Going deep! Acquiring new submarines in common?

An analysis of Dutch and Norwegian security interests, defence traditions and concepts for the use of submarines

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Introduction and analytical approach

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the Netherlands' and Norway's security- and defence policies, including the two countries' defence traditions and strategic cultures. An analysis of the security and defence policies and a systematic comparison between them are of significance when the two countries are investigating possibilities for a comprehensive cooperation program in the area of submarines. This might result in a joint acquisition program for the two countries' navies. In fact, the Netherlands and Norway will seek to replace their submarines during the same time period in the mid 2020's. With regards to their current submarine capability, the Dutch Walrus-class was phased into the Dutch navy in 1990-1993, while the Ula-class was phased into the Norwegian navy in the years between 1989 and 1992. To further develop a submarine capability will be of importance due to the need for both of them to use subma-

rines to conduct clandestine operations at sea because submarines have a higher strategic mobility and endurance during operations than surface vessels. In short, a significant part of the role of submarines is strategic deterrence through its ability to operate covertly and to create a condition of insecurity for the opponent. To further develop such a capability in the years to come is a strategic priority for both countries.

The main aim of this paper is to clarify the main variables that are of relevance when we discuss such a comprehensive cooperation program. By building the analysis upon a report by Tomas Valasek (2011), this paper seeks to identify six variables that will have the most significant impact on such a joint comprehensive cooperation program. The six variables are similarities and differences of strategic cultures, geographic proximities and interests, equal sizes of the defence structures, a common understanding of the aims of the cooperation, trust and solidarity between the parties, and similarities in the competitive conditions for the defence industry. One of the aims of this paper is to state the commonalities and clarify to which extent differences in strategic culture can be an impediment when these two countries might develop a submarine capability in common.

One of the main conclusions drawn is that difference in strategic culture is the most important impediment for a successful comprehensive cooperation program. Strategic culture will here be defined as the shared beliefs, norms and ideas that generate specific expectations about a state's preferences and actions in security and defence policy (Biehl, Giegerich & Jonas 2013: 12). Due to these differences in strategic culture, the Dutch and Norwegian approaches towards the application of military force have differed substantially. This has been due to a far more expeditionary strategic culture in Dutch security policy, while the Norwegian culture has been far more homeland oriented (see e.g. Græger 2007; Noll & Moelker 2013). One of the aims of this paper is to point out which variables that might reduce this impediment and will point out that trust and solidarity between the two countries to a large degree can counterweight differences in strategic culture. This paper will consequently argue that the best outcome for Norway will be if the Dutch expeditionary strategic culture can be utilised for the purpose of the common defence commitments in NATO. In short, it is important to rank these variables so as to decide which of them that has the most influence upon the success or failure of such a cooperative endeavour. The paper therefore applies comparative methods with the aim to clarify the limitations as well as possibilities for such a comprehensive cooperation program.

As this paper also will illustrate, the differences in strategic culture will inevitably result in differences in doctrines and defence structures. In recent years these differences in strategic culture have narrowed somewhat, meaning that the Netherlands and Norway to an increasing extent have developed a more similar approach to how international challenges and threats should be met. Hence, the really big issues in today's European security discourses are whether national strategic cultures have become more similar and to what extent new threats, foreign crises, and institutions have affected strategic thinking also in medium-sized and smaller countries like the Netherlands and Norway.

This analysis is organised as follows. The first part describes and analyses the security policy framework for Dutch-Norwegian cooperation in security and defence affairs. It covers issues like the different initiatives that have been taken during recent years on EU and NATO defence cooperation and the different security interests of the two countries. In the second part the six variables will be thoroughly discussed. In the conclusion these six variables will be ranked based upon a qualitative analysis.

The security policy framework for Dutch-Norwegian cooperation

The Pooling and Sharing (EU) and Smart Defence (NATO) Initiatives

Traditionally, the US predominance in NATO has given European governments little reason to bolster their own militaries (Valasek 2011: 2) and provided the European member states strong incentives for free-riding. In this situation the "Ghent framework" on "pooling and sharing" of European defence resources from September 2010 has been widely praised as a very significant breakthrough. Following up the informal defence minister meeting in September 2010, a food for thought paper elaborated by Germany and Sweden was distributed in November the same year. The title was "European Imperative. Intensifying Military Cooperation in Europe" – "Ghent Initiative" (European Union 2010). To spend resources within Europe more efficiently and to maintain a broad array of military capabilities to ensure national political ambitions, as well as Europe's ability to act credibly in crises, are the overarching goals with this initiative.

This EU "pooling and sharing" initiative was followed up in May 2012 by a NATO decision to promote "smart defence" along very much the same lines (NATO 2012; Howorth 2014: 87). The main background was to rationalise and maximise European military capacity and to promote closer European defence coordination. This will be even more important when US strategy is shifting towards Asia and the Pacific. Hence, if the US no longer takes the lead in setting strategy towards Europe's neighbourhood, the only alternative actor is Europeans collectively, i.e. the EU since no European country individually can defend all of its interests all of the time (Biscop 2013b: 7). Then, however, Europeans meet two challenges that have been on the rise since the financial crisis began in 2008. The first challenge is that the defence cuts by the EU- and NATO-member countries have been conducted at purely national level without any reference to what others were doing. The second challenge, derived from the first one, has been a lack of trust which stems from an overvaluation of sovereignty. This is a major factor inhibiting rationalization of Europe's military capacity (Howorth 2014: 88). A combination of differences in strategic cultures and different levels of trust between European countries has had serious effects. The most important one is Europe's diminishing role as a strategic actor in a more multipolar world. Consequently, the EU is a "small power" (Toje 2011).

Such a "small power" will in the future face a different and extremely multifaceted security environment of both symmetrical and asymmetrical challenges and threats. This includes a resurgent Russia which has led to a completely different security situation in Europe. It also includes new security challenges such as cyber-threats and threats emanating from newer developments in technologies, concepts and doctrines. Furthermore, the volatile situation with state-collapses and refugee-flows from the Middle East illustrates the multidimensional challenges in today's Europe. One cause for optimism in this rather grim picture is that Europe at least has several vital interests in common, like preventing threats against Europe's territory from materialising. Therefore, the only way to avoid such a diminishing role of Europe in security and defence affairs is significantly cross-border defence cooperation, coordination and integration. This might include measures like common acquisition of defence equipment, common maintenance agreements, training and education programs, a more wide-spread sharing of infrastructure such as training grounds or storage facilities, and the creation of joint military units. The main problem within the EU, but the same is the case for NATO as well, is that

much of it is wasted in fruitless duplication across 28 armies, 24 air forces and 21 navies (Howorth 2014: 85). Simultaneously, different parts of Europe are faced with different sets of security challenges and threats. Since the US might not be the force for European cohesion as it once was, we are also witnessing the existence of diverging geostrategic preoccupations among European allies (Simón 2015: 166).

The strong tendencies by European powers to organise their defence cooperation in "clusters" is an important feature in this development. In this cluster approach, often like-minded nations come together to cooperate on defence procurement, investments and policy (Howorth 2014: 89-91). The motif behind such a cluster (or "nodal") approach is primarily to save money, to generate and further develop European cooperation on security and defence, and to generate trust among the participants.

The Netherlands and Norway's security interests and defence traditions

Therefore, the sovereignty concept must be given another interpretation in today's European security framework. Hence, up until now the European EU- and NATO-members have preferred autonomy over capabilities causing a sovereignty-capability paradox in today's European security framework (Major & Mölling 2013: 15-16). This sovereignty-capabilities paradox together with a "nodal" form for defence cooperation is a useful background for analysing the Dutch-Norwegian cooperation on new submarines. For the Netherlands and Norway, bi- and multinational cooperation with European allies will make an important contribution to transatlantic burden-sharing. This is also important politically for the two countries with their Atlantic outlook in security and defence affairs. For both of them NATO is the most important security institution, which most clearly was underlined by the former Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs Uri Rosenthal in 2011 when he stated that "... The trans-Atlantic cooperation remains for me the cornerstone of the Netherlands security policy. The treaty organisation remains leading in the world. NATO is first and foremost a community of values" (quoted in Noll & Moelker 2013: 261). Nevertheless, and as the conclusions from the European Council from June 2015 underlines, Europe's security environment has changed dramatically (European Council 2015). Therefore, the European Council will keep security and defence regularly on its agenda. This might, in a longer perspective, chal-

lenge the Netherlands traditional Atlantic foreign policy outlook, also because the Dutch EU presidency during spring 2016 will work an EU White Book on defence. This work will be conducted in parallel with the elaboration of an EU global strategy. The European Council will in June 2016 take the final decisions on such a strategy which will replace the current EU strategy from 2003.

In this perspective, a joint acquisition program will be far easier to achieve if the two countries first share the same security- and defence policy challenges, and second have compatible strategic cultures as a foundation for the elaboration of their defence policies. If this is the case, it will be far more feasible to develop and agree requirements for new submarines that are not only similar, but identical. Clearly, identical requirements and an identical design of the submarines will be the best solution in all areas, also including being the most cost-effective one. This has, however, on many important issue areas traditionally not been the case.

In fact the Netherlands was after the end of the Cold War one of the first European countries to start a defence transformation towards expeditionary forces, including the abandonment of conscription in 1993. Central in the Dutch defence reform were investments in light, modular forces and maritime transport capacity. In comparison, the adaptation of Norwegian forces to a new security situation was a much slower process. Norway kept for a long time its large mobilization army, a large number of permanent military installations and a corresponding large number of out-dated defence materiel. This also posed major financial challenges for the Norwegian defence forces. The result was a double imbalance: first, between adopted budgets and defence plans; and second, between the new tasks required of the Norwegian military, like participation in international military operations, and its ability to carry them out. In fact, the Norwegian adaptation process was much slower than was the case in many other NATO member states like Belgium, France, Great Britain and the Netherlands. One major reason behind this reluctance was undoubtedly Russia's military capabilities on the Kola Peninsula.

However, the reasons behind these differences are only partly a result of different threat perceptions among European allies. Differences in strategic cultures and corresponding differences in defence discourses must also be taken into account (Græger 2007; 2009). This seems in many ways as a paradox since the Netherlands and Norway share a corresponding foreign policy tradition mostly related to two aspects. The first one is the maritime-commercial tradition and the second one is an internationalist-idealist tradition in foreign

policy conduct. For the Netherlands, "going Dutch" has traditionally meant an integrative approach of Defence, Diplomacy and Development. Consequently, the Netherlands has actively striven to improve the world, using all assets, including the military (Noll & Moelker 2013: 263-264). Norway's foreign policy tradition is fully compatible with the Dutch tradition of claiming "moral leadership" through the country's policy of "peace and reconciliation", also including trademarking this policy "global Norway" so as to underline Norway's dependencies on an open world economy (Tamnes 2009: 259).

Nevertheless, when the Netherlands internationalised its defence forces in the 1990's, Norway kept the national focus. The main reason was primarily the nation-building role of the Norwegian defence policy and how this was incorporated in central national concepts, values and military practises. This rendered it resistant to change (Græger 2009: 4). Other factors explaining this paradox was how defence policy intertwined with other areas of domestic policy, so when changes in the defence establishment had negative consequences for these areas, opposition was provoked, not least in the case of district policy issues. This illustrates that the Norwegian defence discourse has mainly been about national, territorial defence (ibid).

When substantial changes in Norwegian defence policy started to take place in 2000-2001, this was mainly a result of changed demands from NATO on the need for defence reform. Especially the US influenced Norwegian defence reform efforts. One of the overarching aims that explain this change of policy was to avoid political and military marginalisation in NATO. In fact, Norway has striven increasingly hard to prevent marginalisation in the post-Cold War environment (Heier 2006: 236). The Norwegian participation in ISAF in Afghanistan must be understood in this perspective. However, there was an increasing concern in Norway that international military operations dominated too much in NATO.

The Norwegian "Core Area Initiative" from 2008 is indicative underlining the need for NATO to focus more on its core tasks, as well as on the challenges in the NATO periphery (Haraldstad 2014). From a Norwegian perspective, it was the ability to meet potential threats against NATO territory and populations in a robust manner, including in high-end scenarios, that made it possible for the alliance to sustain high-intensity conflicts beyond NATO's borders (Eide 2009). Interestingly, we have seen a corresponding development in the Netherlands regarding international operations. On the one hand, the military operations that the Netherlands have taken part in have shown that

there has hardly been any geographical focus in Dutch security policy. The country has been engaged in UN-, NATO- and EU-led operations all over the world. On the other hand, this has not been without political costs. The ISAF mission in Afghanistan caused political problems in the Netherlands when the Social Democrats in government in 2010 no longer supported the mission due to the changing nature of ISAF from a reconstruction mission to much more of a fighting mission. This led to the fall of the Dutch government (Batty 2010). Hence, we are witnessing an increased scepticism in the Netherlands with regard to the use of military force as an instrument in foreign policy. This is also in line with Norwegian experiences.

Nevertheless, to organise defence cooperation in clusters (or "nodes") is an integral part of Dutch defence policy. This was most recently expressed in the letter from the Dutch Ministry of Defence to the Parliament from 7 November 2014. In this letter Norway is regarded, together with Belgium, Germany and Luxembourg, as "strategic partners". In addition the Dutch defence forces have close cooperation with Denmark, France, Great Britain and the US. These cooperative measures include several issue areas, like the Dutch-German Corps, the Benelux cooperation on defence, the British proposal on a Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) and several others, including cooperation between the Netherlands and Norway on the F-35 acquisition. The Belgian-Netherlands cooperation on an integrated maritime command (Benesam), which includes common training and maintenance facilities for frigates and mine hunters, is also emphasised in the letter.

Clearly, the sovereignty-capability paradox is of relevance when analysing this form of cooperation. Here the question is often asked how to match increasing dependency on capacities of other countries with national autonomy on defence matters. The Dutch-Norwegian Declaration of Intent signed in March 2012 on material and operational cooperation is one of the frameworks for the joint acquisition program on new submarines. The changing security situation in Europe where NATO again underlines the common defence commitments is of fundamental importance when the two countries are scrutinising the possibilities for a joint submarine acquisition program.

The Six Conditions for Successful Cooperation in the Area of Submarines

Dutch and Norwegian Strategic cultures – So many similarities, but so different approaches

Without conducting a pure text-analysis, an important method to compare strategic cultures is to analyse their strategic outlook documents, including doctrines and public reports. When comparing the two countries' foreign- and security policy documents, similarities more than differences come to mind. The similarities include Atlanticism, a foreign policy characterised by "effective multilateralism" and an UN-led international order. Important to note however, is that these countries' Atlantic outlook does not only stem from the fact that NATO is a security community, but also from an enduring and profound cultural commonality that goes deeper than the fact that both countries belong to the same defence alliance.

The Netherlands

This Atlantic foundation is described in the Netherlands defence doctrine (NDD) from 2013. Here it is emphasised that it "cannot exist in isolation". This means that the doctrine cannot be seen in isolation from NATO, the EU and the UN, "... of which NATO's doctrine development is the most advanced" (NDD 2013: 13). From a Dutch perspective, even though the EU and the UN are central institutions to Dutch security- and defence policy, it is NATO's doctrine development that is highlighted as the most important one. Taking this Atlantic outlook as our main point of departure, the NDD underlines that it must be seen as an integral part of NATO's defence doctrines. Therefore, the Dutch defence doctrine states that the "... Dutch joint doctrine will only be written and issued for subjects not covered by NATO doctrine or in which specific Dutch aspects need to be emphasised, in cases where the Dutch vision differs from that accepted within NATO or if clarification is needed for the tactical level (NDD 2013: 14). This statement implies that Dutch defence policy is unequivocally NATO-integrated.

Besides the NATO framework for the conduct of Dutch defence policy, it is important to note that according to Article 97 in the Dutch Constitution, it is the Government that has the supreme authority over the armed forces. Hence,

any decisions to deploy the armed forces will always be made by or on behalf of the government. As a further elaboration of Article 97, three overarching tasks for the Dutch armed forces are identified: 1) protection of national and allied territory, including the Caribbean parts of the Netherlands, 2) promotion of the international rule of law and stability, 3) support for civil authorities in national law enforcement, disaster relief and humanitarian aid, both nationally and internationally.

Important to note, and a clear sign of the Netherlands' clear expeditionary strategic culture, is that this list in no way is hierarchical. On the contrary, these tasks are described as equal and must be executable at all times. The doctrine further underlines that the likelihood that a certain task will need to be executed may vary over time (NDD 2013: 50-51). Therefore, the Dutch expeditionary strategic culture could be defined as a policy that emphasise that national as well as international tasks are equally important. This explains why the defence structure is light and mobile. This includes a policy where the defence of Dutch territory (also in the Caribbean) is not setting the framework for the development and build-up of the defence structure. Light armoured forces with high agility and mobility, deployable in principle anywhere is henceforth a consequence of such a strategic culture.

Nevertheless, in NDD as well as in in the document "Fundamentals of Maritime Operations – Netherlands maritime military doctrine" (GMO), Article 5 in NATO and the collective defence of NATO territory is regarded as an essential core task for NATO. Consequently, this is an essential core task for Dutch military forces as well. However, collective defence "... in its traditional form", namely warding off a large-scale offensive directed at one or more NATO member states, is unlikely the NDD states. Even though the NDD was issued in 2013 well before the conflict in Ukraine began, the 2015 and 380 pages long GMO also, interestingly enough, puts most emphasis on asymmetrical threats: "The relatively (East-West) situation in the past has given way to a diffuse and uncertain state, in which interstate conflicts and thus regional instability, terrorism, organised crime and environmental and natural disasters pose the greatest threats to national and European interests" (GMO 2015: 11). The maritime doctrine further states that this will have implications for the Dutch navy by underlining the widening as well as the diversity of maritime operations both at sea and in coastal regions (ibid).

With regards to submarines, the GMO (2015: 274-275) states that operating under water is one of the few ways to stay hidden in the maritime domain.

Submarines derive their strength from this; they are difficult to detect and can thus remain unseen for longer. This enables them to bring their striking power to bear in places where other units run much greater risk, such as in the immediate vicinity of units and areas of an adversary. Submarines can thus make full use of the elements of surprise. Therefore, the possible presence of a submarine sends a strong and threatening signal to an opponent.

Paradoxically, the Dutch strategic culture is clearly expeditionary, but we have for a long time seen a development where the opposition to the application of military force has grown stronger. As Noll and Moelker (2013: 261) emphasise, this will make it difficult for any government in the country to act in accordance with its own ambitions. This is also an all-European development causing dilemmas in the elaboration of European defence policies.

Norway

Strategic cultures are changing in Europe and so is the Norwegian approach on how to apply military force. International operations, and especially the ISAF mission in Afghanistan, have been an important element in the development of Norwegian defence policy during the last decade. Contrary to the Dutch expeditionary strategic culture, the Norwegian culture remains national in its approach.

Proposition to Storting 73 S (2011-2012), the proposition on defence from the Norwegian government to the Parliament, was made public well before the conflict in Ukraine began (Forsvarsdepartementet 2012). The proposition states that the aim of the Norwegian armed forces is that it shall, together with allies, maintain Norwegian sovereignty, rights, interests and values. To develop abilities and relevant responses in the whole spectrum of conflicts shall constitute a war preventive threshold that secures Norway's security and room of manoeuvre against any form for political, military and other forms of pressure. In today's world, the proposition further underlines, security must be regarded from a global perspective. Norway can therefore not limit its security policy outlook to a strictly regional approach. It is therefore in Norway's interest to maintain international peace and stability by taking part in efforts to keep an UN-led international order of justice and furthermore to defend human rights and to strengthen cooperation between states. The Norwegian Armed Forces are therefore one of several instruments that contributes to shape and create a safer world.

Interestingly enough, the role of submarines are given the same description as in the Dutch GMO. In the Norwegian proposition, the role of the submarines is described as a flexible capability covering the whole spectrum of operations at sea. The ability to conduct clandestine operations makes it a unique capability. Hence, the tasks a submarine can conduct make it an important capability in a modern defence. Furthermore, the submarine is not as dependent as surface vessels on logistical support at sea. It has a higher strategic mobility and endurance during operations. A significant part of the role of submarines is strategic deterrence through its ability to operate covertly. It then creates a condition of insecurity for the opponent. The national approach in Norwegian defence policy is clearly expressed when the proposition states that Norwegian submarines shall patrol continuously in Norwegian areas of interest. Furthermore, the submarines can also participate periodically and for a shorter period of time in the whole NATO operational area. These operations can both be in littoral areas and further at sea.

The Russian annexation of the Crimean peninsula in March 2014 has set a new framework for Norwegian defence policy. This is most clearly expressed in the report from the Expert Commission on Norwegian Security and Defence Policy –"A joint effort" which was made public in April 2015 (Ekspertgruppen for forsvaret av Norge (EG) (2015). The report states that the framework for Norwegian security policy has changed significantly in a relatively short time. Norway is again facing traditional security challenges. It further underlines that Norway is a small state and dependent upon a functioning multilateral system, that Norway is part of a western security community, and that Russia is outside this community. Additionally, the report emphasises President Vladimir Putin's ambition of making Russia a strong and important military actor in international affairs. As a consequence, it underlines the deep distrust between Russia and the West and concludes this situation most probably will last for years.

In its advice to Norwegian politicians the report concludes that a new and more lasting security situation has appeared in Europe. The role of NATO's collective defence commitments is underlined throughout the document, as well as the re-appearance of symmetrical threats. As a consequence, it becomes important to strengthen the transatlantic link and henceforth the US engagement in the defence of Europe. The need for modern submarines is therefore underlined several places. The report therefore underlines that acquisition of new submarines is the next large investment project for Norway. New subma-

rines have a central place in the operational concept that will solve challenges in the upper part of the conflict scale. The Expert Commission states that the financing of new submarines is impossible within the ordinary defence budget. Hence, the extra funds needed must be provided outside of the defence budget line.

Summary

This comparative analysis has shown several similarities, but also important differences in approaches. The Dutch approach is still an expeditionary one, as expressed in the maritime doctrine (GMO). However, the Dutch government also recognises the new security situation in Europe, and underlines that Dutch doctrine shall be in full correspondence with NATO doctrine. Hence, from a Norwegian perspective, the best outcome will be if the Dutch expeditionary strategic culture can be utilised fully for the purpose of the common defence commitments in NATO.

One of the most important insights has been that the Norwegian adaptation to international operations and an expeditionary praxis primarily stems from a fear of being marginalised in NATO. The Expert Commission's recommendations support such a conclusion with its clearly national approach, also including the Northern areas as the primary focus for Norwegian defence policy. Consequently, the trustworthiness of the common defence commitments in NATO is fundamental for Norwegian security.

In this regard it is interesting to note that the description in the Dutch and in the Norwegian planning documents on the role of submarines are identical (GMO 2015: 274-275; Prop 73 S 2011-2012: 96). Furthermore, it is an increased focus on the submarine project in the Netherlands. In the spring of 2016 the Dutch Minister of Defence will present a paper to the Parliament on future submarines, also including the requirements for these submarines. There is furthermore a lot of political attention to this project, and also an increased interest from the Dutch defence industry. Nevertheless, due to the differences between the two countries, differences in requirements for the new submarines might very well appear. Clearly, an identical submarine with the same requirements will be the optimal solution. If that is not possible to achieve, submarines that are different, but shares identical subsystems to the maximum extent possible, will be the next-best option.

Geographic proximities and interests

While differences in strategic cultures and approaches clearly exist between the two countries, the need for partners to cooperate with is on the rise in both of them. Hence, the need for intensified defence cooperation, especially in the north-western European "node" of NATO countries, is on the rise. This is perhaps especially the case for Norway. The Expert Commission clearly states that Norwegian defence policy cooperation with countries in Northern Europe must be intensified (EG 2015: 62). The most important type of cooperation is bi- and multilateral cooperation with NATO allies in the region. Great Britain, Germany and the Netherlands are of special interest. From the Norwegian side this is labelled the "North Sea strategy". The aim of this strategy is primarily to strengthen the operational abilities through defence cooperation with NATO allies around the North Sea through joint acquisition programs, training, exercises and logistics. It must nevertheless be stated that the space for an effective north-western European "node" might have some difficulties to develop when the countries involved already are engaged in bi- and multilateral defence cooperation, like the Benelux-cooperation, the Dutch-German corps and so on.

With regards to Great Britain and Germany, these two European powers have considerable military capabilities that can be of use in case of military support to Norway. With the Netherlands, the report says, Norway has a long tradition of defence materiel cooperation. The German Framework Nation Concept (FNC) from 2013 and the British initiative on a Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) from 2014 emanates from this region. As regards the FNC, this is meant to offer a practical mechanism for realising deep cooperation amongst volunteering nations. The key idea is that those nations who retain a broad spectrum of capabilities would act as cluster coordinators with a view to meeting alliance defence planning targets on a tailor-made multinational basis. This effectively boils down to an open-ended invitation for smaller allies to plug into those enabling capabilities only the big nations can provide: headquarters, communication and information systems, joint intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance etc. (Mattelaer 2014). The FNC initiative can, nevertheless, be criticized for being too oriented towards collective defence, which might be considered a handicap, not least for countries with a more expeditionary tradition. Nevertheless, the Netherlands plays an important role in both FNC as well as in JEF. To strengthen this north-western European "node" is therefore in full correspondence with Norwegian interests. This is also an area where the

Dutch interests match the Norwegian ones, and the letter from the Dutch Ministry of Defence to the Parliament from 7 November 2014 fully confirms this.

As a consequence, the bilateral Dutch-Norwegian cooperation has grown stronger in the 2010's. Several agreements have been reached like the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) from April 2013 on defence materiel cooperation. In addition, an agreement on "Implementing Arrangement Naval Materiel" (IA) from March 2014 has been signed, and a Project Arrangement concerning the cooperative program for a future Dutch and Norwegian submarine capability was signed in February 2015. With regards to the first agreement, the aim is to identify areas of possible defence material cooperation like industrial relations and defence research, but also to strengthen the Dutch and Norwegian defence suppliers' opportunities to compete on a reciprocal basis. The aim of the second agreement is to explore the possibilities for future joint project activities and joint procurement programs. The third agreement has as its overarching aim to achieve and sustain a relevant Future Submarine Capability (FSC). This may include, but is not limited to, joint development; coordinated procurement and pooled resources for in-service support activities (i.e. shared and combined education, training, work-up, exercises, maintenance and spare parts). The objective of the joint effort is to achieve better life time operational value for money through economy of scale and economy of effort, seeking also to share the work to be performed.

When analysing this variable, the above mentioned sovereignty-capability paradox becomes an important element to take into consideration. This is beyond doubt an impediment, but an impediment that can be minimised by the political and military authorities involved. Hence, when we seek to analyse these cooperative efforts, we must therefore take into consideration that it can take several years before the benefits for these cooperative efforts becomes visible. Furthermore, the costs may be higher in the initial stages and political risk factors cannot be underestimated either. In sum, the countries involved are in a felt position of losing their formal sovereignty. Therefore, it becomes important to have a long-term perspective on these cooperative efforts where practise and some sort of commonalties in values can counterweight differences in strategic cultures between the two countries.

Equal sizes of the defence structures

As the American scholar Oran R. Young wrote several years ago, sharp asymmetries in the distribution of power among the participants will circumscribe the effectiveness of international institutions (Young 1993: 185). This statement is valid in bilateral relationships as well. When analysing this variable it becomes apparent how difficult it is to compare different states' needs for submarines on a quantitative foundation alone. One very illustrative example is Netherland's four Walrus-class submarines versus Norway's six Ula-class submarines. From a quantitative approach alone it seems that Norway is a bigger submarine actor than the Netherlands. In practise, however, the Dutch submarine service is twice as large as the Norwegian one. The Dutch submarines are more than twice as large as the Norwegian submarines (2800 tons versus 1100 tons) and the number of personnel on board is more than twice as high as well (55 versus 23).

When assessing symmetries and asymmetries in the Dutch-Norwegian relationship on submarines, more qualitative factors must be taken into consideration. Such qualitative factors are the two states' military needs for submarines, their operational concepts, their performance requirements, their different capabilities in several warfare areas, and their maintenance, education and training organisation and facilities. Strong asymmetries in a relationship might therefore result in submarines with other capabilities and capacities than the weaker part in the relationship is in need for. However, the level of asymmetries in the Dutch-Norwegian security policy and military relationship should not be overestimated. The bilateral agreements between the two states as described above will mitigate these tendencies and make the relationship far more symmetrical. Hence, the cooperation between the two countries must be analysed and understood in a bottom-up perspective as well.

As the document "In the interest of the Netherlands" (2013: 9) from the Dutch Ministry of Defence emphasises, bottom-up initiatives often arise from the practical cooperation between two or more countries and can subsequently be adopted as best practises by other countries as well. The same document underlines that the current intensification of the cooperation between the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and Luxembourg can be a relevant example (ibid). Clearly, this bottom-up approach might well result in policy convergences and common doctrinal developments. Here, we might define policy convergence in a symmetrical perspective as a gradual adoption of similar policies in terms of

doctrines (enunciated principles or discourses), means (or instruments) and practises related to the use of military force (Pannier & Schmitt 2014: 2).

Furthermore, when analysing the north-western European "node" of NATO countries in perspective of symmetries and asymmetries, the Netherlands and Norway are beyond doubt the two countries in this "node" that most clearly match each other. They share, as previously stated, a common history of long-standing defence cooperation. Both of them are partners in FNC and JEF, the newest security policy concepts that also emanates from this region.

Several Norwegian policy-makers and civil servants also like to stress that Norway has "moved up one division in NATO" making Norway on par with the Netherlands. If this is a correct description, then Norway will face the same dilemma as the Dutch seem to do: "are the Netherlands the biggest of the small or the smallest of the big military powers?" The background for this Norwegian assertiveness stems on the one hand from an overarching fear of being marginalised in Europe (Heier 2006), and on the other hand from the fact that Norway has been very ambitious since the end of the Cold War, playing an active military role in the world, most notably in NATO operations. The same has been the case for the Netherlands (Noll & Moelker 2013: 255). To pin down the exact degree of symmetry and asymmetry in the bilateral Dutch-Norwegian relationship is difficult, but there does not seem to be strong asymmetries in the relationship.

Same understanding of the aims of the cooperation

The Netherlands and Norway will seek to replace their submarines during the same time period in the mid 2020's. Hence, the basic need for a new submarine capability in the near future is the very reason that explains the aim of this Dutch-Norwegian cooperation. The 2013 Dutch-Norwegian MoU seems to be a relevant starting point for analysing the aims of this cooperation effort. It is nevertheless important to develop an understanding of this MoU in perspective of the Dutch aim of further developing its defence structure within the framework of multilateral cooperation. The Norwegian Expert Commission (2015) assessment as regards multilateral defence cooperation is also of importance in this regard. However, the above mentioned sovereignty-capability paradox might be of relevance here since Norwegian defence policy, compared with the Dutch approach, is far more national and sovereignty oriented.

As regards the scope of the MoU, it first includes elements of enhancements

of cooperation in industrial defence areas of production, services, technology and trade. Second, it includes cooperation in the use of defence scientific and technical resources to encourage and promote joint research and development projects. Third, the scope of the MoU includes facilitation of the exchange of personnel, scientific-technical and technological information relating to defence material. The first objective of the MoU includes the determination and periodic review of the specific common requirements of the armed forces of the participants and to which extent the undertakings on development of defence equipment may be carried out jointly. The second objective is the identification of possible areas of collaboration in the procurement of equipment to meet common requirements of the armed forces of the participants, including logistical support of common equipment jointly procured. Finally, the third objective is mutual assistance in technical evaluations, tests and trials, in developing operational and maintenance concepts. This might also include exchange of personnel, experiences, materials and scientific-technical and technological information concerning defence materiel, and furthermore also cooperation in the field of defence technology and supply.

However, while the content of this MoU is far-reaching and paves the way for deep and comprehensive defence cooperation, not only in the realm of submarines, but in other defence sectors as well, we should not underestimate the possible obstacles such a MoU might face either. As Tomas Valasek (2011: 14) points out, countries that buy weapons jointly will want to share the expense of looking after them and may form joint maintenance depots. Similarly, countries that form a joint unit may want to set up only one supply chain for it and buy from one supplier.

When we assess the comprehensive Dutch-Norwegian cooperation, one of several possible obstacles is that many past attempts at pooling procurement have been plagued by participating governments' inability to agree on common technical standards for the equipment they want to buy jointly. Several projects have also suffered from governments insisting on keeping a certain portion of manufacturing jobs at home (ibid). This has consequently led to expensive production arrangements and leads us again to the sovereignty-capabilities paradox. Not only the financial crisis, but also the new security situation in Europe has led to enhanced needs in both countries to intensify defence integration. The Dutch government has stated this on several occasions, and the Norwegian Expert Commission has emphasised the same as well. The challenge from the Norwegian side is that the Dutch defence forces have a very

long experience in in-depth defence integration through Benesam that for much over a decade has shown that capabilities can be kept by sharing sovereignty (Biscop, Coelmont, Drent & Zandee 2013).

Trust and solidarity between the parties

A successful implementation of the 2013 MoU presupposes a high degree of trust between the Netherlands and Norway. In a changing European security situation where we are witnessing a rebirth of the collective defence commitments in NATO, trust and solidarity between the allies is a precondition for a viable European security order. As Valasek (2011: 22) underlines, trust is always important, but especially so when the forces that partners choose to combine are responsible for defending home territories. Trust is the key difference that determines whether joint projects are successful in creating best operational output for money which is the overarching aim of the Dutch-Norwegian Future Submarine Capability program.

One way for cooperating countries to build trust is by committing to a treaty, as the French and the British did through the Lancaster House Agreement from 2010 (Pannier & Schmitt 2014). No such bilateral treaties in the sphere of security and defence exist between the Netherlands and Norway, but this fact alone does not prevent a development of a high degree of trust and solidarity between them. Irrespective of a treaty or not: military cooperation is a process that takes time. As the document "In the interests of the Netherlands" (2013: 9) emphasises, it is important to remember that the costs generally precede the benefits. Therefore, in order to enjoy the fruits of efficient cooperation, prior investment is often necessary: "Various international initiatives have led to concrete results, but less quickly than had been hoped. Cooperation implies an increasing dependency on others and investments in specific capabilities. This does not alter the fact that cooperation is no longer a matter of choice but a matter of pure necessity" (ibid: 9-10).

When we assess the concept of trust as defined above, an important analytical dimension in this concept is path dependencies. Path dependencies are created when past events sets the framework for future cooperation efforts between the parties. This implies that if an agreement is reached between two or more countries, and one of the participants fails to live up to its obligations, this might have negative effects upon the will among the other countries to negotiate new agreements with that specific country. Hence, negative spill-over

effects are created which furthermore can undermine that specific state's needs for future defence cooperation with the other countries involved. Positive spill-over effects can also be the result if the cooperating countries find the cooperation fruitful and in accordance with their own interests. In the realm of defence policy, to save scarce resources and to use the funds provided more wisely is an overarching aim for defence cooperation. This implies to pool and share the defence resources in a smarter way; i.e., the EU Pooling and Sharing-, and NATO's Smart Defence Initiatives.

The so-called "Package Deal" agreement between the Netherlands and Norway from 2003 is an example of a cooperation effort that went wrong. The "Package Deal" was an agreement between the two countries on exchange of defence materiel, most notably the exchange of NASAMS II (Norwegian Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile) with Panzerhaubitz 2000 (PzH 2000) 155 mm self-propelled howitzers from the Dutch army. From the Norwegian side it was, in June 2004, argued that to adapt and operate the PhZ 2000 would be far more expensive than previously thought. Nevertheless, this "Package Deal" arrangement had been marketed in Norway, and especially in the Netherlands, to be a result of a unique form of cooperation between two countries with corresponding security interests. It was expected that this agreement would lay the foundation for long-standing cooperation in the area of defence material. Failure to implement this agreement would, consequently, have negative effects on Norway's trustworthiness as a partner. In reality however, the failure of the deal did not have severe consequences. The reaction in the Netherlands was astonishment rather than irritation. Even though the consequences were not severe, it must be clear that trust-level is an important element in defence cooperation, even within the north-western European "node" of NATO countries.

As Howorth (2014: 88) points out, lack of trust in addition to differences in strategic culture are the major factors that inhibit a rationalisation of Europe's military capacity. These two factors combined explain why European countries overvalue their own national sovereignty. In sum, trust must be regarded as the main driver in bi- and multilateral defence cooperation. Without it, cooperation agreements will only become paper-tigers. Irrespective of formal agreements, trust is one of the most important factors determining the success or failure of defence cooperation in today's Europe.

Level playing field for the defence industry

The defence industrial aspects are important elements in a Pooling and Sharing (EU) and in a Smart Defence (NATO) perspective. In fact, the European Council (2013) points out that no European government can launch new programs on its own. Very often the necessary defence investments in Europe are too high and the national market too small. With defence budgets under pressure, further market-driven industrial restructuring and consolidation is inevitable. The EU's aim is to create a strong, healthy and globally competitive European Defence and Technological Industrial Base (EDTIB). This is a prerequisite for developing and sustaining defence capabilities and securing the strategic autonomy of Europe (Fiott 2013). Therefore, the role of the industry is also a central element in the Dutch-Norwegian considerations on new submarines. In the Project Arrangement concerning the cooperative program for a future Netherlands and Norwegian submarine capability, an important objective is "... to facilitate the industrial co-operation between the Participants in order to involve their national industries". In the introduction to the Dutch-Norwegian MoU it is emphasised that the goals are "... strengthening defence industrial relations, encourage closer co-operation in the field of defence research and development and to strengthen Netherlands and Norwegian defence suppliers opportunities to compete on a reciprocal basis, for the procurement of defence products, equipment, materials and services".

However, nation-specific emergency preparedness needs and commercial- and industrial considerations have often reduced the potential gains. To utilise the potential gains from such a cooperative endeavour the parties must actively harmonise needs, specifications, time-frames and decision-making processes. Trust between the parties is a central element here as well. Hence, trust also has a commercial side. In fact, pooling and sharing and smart defence saves money by allowing the participating states to reduce the amount of equipment they buy (Valasek 2011: 23). One important challenge in this regard is that neither Norway nor the Netherlands any longer have experienced submarine shipyards. Both of them are consequently in need of finding a qualified submarine shipyard abroad. Two Dutch shipyards have traditionally built submarines, the Rotterdamsche Droogdok Maatschappij Submarines B.V. (RDM) and the Wilton Fijenoord shipyard. The latter closed its submarine division due to lack of orders in 1988, and RDM ceased production in 2004 for the same reason (NTI 2013).

Therefore, the Netherlands has a very long history of building submarines, also for the export-market. For example, the RDM Company constructed a total of eight boats for the Dutch Navy over a time-span of 40 years. The RDM also offered two types of submarines for export; one of them was the Zwaardvis-class diesel-electric submarine. This submarine was decommissioned in the mid-1990s following service in the Dutch Navy. The other submarine was the Moray-class, also a diesel-electric submarine, with an optional air-independent propulsion (AIP) system.

Important to note is that Combat Systems for submarines is an area where both the Netherlands and Norway have decades of experience. The Norwegian defence company Kongsberg Defence & Aerospace (KDA) has delivered Combat Management Systems and Passive Sonar processing systems for Norwegian submarines and for export. In the Netherlands the development and production of Combat Systems are done within the Defence Materiel Organisation (DMO), who delivers Combat System solutions for Dutch submarines and surface vessels. The Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research (TNO) is an important sub-supplier for DMO within Combat System development. Sharing of Combat System deliverables between the two countries' defence suppliers may be a challenge in a submarine cooperation program.

Therefore, in the Dutch-Norwegian cooperation program on submarines, industrial policy will play a significant role. The overarching aim must be that the two countries strive to maximize common requirements for the new submarines built around the same platform, but at the same time accept some differences due to national defence needs and vital national industrial capabilities. In fact, real savings and benefits of cooperation are likely to be considerably higher with a high degree of trust between the parties. As previously stated, trust is often the key difference that determines whether joint projects save money or not.

Summarising the overarching findings of the analysis

The factors explaining the foundations for success	The Netherlands	Norway
Similarities in strategic cultures	Expeditionary strategic culture	Homeland oriented strategic culture. Strategic, not ideational adaptation to international military operations
Geographic proximities and interests	The north-western European "node" in NATO: • More important for the Netherlands	The north-western European "node" in NATO: • More important for Norway
Equal sizes of the defence structures	The Dutch submarine service larger in size due to different national defence needs than the Norwegian one (expeditionary versus homeland). The defence cooperation agreements reduces asymmetries in the relationship	"Norway has moved up one division in NATO"
Same understanding of the aims of the cooperation	A stronger tradition in the Netherlands for defence integration: • Benesam a possible model for European naval integration?	The Expert Commission emphasises stronger need in Norway for intensified defence cooperation with neighbouring countries
Trust and solidarity between the parties	A very high degree of trust: • The only factor that can counterweight differences in strategic culture	A very high degree of trust • The only factor that can counterweight differences in strategic culture
Level playing field for the defence industry	A long tradition of combat system development and building of naval vessels, including submarines. Possible political consequences?	A long tradition of combat system development. No tradition of building submarines.

Conclusions

The Netherlands and Norway share a common security policy history. A comprehensive cooperation program in the area of submarines must therefore be understood in perspective of this long history of close cooperation. However, this cooperative endeavour takes place during a time when the conditions for European defence could be said to be in some kind of state of emergency (Biscop & Fiott 2013). Claudia Major and Christian Mölling (2013: 13)

describe Europe's condition as a lack of willingness to generate appropriate portions of capability for defence, which again has led to a new kind of paradigm in Europe: the defence economic imperative. This means that the decisions taken by the Europeans on military capabilities are less an expression of their long-term strategic priorities, but rather one of immediate budget restrictions.

This paper has primarily outlined the overarching framework for the Netherlands' and Norway's long-term strategic priorities and interests with regards to cooperation between them on submarines. The uniqueness of this paper is that it has applied a framework developed by Tomas Valasek (2011) that can discern between the different variables that are of relevance when we investigate such a comprehensive defence cooperation program. This framework has also allowed us to rank the variables and thereby to pinpoint which of them that is of highest significance.

Out of the six different variables, strategic culture appears to be the most important one and is the only variable that can decide whether a cooperative endeavour becomes a success or not. This paper has described how different the strategic cultures in the Netherlands and in Norway are. In fact it is possible to conclude that the Netherlands is a model for those European countries that have an expeditionary strategic culture; while Norway's strategic culture is a model for those European countries that have a national approach. As this paper has shown, this major difference between them cannot be understood in perspectives of different threat perceptions alone. Differences in strategic cultures must be understood as a result of differences in national defence discourses due to differences in social factors and relations at the national level (Græger 2007; 2009).

However, taking the other five variables into consideration, one important conclusion from this study is that the trust variable seems to be the only one that has the ability to counterweight differences in strategic culture. Trust and solidarity between the parties is therefore the second most important variable. This conclusion is also in line with the current research literature (Biscop 2013ab; Biscop & Fiott 2013; Howorth 2014).

The third most important variable is geographic proximity and interests since both countries belong to the north-western European "node" in NATO. This is primarily a result of diverging geostrategic preoccupations among the European allies. This geographical variable is also important from a defence cultural perspective since these countries have several interests in common.

Due to a changing security situation in Europe, Norway's need for cooperation with countries around the North Sea becomes even more important. The Dutch approach is in line with the Norwegian line of thought, but goes further in defence integration as is the case for the Benesam-cooperation framework.

The fourth most important variable is the degree of symmetry and asymmetry in the relationship. Even though the Dutch submarine service is larger than the Norwegian one, there is in total a high degree of symmetry between them. The bilateral agreements between the two countries reduce the degree of asymmetry, and Norway's participation in international operations has, in Norwegian self-perception, moved the country "one division up" in NATO.

The fifth most important variable is the defence industry and especially the importance of a level playing field for this industry. This stems primarily from the fact that both countries have to build their new submarines at an experienced submarine shipyard abroad and not in the Netherlands nor in Norway. Since both nations have long experience within Combat systems, sharing of Combat System deliverables between the two countries' defence suppliers may be a challenge in a submarine cooperation program.

The sixth most important factor concerns whether the two states have the same understanding of the aims of the cooperation between them. Here the Dutch side has a much longer tradition of deep defence cooperation with other countries than is the case for Norway.

In sum, when the two countries take their decisions on cooperating on submarines, they must realise that both of them are facing the same security policy challenges. It might therefore be important to take a more long-term strategic perspective when we discuss the submarine issue and invest in building a long-lasting trusting relationship, instead of giving priority to the most immediate budget restrictions or national industrial needs.

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