulated, that NATO perceived a *threat* (*ibid.*). As the conflict further unfolded, the unlawful deployment of military forces into the territory represented the *precipitating event* in the CS-process. NATO had repeatedly stated that the annexation of Crimea represented a serious breach of international law, and violated Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity (NATO, 2019). Thereby, Russia violated the shared values of the alliance and posed a threat to its *preferred international order* (Sperling and Webber, 2017). The speech act, as the ultimate declaration of a threat and *securitization move*, was first signaled by a press release (NATO, 2014), however, it lacked the depth and authoritative framework to be considered an actual *speech act*. As a statement of one of the most authoritative actors of the organization, the heads of state and government enacted the *summit communiqué* of the Wales Summit in September 2014. Thereby it was also able to provide a more in depth-document and initiate a strategic change. Through its International Staff (IS) the document had previously been negotiated and drafted by all member states, undoubtedly making it a collective effort. It was at that summit that NATO's securitization process began by jointly declaring Russian actions a threat to NATO and its values (Sperling and Webber, 2017, p.29 ff.).

IV.ii. Audience Response and NATO Policy Output

A NATO member state is as much actor as it is referent in the CS-process, and thereby constitutes the necessary validation for the *speech act*. Their active contribution to the *summit*

communiqué and the legitimization of NATO to speak on the behalf of its members, provide the necessary validation. As member states become part of the securitization, they automatically commit to policy output, too (ibid). In other words, as Russia becomes a threat, NATO declares its intention to counter it.

Stage five refers to the policy output generated through the securitization and takes place on two levels: multinational through NATO, and nationally through various entities in the respective countries involved in the reform process. On the NATO level, the North Atlantic Council (NAC), the Defense Planning Committee and the Nuclear Planning Group are the policy making institutions. The decisions taken by these actors have the same status as the policy of member countries, without regard to the level at which they were taken (NATO Handbook, 2006).

IV.iii. From Summit Statement to Strategy

Through the Summit Declaration, NATO announced it reached consensus not only on a collectively perceived threat and the need to counter akin Russian actions, but also on an overall change in its strategic focus. Thereby, it would still build on the priorities of the strategic concept: collective defense, crisis management and cooperative security (NATO, 2014, No. 3). However, in the years leading up to the summit, the alliance had focused its efforts more on crisis management abroad, e.g. in Afghanistan (Major, 2012). Hence, the (re)focus to collective defense, required the implementation of numerous political and military measures (Nünlist and Zapfe, 2014).

Since NATO's perception of the security environment had changed, the declaration mentioned a need to respond to "*the challenges posed by Russia and their strategic implications*" (NATO, 2014, No. 5). This meant in Freedman (2013)'s understanding a change in the way in which the alliance thought about future actions in relation to its outlined goals and capacities. NATO announced that these were to be realized through various efforts like enhanced intelligence and strategic awareness (NATO, 2014, No.9) as well as regional monitoring (ibid, No.11) and reform revision (ibid, No. 13, 15, and 111). In 2020, the strategic change would also become enshrined in its reworked Strategic Concept, a roadmap guiding NATO's reforms for the next 10 years. More practically, NATO also decided upon a direct commitment to its members bordering Russia, countering potential action, where the threat was perceived the most

imminent. Apart from the deployment of the four battle groups, and greater importance placed on the VJTF, NATO also approved the Readiness Action Plan (RAP), aimed at ensuring rapid response to its Central and Eastern European members through various so-called *assurance measures* (NATO, 2016, No. 5). The RAP thereby represented a direct translation of the goal of enhanced troop reinforcement, presented at Wales and Warsaw (NATO, 2014, No. 8 and 13; NATO, 2016, No. 4, 37 c-d, 40 and 44).

As the declared political means necessitated a translation into military action, these documents demanded member states to contribute on numerous levels and to reform where necessary. Especially on military logistics, the demand of rapid deployment, strategic reinforcement, maintaining a large-scale military presence in the east for the purpose of deterrence and power projection required extensive reform and inter-state collaboration. A difficult undertaking in a multinational context since military mobility has historically been a national matter (Mittelstädt, 2018). However, as NATO had established the Concept of HNS, with the underlying goal of providing logistic support from one member to another passing through (NATO, 2012).

NATO requirements related to the move of the eFP BGs, exercise deployments, and the VJTF alone demand the ability to manage larger troop movements, at higher frequency, and potentially greater speed. Fulfilling these demands, however, largely requires actions by individual member states.

IV.iv. German Strategic Shift

In Germany, the developments of NATO's strategic refocus were followed by political announcements of growing commitment to NATO, and a national strategic focus on national and collective defense, referred to as *LV/BV* (KdB, 2018, p. 5). Hereby, the Ukraine Crisis became the argumentative basis for a changed security environment and reasoning behind the increased national commitment and change of reform in Germany's 2016 White Paper (BMVg, 2020). It is the Federal Republic's key document for security policy and stated: "*Russia is openly calling the European peace order into question with its willingness to use force to advance its own interests and to unilaterally redraw borders guaranteed under international law, as it has done in Crimea and eastern Ukraine. This has far-reaching implications for*

security in Europe and thus for the security of Germany.“ (White Paper, 2016). Thereby, one could argue, that Germany provided its own *speech act*, directed at a national audience.

For the securitization in Germany to generate the desired policy output (stage five), the Federal Government under the lead of its Ministry of Defense (BMVg), developed two more key reform-guiding documents in addition to the White Paper. Firstly, the *Bundeswehr Concept* (KdB) of 2013, which was reworked in accordance with the Summits of Wales and Warsaw and approved in its new version in spring 2018. The KdB is a long-term policy statement that defined the responsibilities and tasks of the armed forces, and functions as framework document of the overall strategy of Germany's military defense. In the document, the government outlines the goal of transforming the Bundeswehr into capable forces according to the NATO demands and lists defense of the alliance as key tasks of the armed forces (KdB, 2018).

According to the BMVg, the document also serves as a comprehensive guideline for the modernization of the Bundeswehr (ibid.), which is further laid out in the third document: The Armed Forces Capability Profile. It was enacted by Germany's Chief of Defense (CHOD) in 2018 and represents an internal (classified) planning document, laying out the next steps of modernization and force adaption for the next 12 years. What is known about the document are the goals of the capability profile, which are threefold: modernizing existing capabilities, filling hollow structures, and developing new capabilities (BMVg II, 2018).

Overall, the provision of security policy framework documents happened fast, and incorporated the new LV/BV focus throughout all reform components and even ministerial restructuring. In the wake of the CS, ministerial work on the planning of the reform process was characterized by a high number of extraordinary staff formations and consulting firms tasked with reviews and studies (Steinmann, 2020).

IV. iv. i. Germany's Geostrategic Role

"Strategy and politics must be done within geography. They cannot help but be influenced by ideas, and physical constraints, that reasonably are termed geographical. Geography is inescapable."

- Colin S. Gray (1999)

The military logistic implications of the reform goals as depicted in the ministry's framework reform documents can be attributed to Germany's geostrategic role in the alliance. Germany's special location in the center of Europe makes it a transit country for troop movements, increasingly so in its role as provider of HNS to a growing number of forces passing through (KdB, 2018). Its position is remarkable because it allows access directly through the North Sea, with a total of 17 ports (German Ports, 2014). The Port of Bremerhaven, for example, is only 32 nautical miles from the open sea, capable of hosting large size cargo and military vessels and allows immediate access to highways and railways leading to the east (Eurogate, 2021). It is also home to Germany's Naval Operations School, about 30 km east of Wilhelmshaven naval base, and circa 20 km south of a naval air base (PIZ Marine, 2019).

Considering air transport, Germany has been a central hub due to NATO's Air Command in Ramstein and overall U.S. military presence through U.S. European Command (EUCOM) and Africa Command (AFRICOM), requiring regular transit of personnel through Germany (USAF, 2021; Brauss, 2018). Therefore, strong logistic ties were already long-established between Germany and NATO's largest military force. Additionally, with more than 33.000 km Germany has the longest railroad network in Europe (Thales, 2020), making cargo and troop movement via tracks possible into all its neighboring states. These special characteristics also place major responsibility on Germany in the provision of services. With the important role in logistic services for NATO, the reform changes of 2014 were to affect all transport dimensions, and all branches of the Bundeswehr.

IV. iv. ii. The 2016 Reform Impact on Military Logistics

In the KdB, logistics is described as the backbone of mission accomplishments of the Armed Forces (KdB, 2018, p.51). However, military logistics depends on what is provided regarding capabilities, personnel, infrastructure, and the legal framework in which it can act. The Wales Summit and NATO's refocus to collective defense, found direct considerations in the reform

guiding documents affecting all these dimensions of military logistics. Firstly, a turnaround in efforts to troop reduction was initiated that also affected German logistics units (BMVg, 2019). Logistical manning was reconsidered together with the skills necessary to successfully fulfill NATO obligations. Secondly, the Federal Government also initiated an inventory study of the transport infrastructure for military mobility in Germany in September 2016. Derived from the ambition to modernize the forces and fulfill the logistic demands of NATO, capability developments across branches were initiated together with efforts to improve transit routes for large scale movement, most specifically those routes previously classified as insufficient by federal entities (Bundestag 19/5208, 2018). Thirdly, in an effort to coordinate military logistics across NATO facilities a multinational command and a training facility was established in Germany. Lastly, collaboration beyond NATO, such as with civilian stakeholders became a major undertaking in the reform of logistics, with the general awareness that the Bundeswehr neither possessed nor had the ability to acquire all necessary capabilities and skills to fulfill its logistic obligation to NATO (SKB and DWT, 2015, p.5).

Manning and Ability to Act

The military personnel reform that derived from the responsibilities and tasks of the Bundeswehr laid out in the 2016 White Paper was aimed at expanding the German armed forces again (BMVg, 2016). This was unprecedented since the Cold War and reverses the previous personnel reform explicitly aimed at troop reduction. Also, the Joint Support Service Command (KdoSKB) became subject to restructuring, by transferring information technology and cyber capabilities into the newly created Cyber Command. Consequently, the SKB was reduced to 30,000 troops together with an increased concentration on logistic capabilities (Hemicker,2016).

In 2019, the Bundeswehr announced the establishment of Logistics Regiment 1 as part of its restructuring efforts, with the entry into service scheduled for fall 2020. The regiment would provide the administrative framework to lead Germany's logistic units in peacetime and in efforts of collective defense. As part of the restructuring, logistics forces were also extended by one more battalion, to a total of seven. The Logistics Battalion 163 reinforces the mobile logistics forces of the SKB. The battalion's core mission is the so-called reception, staging and onward movement (RSOM). Thereby, fulfilling the NATO logistical demands in Germany's

responsibility of HNS (Bundeswehr, 2020). The RSOM phase can be understood as transit from Ports of Debarkation to the final destination, requiring a high level of logistic support and alignment of forces in the HNS planning process (NATO, 2012, p.24).

In order to apply logistical skills appropriately when needed, they must be practiced to achieve an *ability to act* (dt.: *Handlungsfähigkeit*). In military logistics, this is usually only possible within the framework of exercises. Nationally, for example, every year the military information training exercise (ILÜ), demonstrates the capabilities of the armed to the next generation of Bundeswehr leadership (Bundeswehr, 2019). Here, a considerable logistical effort is required. Generally, however, Bundeswehr exercises at home have no need for extensive support from logistics forces. It is therefore only logical that the exercise of military logistic capabilities takes place primarily within the framework of NATO exercises, as their application takes mainly place in the NATO framework.

Since 2016, Germany has increasingly committed itself to NATO exercises (Handelsblatt, 2018). U.S.-led Defender Europe 2020, for example, was constructed as a largescale exercise, to practice the rapid deployment of forces across the Atlantic and through continental Europe. The redeployment of a division to augment forces in the East is thereby practiced for the first time with Germany taking on a large share of responsibility as HNS provider (PIZ SKB, 2020). The exercise with a personnel contribution of 37.000 was aimed at the improvement of NATO's readiness, reinforcement, and enablement capabilities (ibid.). Considering these complex variables for successful transit, NATO large-scale exercise is further used as a study to gain insights into capability gaps and needs of the military (Bundestag 19/25059, 2020).

Roads

In response to a parliamentary request regarding military mobility, the Federal Government stated, that *“load-bearing capacity of road bridges and their load downgrading may prove to be a weak point for military requirements.”* Further, bottlenecks were identified in terms of transport space, encompassing a lack of special vehicles for heavy-duty transport (Bundestag 19/5208, 2018). While infrastructure deficits continue to be a military logistic challenge, the German government launched a program for bridge modernization in 2015. By providing input as part of the military transport expertise, the BMVg was able to contribute to the

prioritization of the modernization and upgrading of road bridges as part of the federal maintenance investments. As a result, modernization measures with an estimated investment volume of 5 million euros per construction project were scheduled from 2015 onwards. Starting in 2017, the plan includes an additional 100 million euros per year for the modernization of smaller bridges to promote the modernization of longer road sections. (BMVI, 2021).

Together with the efforts for infrastructure improvement, Germany also committed to the modernization of its transport fleet (Roller, 2019). One example is the contract between the Bundeswehr and Rheinmetall, a weapons ammunition and vehicle provider to the forces, comprised of more than 2,200 military trucks. The project "Unprotected Transport Vehicles" was initiated on the premise of supporting the VJTF, according to Rheinmetall Public Affairs staff. It offers all-terrain vehicles, with payloads of up to 15 tons. The investment is estimated at about 380 million Euros per 1.000 vehicles. (Rheinmetall, 2020). The Bundeswehr plans to invest around 24 million euros in new buildings and the renovation of existing buildings for the additional 273 vehicle service posts (Roller, 2019).

Rail

In its effort to translate the NATO commitments into action, the BMVg identified the lack of rail track availability, and railroad flat cars for heavy transport and a need for improvement through targeted investments (Bundestag 19/5208, 2018). The nationwide railways are in the hands of Deutsche Bahn AG, a joint-stock company with the Federal Republic, which means that the military demands were competing with the open economy. While military transport would use the tracks, Deutsche Bahn would not be able to use that space to move paying customers, or even worse, run into delays that would cost the company. This situation is further complicated by the fact that the state's claim to use infrastructure for military purposes is limited by laws that restrict availability through the exception of extraordinary circumstances, like emergency scenarios (VerkLG, 2004, §1; VerkSiG, 1965, §1). As the established federal system and legal framework impede the desired improvements for strategic mobility, collaboration is sought through agreements with industry stakeholders.

Despite legal and economic obstacles, a framework contract for rail transports was signed between BMVg and Deutsche Bahn in 2019. The agreement is directed at the enablement of Germany's VJTF troop deployments and as the contractual foundation for future foreign rail transports that conducted by the German Armed Forces. The investment of this agreement is estimated at about 97.5 million euros (BMVg I, 2018). Additionally, Germany started a regular engagement for the establishment of a freight contract framework, especially ahead of exercises. One example is the contract concluded at the end of 2018 between the German Armed Forces and Deutsche Bahn AG's Cargo subsidiary. The contract allows for the provision of 300 wagons and locomotives for more than 1,300 military transports annually. The contract came into force on January 1st, 2019. Over the period of two years the investment for this project is expected to amount to circa 100 million euros (Bundestag 19/17683, 2020).

Air

Airfields are not only part of critical infrastructure, but also function as logistic hubs, thereby directly contributing to military mobility. When it comes to logistical components for the enablement of mobility sufficient infrastructure is key. With increasing demand in air transport, the quality of airfields and possibility to accommodate personnel, store equipment, and endure an increased frequency in transport plane landing and takeoff, required investment. In this regard, as Germany was expecting an increasing demand due to the VJTF and deployments to eFP, the infrastructure in air mobility was revised, too.

In 2015, the decision was made to transform Wittmund airbase. Expansion and modernization costs of the logistic air transport were expected at around 350 million euros. According to the local construction management authorities, around 70 individual construction projects were outlined, including more than fifty building construction measures and the renewal of the entire technical infrastructure of the base (HWK Aurich, 2019). Similarly, the renovation of Büchel Airbase, home to German Bomber Squadron 33 and the U.S. 702nd Muniton Support Squaron, was initiated in 2019. The construction plan encompasses runway surface repair, taxiway modernization, new fencing, and the construction of 60 shelters, with renovation exceeding 40 million Euros (ABB RLP, 2019; Bundestag 19/27108, 2021; USAF, 2021).

Sea

In its annual directive for the Navy, Germany's Chief of Navy outlines planned capability developments, training, and personnel perspectives, especially regarding international cooperation (Mannhardt, 2016). At a speech in 2016 Vice-Admiral Andreas Krause, Chief of Navy at the time, that LV/BV was back on the agenda since the events in Ukraine and highlighted the need to address deficiencies in the maritime capability network of the alliance (Krause, 2016). In the military logistics reform delineation harbors and logistic hubs became a priority for further investment, especially in light of Germany's role as HNS provider. One example of investment into respective logistic hubs was the 600 million euros commitment to modernize and refurbish the logistics center at Wilhelmshaven Naval Base in 2015. Wilhelmshaven is the city with the highest presence of military personnel, and geographic advantage in maritime deployments and shipping. According to the Minister of Defense, the investment was intended to guarantee logistic efficiency for the future (Logistik News, 2015).

As Harbors worldwide are largely owned by civilian entities, contracts and legal adaption beyond the military are required. Studies by NATO and the German Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure (BMVI) found that this limited accessibility could pose a challenge to military mobility in the near future. To counter this potential capability gap, Germany, collaborated with Denmark in an effort to acquire sea-based strategic deployment capabilities. Hereby, the availability of maritime strategic transport capabilities is ensured by reserving a certain quota of vessel, but at the same time allowing shipping companies to offer the vessels for commercial purpose in the case of non-utilization, while respecting the agreement of provision within the contractual time frame. This allows freedom to act to changing demands even on a relatively short notice, with the first provision of vessels promised within 15 days. The outdated civilian contract of the early 2000s was transformed into a Memorandum of Understanding in 2012 (Gerk, 2019).

Digital Infrastructure

„Leveraging digital capabilities and building a digital self-awareness will shape the military capabilities of the future.“

- BMVg Digitization Guideline (2017, p.19)

The BMVg described digitization as a core aspect of the modernization reform effort of the Bundeswehr (White Paper, 2016). In its reform effort it instructs all units through its digitization guidelines to implement efforts for increased interconnectivity (BMVg Digitalization Guideline, 2017; p.15). Together with the goal of sufficient software and IT service provision these acts are directly targeted at the establishment of a modern integrated command and control organization (ibid.).

In order to respond quickly to NATO demands, extensive change had to be initiated in regard to digitization. It was recognized by the Bundeswehr logistics demand study and implemented in an initiative for digital improvement. One component of this effort is the development of a Bundeswehr logistics management system (LogLageBw) in line with the strategy of military operations (Mittelstädt, 2018). The system encloses a search engine with data on available weapon systems and material, a malfunction data analysis, and scarcity and deficit management, which provides information on the unavailability of material. (BWI, 2020). The ultimate goals are rapid availability of *au courant* logistics details and multinational operability for the use within the alliance (Mittelstädt, 2018)

Logistics Institutionalization

The establishment of eFP and the superordinate objective of deterrence made Germany an active part of NATO's joint rear area, both for missions and related exercises. The required collaboration across borders, and the dependency on logistic support from allies as material and personnel is moved, lead to a variety of multinational tasks requiring coordination. In order to respond to this need for coordination, Germany announced its willingness to act as the central logistic hub for partners (Lange, 2018). This commitment was manifested through the creation of the JSEC in Ulm. NATO Spokesperson Oana Lungescu summarized the purpose of JSEC as follows: *"the new command will help to speed up, coordinate and safeguard the movement of allied armor and infantry across European borders."* (NATO, 2019). In the case of crisis or conflict, the JSEC will be activated as part of the NATO force structure. The task of the JSEC will be to ensure support services for NATO-assigned forces, which will be subordinated to the JSEC by NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) in its own area of responsibility (Bundestag 19/3005, 2018).

Considering NATO commitment for military mobility, efforts to shape coherence and interoperability were initiated, too. Since Germany assumed responsibility as a framework nation in the area of multinational logistics through the Wales Summit, it also accepted to host and lead NATO's Joint Logistic Support Group Coordination and Training Centre (JCTC). It is a Center of Excellence integrated into Germany's Military Logistics School. The JCTC's goal is to provide training and recommendation for an improved structured development and consolidation of logistical capabilities for NATO's rapid reaction forces across Europe (Thomas, 2019). While the creation of the JSEC and JCTC contribute to the enhancement of capabilities, multinational logistics cohesion and standardization, it also created infrastructure and personnel demands for Germany.

Collaborations and Dependencies

The efforts within NATO as well as the investment in civilian infrastructure have illustrated the extensive network of collaboration, beyond the national forces. This once again shows that not all tasks can be performed by the armed forces or the military administration alone.

“Due to the renewed emphasis on LV/BV, however, the Bundeswehr requires significantly higher logistical capacities than are available today and can be provided by the military in the future. The establishment and expansion of services that can also be provided by commercial logistics service providers at any time, depending on the threat, will therefore be crucial.”

- LogKdo (2019)

Particularly when it comes to supporting foreign armed forces during their temporary stay in and transit through Germany (HNS), military and civilian resource providers from the various ministries and the commercial sector work together. In addition to the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Home Affairs (BMI) in the lead for internal security affairs and civil military cooperation, the network is further complicated by responsibility sharing with the BMVI. Due to its federal structure, this requires Germany to have a high degree of collaboration in the reform process (Territorial Task Command, 2019).

The BMVg initiated its participation in further development of the "Framework Guidelines for Overall Defense" (RRGV) at an early stage. The document dates back to 1989 and has not been modified since (BMVg, 1989). As part of further dovetailing between the two ministries, the

BMI published the Civilian Defense Concept in August 2016 following joint cooperation with the BMVg. This defines the role of the Bundeswehr in the event of a crisis (KZV, 2016). It also lays the foundation for Bundeswehr claims to civilian material and capabilities, including infrastructure in various escalation stages of a conflict. This document provides the first step in the composition of an updated RRGV.

In order to counter dependency and accelerate cooperation when it comes to accessibility of infrastructure and services, the BMVg has become part of subject-matter working groups at other ministries, e.g. a BMVI's renewal of infrastructure working group, in order to contribute the military perspective (Bundestag 19/25059, 2020). In a report the SKB and German Military Technology Society (DWT) concluded that the Bundeswehr had developed a dependency on civilian services (SKB and DWT, 2019). However, the German government acknowledged this reality and identified increased civilian logistics service investment as part of reform plans for enhanced military mobility (Bundestag 19/5208, 2018).

The matter of collaboration, rights and accessibility is further complicated by Germany's federal system, where responsibility for the approval of large and heavy transports lies with respective states. While people and goods can travel freely throughout the EU, the military cannot, and is subject to request to pass borders, even more so military transport, which needs to be registered with customs. In an attempt to accelerate the process of reform, Germany strived to turn the national effort into a European one. It utilized the EU's Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) created in 2017, and more specifically the Projects "Military Mobility" and "Network of Logistic Hubs in Europe and Support to Operations" to advance cohesion (Mittelstädt, 2018). This not only accelerates collaboration in Europe but can also trigger a request for legal provision through the PESCO secretariat, with the distinct advantage of the primacy of EU law and a referred precedent on the EU level, through which legal change for cross border military movement would be advanced.

V. Analysis Part Two: Comparative Approach

A reform of the German Armed forces is always made up of a number of different undertakings or reform components. As it originates from a strategic reorientation it ranges from restructuring, over investments, to legislative change. In addition to security policy documents such as the White Paper, there can be a variety of strategies and guidelines on separate

disciplines and responsibilities (Figure 4). In addition, national laws and the federal separation of responsibilities often set a narrow framework for action. Most reform components can be undertaken by the BMVg itself, as the authority responsible for the leadership and governance of the Armed Forces. However, as soon as reform efforts go beyond the force structure and military strategy, reform efforts of the BMVg require collaboration between different ministries as responsibilities overlap (GG 1949; Art. 65 Clause 2). To identify unique procedures and characteristics of Germany's reforms in response to the Ukraine Crisis, it needs to be considered in comparison to previous reforms. The comparative approach acknowledges established processes and reforming documents. Further, the reform scope and strategic coherence are considered.

V.i. Reform Structure

The BMVg is lead by the Minister of Defense, with the CHOD as the highest military commander and the government's advisor on the Armed Forces. It comprised of ten specialized departments and almost thirty subdivisions, as well as various extraordinary staff formations with subject matter working groups (BMVg, 2021).

When it comes to logistics, three different departments are concerned with the future and use of logistic capabilities. Firstly, the Planning Department (Plg) is in charge of abstract capability planning conceptualization, encompassing capability analysis, and multinational defense planning on the macro-level. Generally operationalizing NATO's capability requirements for Germany. For the demands of current operations, the strategy and operations department (SE) is leading efforts in the everyday use of logistics, in collaboration with the subordinate Joint Force Operations Command. Lastly, the Command-and-Control Department (FüSK) is tasked with conceptualization of military mobility and operationalization of multinational commitments (BMVg, n.d.). FüSK is where the focus has been placed since Wales. All these department receive direction through the CHOD in accordance with guidance from the political arena. Once the departments have clearly defined the strategic and operational priorities for development, they can task the KdoSKB and the Logistics Command for contributions in the planning of the next steps, e.g. through a specialized study, or order the execution of measures right away. Further, the Planning Office of the German Armed Forces (PlgABw) can be tasked to conduct a study on future capabilities etc. (BAAINBw, 2019).

Based on such studies, that may also be conducted from various commands entrusted with specific aspects of logistics, the Federal Office of Bundeswehr Equipment, Information Technology and In-Service Support (BAAINBw) is assigned with engaging in the development and purchase of new equipment and capabilities (ibid.). Overall, the logistical reform process can involve more than a dozen subordinate commands (Mittelstädt, 2018).

V.ii. Framework Documents and Strategic Goals

The previously mentioned framework documents shared the same argumentative basis, namely a significant strategic shift of the alliance. What Germans refer to as LV/BV was linked to the acknowledgement of deficiencies that conflict with the commitments made to NATO in 2014 and 2016 (White Paper, 2016). Due to the extensive need for reform identified by the BMVg a range of strategic documents on key subjects were published, e.g. the 2016 Personnel Strategy and the Strategic Directive for Digitization in the Armed Forces in 2017.

Logically, the reform of 2010 based its actions on the security environment and threats as listed in the preceding White Paper, which was released in 2006. Together with the Security Guidelines released by the BMVg (2011), Germany identified terrorism as the primary threat and cause of international destabilization (p.8, 21) However, the securitization of terrorism primarily took place in other sectors, affecting change mainly in the area of responsibility of the BMI and BMVI (Fischer and Masala, 2011). The BMVg did, however, devote capacities in an intra-ministerial effort to create joint trainings between the Bundeswehr and the Police, as part of an anti-terrorism exercise (Wiegold, 2017). Other threat scenarios were identified in connection with regional conflicts, pandemics, fragile statehood, migration, and energy security, and were partially outlined in connection with terrorist threats (BMVg, 2006). While the outline of threats and future challenges to the international security environment are intended to guide future reform, the 2010 reform efforts did not provide a clear plan on how to develop the capabilities needed. Considering the concept of the Bundeswehr and the capability profile, the ministry was running behind on a timely reform implementation, with the concept becoming released seven years after the White Paper.

Eventually, German troops were reduced by more than 50.000 soldiers within a year, following the termination of conscription in 2010 (Figure 3). Various units were closed, thousands of combat soldiers transferred to staff duties (BMVg - Referat Fü S VII 3, 2011) and weapons

systems were sold (Friederichs, 2013). Armed Forces Staff was dissolved, and responsibilities were transferred from the level of the four military area commands to 15 regional commands. The Bundeswehr was downsized and at the same time burdened with a greater mission's commitment than ever before (BMVg, 2011; Lensing, 2012).

V.iii. Logistics Down-Scaling

What did this mean for logistics? The KdoSKB, as newly created command started its work in late 2012. Thereby, the three different capabilities commands (Logistics, Command Support, Strategic Reconnaissance) and Territorial Command were united under the leadership of the KdoSKB. Their commanders were directly responsible to the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces Base for the operational readiness, command, training and further development of their capability commands. This consolidated restructuring was argued to serve the responsibilities as force provider and enabler for missions abroad (Bundeswehr, n.d.). However, as a result of the restructuring, the SKB has suffered losses in logistical sustainment.

The 2006 White Paper, too, refers to logistic responsibilities almost exclusively in the context of combat missions abroad (p.53, p.127). Only once does the document refer to the importance of logistics in light of domestic crisis, however, it does not identify a need for reform or change (ibid. p.85). Eventually, regional logistics remained a topic linked to mission obligations abroad. In the end, the Bundeswehr lost two battalions in charge of RSOM to the restructuring (Hamburger Abendblatt, 2011). The White Paper, and the strategic guidelines of 2011 thereby outlined a variety of responsibilities and potential fields of reform, considering a future oriented approach. However, in the end, the mismatch between strategic goals and military means remained undiscussed (Sanger, 2014).

V.iv. Investments

Overall, from the 1990s until the early 2000s Germany's defense spending declined from 57.5 billion U.S. dollars to 45.3 billion. (Fleckenstein, 2002). From 2006 until 2009 defense spending in Germany rose consistently, until it became close to stagnant in 2011 (Figure 2). Since 2015, however, Germany's defense spending reached almost 53 billion dollars in 2020, making it the

highest annual spending in real terms since 1988 (BMF, 2021). In 2020 Germany had the largest increase amongst the top fifteen spending states worldwide (Heinrich, 2020).

The efforts undertaken since 2014 to improve infrastructure for military logistic purposes in Germany are the first of its kind since the Cold War period, where secure rear areas were established together with supply routes across Europe to ensure rapid reinforcement (Koster, 2018). Consequently, there was no comparable effort known to change infrastructure plans to such an extent and to integrate troop mobility into reform until the demand for rapid reinforcement was identified again. Although the 2006 White Paper stated, that the protection of citizens and infrastructure is gaining in importance, in regard to national defense and that of the alliance (White Paper, 2006, p.11). Further, in 2011, the BMVg states in a Reform Guiding Document its intention to revise its infrastructure and service processes for the purpose of efficiency enhancement, since *“The construction and maintenance of military infrastructure at home and abroad continues to be of particular importance.”* (De Maiziere, 2011). Concerning logistics, these review efforts mainly referred to the support of military operations abroad (Mittelstädt, 2018, p.3). Despite identified needs, the overall reform package was directed at reducing personnel, equipment, and new capabilities. At the same time, the Federal Government expressed its desire for a general reduction in defense spending (Handelsblatt, 2010). The publicly disclosed spending on army maintenance logistics provides an insight into the means provided concerning military logistics, which should have been in need of large investments as part of the 2010 reform focus on missions abroad. Here the funding amounted to 252.5 million euros in 2012 and 562 million euros in 2020 (BMF, 2021).

However, regular efforts for infrastructure improvement were undertaken, e.g. in the modernization of the Northern Air Transport base in Wunstorf. The construction began in September 2009, and the first construction phase was completed in early 2015. The state ministry of finance estimates the total cost of converting and modernizing the air base of Air Transport Wing 62 at around 750 million euros. Wunstorf is home to the A400M transport planes with a regular duty to transport personnel and equipment into mission (Krüger and Sokoll, 2018); thereby matching the priority setting of crisis management abroad.

For a strategy to be successful, requirements and operational challenges need to be defined, before the development of a concept (Owens 2015). However, the stocktaking on the efforts undertaking in the 2010 reform process has illustrated a discrepancy between the challenges

and needs identified in relation to the actions taken. A coherence in reform planning and implementation has been more visible in the 2016 reform that followed the CS.

VI. Analysis Part Three: Process Tracing

Russia's actions in Ukraine have changed the threat perception across NATO, and required a immediate reform response from its member states (Koeth, 2016). As the case of Germany illustrates, military logistics means transformation across branches and the triggering reform even beyond the military for the purpose of enablement and national resilience. Both cases have shown that responsibilities in Germany are largely scattered across government bodies, requiring even more effort and time for change. Therefore, the Ukraine Crisis clearly had a big impact on decision-making processes in the Federal Republic, as errors were identified in relation to the preceding reform trend of the military, like the downsizing without demand studies and its overall neglect of military logistics in regards to LV/BV. As boined et al. (2016) argued, Ukraine Crisis gave Germany the opportunity for learning and adaption (p. 115). It transformed German defense policy into a To-Do list for political action. The case of logistics has demonstrated political willingness and fast decision-making, promoting even inter-ministerial reform progress. The 2016 reform was the first attempt at a comprehensive reform approach to logistics due to the refocus to collective defense.

Further, the reform process that followed CS has seen an increase in defense spending, and especially high investments into logistical capabilities, modernization of infrastructure, and contracts for enablement. The investments go together with an overall increase in defense spending since 2014 (Figure 2), which can be attributed to a more favorable political economic situation due to economic recovery (Keller, 2011; Bundesbank, 2014).

It is known that national political and legal limitations affect the extent to which member states can contribute to NATO (Mello, 2019). However, the remarkable commitment, depth, and speed at which reform took place in the aftermath of the Ukraine Crisis, makes it clear political pressure and willingness to act play a big part in overall contributions. Overall, the depth and strategic coherence of the reform is traced back to two aspects of CS: The pressure of the collective, and the pressure of the crisis.

VI. i. German Strategic Culture and the Pressure of the Collective

Strategy is by nature future-centric and requires the capability to engage in predictive action for it to be successful and create room for maneuver (Milevski, 2012). The German case, however, has shown the lack of preparedness and foresight, when considering the high demand for reform, especially the need for new capability development, already known during the 2010 reform process. Most likely, the demands identified after CS could have been foreseen, by setting the right priorities, by implementing a forward-looking approach, and through coherent reform. However, Germany responded when the crisis occurred, and not ahead of time. Considering various defense policy trends in Europe of the early 21st century, Germany may as well be just one example of many. The origin of what can be referred to as “cautious prudence” can be traced back to Germany’s strategic culture.

As a result of World War II, Germany developed a strategic culture of prudence, attributed to the caution to danger and risks of military action. Former Chancellor of Germany, Willy Brandt, expressed the future ethical obligation of Germany in a state declaration as such: “*War must never again emanate from German soil.*” (BRD, 1970). Following the premise of dealing with conflict in a way that circumvents armed involvement, Germany also developed a comprehensive approach to security policy, where it aims for future-oriented actions, but where the armed forces are one instrument among many (FES, 2011). Further, Germany pursues the principle of coordination in a multilateral alliance after the establishment of the Bundeswehr. Germany acts in systems of collective security in NATO, the EU and the United Nations (KdB, 2018). German security and defense policy is shaped in consultation with partners and through alliances. As described in article 24 of the Basic Law of the Federal Republic, “*to achieve long lasting peace the Federation may enter systems of collective defense and consent to limitations upon its sovereign power*” (BRD, 2019).

After World War II, Germany developed a reluctance towards a patriotic and nationalistic consciousness through foreign occupation and denazification. The former mindset was replaced by a European and liberal orientation of German policy. Hereby, foreign powers like Great Britain and France shaped the government structure, together with restrictions to its industry that tied Germany to European agreements, to prevent it from rearming (Grau et al, 2017; Boesch and Schläpfer, 1997). Today, the government argues, that Germany’s national security interests stem from its history, geography, international relations, and dependency

on resources (BMVg, 2011, p.11; FES, 2011). At the same time, it explicitly states that it supports strategic development around the world to protect the rule-based order, and its armed forces act in alliances of collective defense (BMVg, 2011; KZV, 2016, p.11).

The assessment of Germany's strategic culture suggests that the perceptions of the collective created pressure, because in the case of the Ukraine crisis the collective – NATO as a whole - argued for more troops, more commitment, more investment etc. This was the exact opposite of what Germany had previously pursued as a policy and deviating from the international security landscape depicted in its policy documents ahead of CS. At the same time, the White Paper (2016) clearly states: *“Germany’s willingness to assume leadership in this area is in line with our Allies’ expectations.”* (p.68). The Ukraine crisis revealed a flaw in NATO's strategic planning, and in the strategic focus of individual member states like Germany. Consequently, CS triggered reform across the alliance to fix that flaw and contributed to an increased efficiency in military logistics (Billings et al., 1980). Given the urgency that a “crisis” entails, the changes were implemented rapidly, also given the political momentum, as leaders were enabled to referred to special circumstances and the responsibility to the collective (Boin et al. 2016, p.132)

VI. ii. Correcting Misalignments

On the one hand, reform is supported by the political momentum that a crisis creates (Boin et al. 2016). On the other hand, it requires political willingness to materialize. Germany's political willingness was demonstrated with a high level of commitment at Wales and Warsaw and was crucial in serving as argumentative base throughout reform documents. The commitment related to a demand, that needed to be assessed and translated into reform. The commitment is also visible in the high volume of strategies and strategic directives (Figure 4), the increase in defense spending (Figure 2), and the high number of extraordinary staff formations and consulting firms in the ministry (Steinmann, 2020), all contributing to the apparent reform process acceleration.

Although NATO's Strategic Concept assigned equal importance to collective defense, crisis management and cooperative security, crisis management dominated over the years prior to Wales. Especially, military engagement in Afghanistan considerably shaped the mindset and decisions as to how NATO member states equipped and trained their forces (Major, 2015). In

Germany, this narrow focus also affected the constitution of military logistics (Mittelstädt, 2018, p.3). In general, experts had remarked a missing collective strategy in the early 2000s already (Antonenko and Giegerich, 2009), and publicly discussed the need for decision on a lasting improvement of NATO-Russia relations, especially in light of NATO enlargement (De Haas, 2009). Seemingly, the Ukraine Crisis brought about what was needed regarding a common threat assessment and the necessary strategy to counter Russian military action. The new confirmation of the importance of collective defense was an important moment and contributed to a strengthened sense of collaboration in the alliance (Nünlist and Zapfe, 2014).

Concerning military logistics in Germany, it remains doubtful that these extensive changes would have been introduced without the Ukraine Crisis and CS. Wales and Warsaw left no possibility to deviate politically from previous statements and commitments without the threat of political repercussions. In that way, CS, or more explicitly NATO, creates immense pressure on its member states to introduce national reforms and organizational changes that might not have been easy to realize before.

VII. Conclusion

The unraveling of the Ukraine Crisis awoke NATO from its peaceful slumber and triggered a wide array of strategic changes and reforms. The case study of Germany provides useful insights into the effects of the Ukraine Crisis on national military reform. The trickle-down effect of NATO strategic direction to the policy, structural, and operational changes is clearly visible in the German Case. In fact, NATO's refocus to collective defense created pressure, that led to a major commitment of Germany and eventually a turnaround of its previous military reform. More troops, more investment, focus on national and alliance defense were all laid out in an array of reform documents, characterized by strategic coherence, and rapid implementation.

The comparative view assured the claim, that the reform efforts were more extensive than previous reform and indicating greater strategic coherence. Through process tracing clearly two aspects of increased pressure through CS could be identified in the German case: I. characterization of the security landscape as impacted by a crisis and perceived sense of urgency to act, and II. collective pressure. The latter being manifested in Germany's strategic

culture, and further intensified through the strong reaffirmation of collective defense, while growing national responsibility is assigned through the strategic refocus of the alliance.

The focus on logistics reform has additionally revealed the consequences of a big demand and capability delta in Germany that came with a policy of saving and without foresight. The previous flaws in crisis perception, a lack of foresight, as well as a national strategic culture characterized by prudence were identified as the root causes for this delta. Further, the analysis and subsequent interpretation provide sufficient data to trace political willingness for reform to the collective pressure generated through CS. Consequently, CS means accountability towards the collective and hence pressure for the individual member state. Especially, the example of logistics emphasized the interconnectivity and interdependency of NATO capabilities and the need for collaboration for the execution of tasks, potentially even raise the stakes of interdependency.

While the research offers a range of examples of reform change and their connectivity of structural elements of the German Armed Forces, it fails to capture military logistics as a key discipline for national and collective defense with all its complexity and depth. Especially, the limited availability of unclassified sources on the matter pose a challenge. However, it provides the opportunity for an expansion by analyzing German reforms beyond logistics, or by comparing the 2014 CS impact with the reforms that followed the CS process in response to 9/11. Additionally, a deep dive into other country cases to show variances of the trickle-down effect throughout NATO could further provide insights into the threat assessments and implementation strategies of reform across member states.

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IX. List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

BAAINBw	= Federal Office of Bundeswehr Equipment, Information Technology and In-Service Support (dt.: Bundesamt für Ausrüstung, Informationstechnik und Nutzung der Bundeswehr)
BAKS	= Federal Academy for Security Policy (dt.: Bundesakademie für Sicherheitspolitik)
BG	= Battle Group
BMI	= Federal Ministry of the Interior and Home Affairs

	<i>(dt.: Bundesministerium des Innern)</i>
BMVg	= German Ministry of Defense <i>(dt.: Bundesministerium der Verteidigung)</i>
BMVI	= German Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure <i>(dt.: Bundesministerium für Verkehr und digitale Infrastruktur)</i>
BRD	= Federal Republic of Germany <i>(dt.: Bundesrepublik Deutschland)</i>
BWI	= Armed Forces IT-Service Support <i>(dt.: Bundeswehr IT-Dienstleister)</i>
CHOD	= Chief of Defense <i>(dt. Generalinspekteur der Bundeswehr)</i>
CIR	= German Cyber Branch <i>(dt.: Cyber und Informationsraum)</i>
DWT	= German Military Technology Society <i>(dt.: Die Deutsche Gesellschaft für Wehrtechnik e. V.)</i>
eFP	= enhanced Forward Presence
FüSK	= Command and Control (Ministerial Department) <i>(dt.: Führungsstab der Streitkräfte)</i>
ISAF	= International Security Assistance Force
JFCBS	= Joint Force Command Brunssum
LogKdo	= Logistics Command <i>(dt.: Logistikkommando)</i>
LV/BV	= National and Collective Defense <i>(dt.: Landes- und Bündnisverteidigung)</i>
NRF	= NATO Response Force
PlgABw	= Planning Office of the German Armed Forces <i>(dt.: Planungsamt der Bundeswehr)</i>
Kdo SKB	= Joint Support Service Command <i>(dt.: Kommando Streitkräftebasis)</i>
PIZ	= Public Affairs Office

- (dt.: Presse- und Informationzentrum)
- RAP = Readiness Action Plan
- RSOM = Reception, Staging and Onward Movement
- SACEUR = Supreme Allied Commander Europe
- SKB = Joint Support Service Branch
(dt.: Streitkräftebasis)
- USAF = United States Air Force
- VJTF = Very High Readiness Joint Task Force

X. Annex

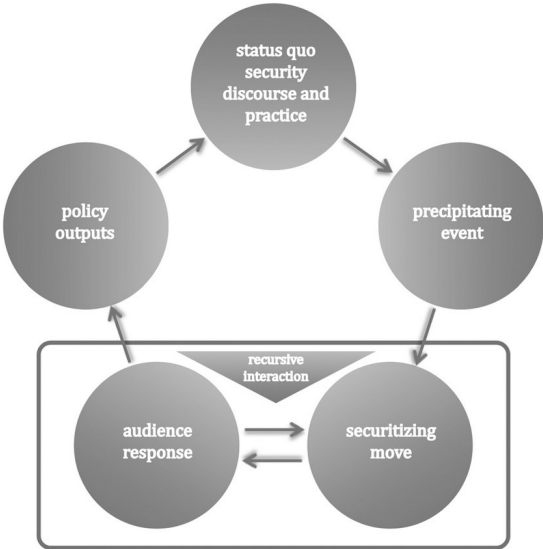


Figure 1. A model of collective Securitization (Sperling and Weber, 2016, p.30).

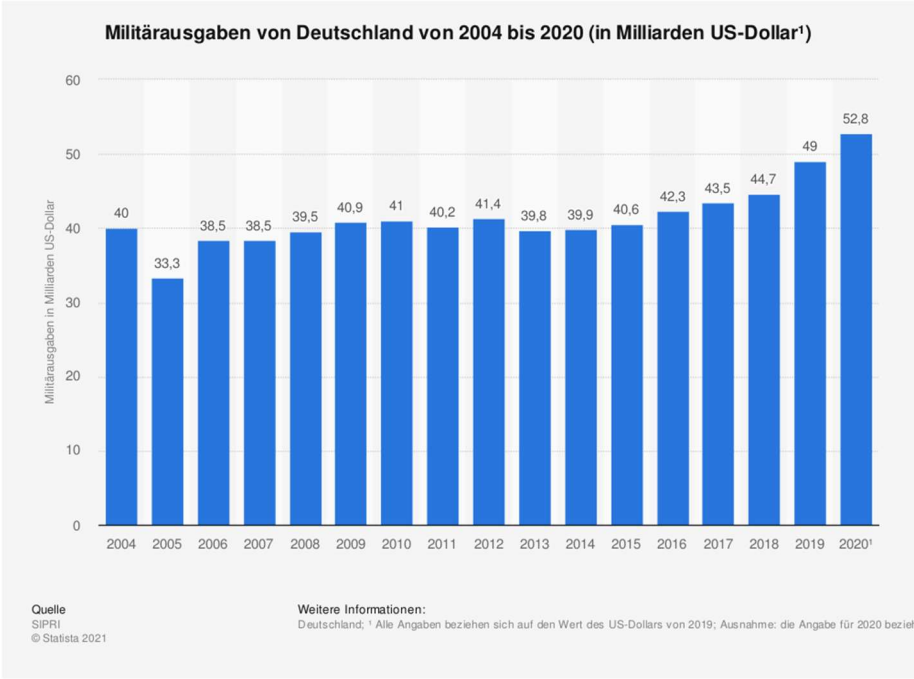


Figure 2. German Defense Spending from 2004 until 2020 in billion U.S. Dollars (Statista, 2021).

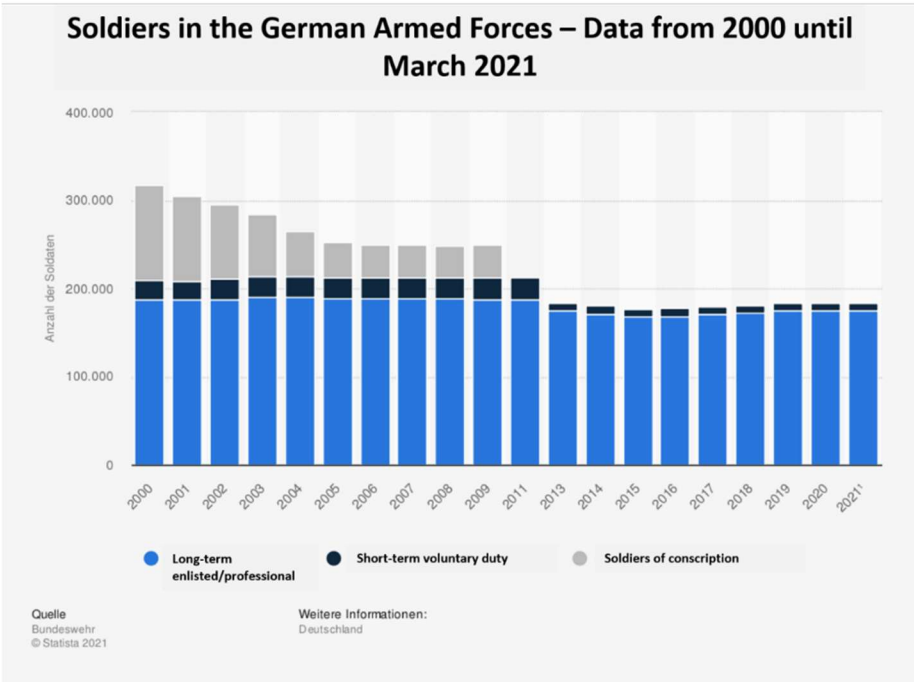


Figure 3. Soldiers in the German Armed Forces – Data from 2000 until March 2021 (Rudnicka, 2021).

Document types	Names	Year	Content	Stakeholder
Security Policy Framework Documents	White Paper	2016	Federal Security Policy Guidelines, Threat Assessment, Future Role of the Armed Forces and Reform Priorities	BMVg -> All Ministries with a focus on the BMVg and the Bundeswehr
	Bundeswehr Concept (KdB)	2018	Military defense Fundamentals and Bundeswehr future orientation	BMVg -> Bundeswehr
	Civil Defense Concept (KZV)	2016	Inter-ministerial fulfillment of tasks: civil defense and emergency response	BMI/BMVg -> Police, Bundeswehr, and Civilian Entities
	<i>Capability Profile (classified)</i>	2018	<i>Capability assessment and future demands</i>	<i>BMVg -> Bundeswehr</i>
Strategies	Personnel strategy	2016	Strategy on long-term order on maintaining competitiveness as an employer and fulfill manning goals.	BMVg-> Bundeswehr
Guidelines/Strategic Directives (public)	On Digitization	2017	Areas of implementation for digitization.	BMVg-> Bundeswehr
Contracts (Enablement)	DB Railroad Accessibility	2018	Framework freight contract including pre-carriage services.	BMVg-> public entities

Figure 4: Reform Documents Shaping Military Logistics (2016 – 2020); Sources: BMVg/BMI.