

## INTRODUCTION TO THE SURVEY

The opinions of Finns about the foreign, security and defence policy of Finland were studied in the interview survey by the Advisory Board of Defence Information (ABDI). In addition, respondents were asked about the measures the EU has taken concerning the Ukrainian crisis, the factors having an effect on Finland's security, the development of security in the five years to come, and factors that cause concern. There were a total of 22 questions of which three were completely new.

The survey was done by the market research company Taloustutkimus Oy on commission by the ABDI, and it was conducted in interviews as part of an omnibus survey. A total of 1023 persons were interviewed. The target group was the 15 to 79-year-old Finns except for the province of Åland. Age, sex, region and type of municipality represented the quotas in the sample. Interviews were conducted in 94 places, of which 58 were cities. The sample was weighed according to the target group with the weighed numbers corresponding to Finland's population of 15 to 79-year-olds in thousands (Official Statistics of Finland 31.12.2012).

The interviews were conducted between 26 September and 12 October 2014. The error of margin is  $\pm$  three point two (3.2) percentage points.

When interpreting background variables related to party affiliation, it must be taken into account that the error margin is smaller for large parties. As a result, more reliable data can be collected on them than on the small parties who have fewer supporters in the survey.

The respondents were asked, "If general elections were held now, which party would get your vote?" 67% (684 people) revealed their political views and 33% (339 people) chose not to reveal it.

The report consists of text sections and illustrating figures which also show the time sequences of previous questions. The illustrations were prepared by Taloustutkimus Oy. Some of the questions form a comprehensive time sequence since 1964. The questions were drawn up by the Research Branch and the Work Branch of the Advisory Board of Defence Information. The report was drafted by the Research Branch.

The data from this survey, like the previous surveys, are stored in the Finnish Social Science Data Archive at the University of Tampere ([www.fsd.uta.fi](http://www.fsd.uta.fi)). The ABDI's survey reports are available in Finnish, Swedish and English on the ABDI's home page, [www.defmin.fi/mts](http://www.defmin.fi/mts).

The Swedish body Myndighet för Samhällsskydd och Beredskap (MSB) has conducted similar surveys in Sweden. The most recent one was published in January 2014. It can be found at <http://www.msb.se/RibData/Filer/pdf/27284.pdf>

In Norway, Folk og Forsvar conducts opinion surveys on an annual basis on security and defence policy. Their latest survey was published in May 2014 and can be found at [http://www.folkogforsvar.no/resources/Folk\\_og\\_Forsvar\\_Meningsmaling\\_2014.pdf](http://www.folkogforsvar.no/resources/Folk_og_Forsvar_Meningsmaling_2014.pdf)

The results of the survey are public and accessible by all. When using the results it should be stated that they are from the survey of the Advisory Board of Defence Information.

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## PREFACE

Compared to the survey conducted last year, there are major changes in the answers to a number of questions in the 2014 survey. Time sequences are the best way to evaluate changes in opinions as opinions regarding specific questions have been recorded over several years.

### *The defence appropriation should be increased*

Over one-half or 56% (32% in 2013) are in favour of increasing the defence appropriation . One-third or 36% (51% in 2013) wants to maintain it on the current level and only six percent (14% in 2013) are in favour of cutting it.

This question has been asked since 1964, and this is the second time that over one-half of the respondents are for an increase. The first time this happened was in 1970.

### *Military situation in Finland's neighbouring areas is seen as more threatening*

Almost a half or 46% sees the military situation in Finland's neighbouring areas to become more threatening in the next ten years. In 2011 only one-fifth or 21% were of this opinion. Forty-six percent believe the situation will remain the same (70% in 2011).

### *Development in Russia is worrying*

75% of the respondents think that the development in Russia causes concern in the future. Only 42% were of this opinion in 2013.

### *Finland's defence capabilities are thought to be weaker than before*

Two-thirds or 63% think that if Finland became involved in a war fought with conventional weapons it would have weak defence capabilities. One-half or 51% were of this opinion in 2013.

### *Support to military non-alignment has decreased while increased support to membership in Nato*

One-third, 34 %, are of the opinion that Finland should join a military alliance (25% in 2013) while 58% thinks that Finland should remain a militarily non-aligned country (67% in 2013).

Less than one-third or 30% are of the opinion that Finland should seek membership in Nato (21% in 2013). Six out of ten believe that Finland should not seek membership in Nato (70% in 2013).

### *Finland has acted well in connection with the Ukrainian crisis - the EU less so*

Fifty-seven percent are of the opinion that Finland has acted well in connection with the Ukrainian crisis whereas 34% think that Finland has acted poorly.

Fifty-seven percent think that the European Union has acted poorly to solve the Ukrainian crisis. Over one-third or 37% think that the EU has acted well in the crisis.

### **The defence appropriation should be increased**

Over a half or 56% (32% in 2013) think that the defence appropriation should be increased considerably (16%) or to some extent (40%); 61% (39%) of men and 51% (25%) of women are for an increase.

Seventy-one percent among the supporters of the Finns Party and the Coalition Party are for increasing the defence appropriation (49% and 30% respectively in 2013). Sixty-two percent (39%) among the supporters of the Centre Party, 56% (29%) among the supporters of the Social Democratic Party, 42% (17%) among the supporters of the Greens, and 29% (13%) among the supporters of the Left Alliance are of this opinion.

Thirty-six percent (51% in 2013) think that the defence appropriation should be maintained on the current level; 33% (43%) of men and 39% (58%) of women are of this opinion. Among the supporters of the Left Alliance 52% (55% in 2013), of the Social Democratic Party and the Greens 42% (46% and 51% respectively), of the Centre Party 35% (41%), of the True Finns 24% (49%), and 23% (52%) among the supporters of the Coalition Party are of this opinion.

Six percent are in favour of cutting the defence appropriation (14% in 2013). Among the supporters of the Left Alliance 19% (30% in 2013) are for cutting while 15% among the supporters of the Greens (27%), six percent (12%) of the Coalition Party, three percent among the supporters of the Centre Party and the True Finns (11% and 9% respectively), and two percent (20%) among the supporters of the Social Democratic Party are of this opinion.

This question has been asked since 1964, and this is the second time that over one-half of the respondents are for an increase. The first time this happened was in 1970. (*figures 1 and 2*)

### **Military situation in Finland's neighbouring areas is seen as more threatening**

Almost a half or 46% (21% in 2013) consider the military situation in Finland's neighbouring areas as more threatening over the next ten years; 43% (19%) of men and 50% (24%) of women are of this opinion. Forty-six percent (70% in 2011) consider that the military situation will remain the same; 51% (72%) of men and 42% (67%) of women are of this opinion. (*figures 3 and 4*)

### **Finland's defence capabilities are thought to be weaker than before**

How good would Finland's defence capabilities be if it became involved in a war fought with conventional weapons?

Two-thirds or 63% (51% in 2012) were of the opinion that Finland would have poor defence capabilities; 59% (52%) of men and 69% (51%) of women are of this opinion.

Thirty-three percent (46% in 2012) believe that Finland would have good defence capabilities; 40% (47%) of men and 27% (45%) of women are of this opinion (*figures 5 and 6*).

### **Support to military non-alignment has decreased**

Over one-half or 58% (67% in 2013) support military non-alignment; 59% of men (67%) and 57% (67%) of women. One-third or 34% are in favour of military alignment (25%). Thirty-six percent (27%) of men and 32% (23%) of women are of this opinion.

Among the supporters of the Left Alliance, 79% (75% in 2013) are for military non-alignment while 69% of the supporters of the Social Democratic Party (74%), 65% (73%) of the supporters of the Centre Party, 61% of the supporters of the True Finns and the Greens (75% and 61% respectively), and 32% (45%) of the supporters of the Coalition Party are of this opinion.

Among the supporters of the Coalition Party, 64% (46% in 2013) are for military alignment while 34% (21%) of the supporters of the Greens, 30% (24%) of the supporters of the True Finns, 27% of the supporters of the Social Democratic Party and of the supporters of the Centre Party (21% and 20% respectively), and 20% (20%) of the supporters of the Left Alliance are of this opinion. (*figures 7 and 8*)

### **Increased support to membership in Nato**

When asked whether Finland should seek membership in Nato, 60% (70% in 2013) answered in the negative; 71% of men and 68% of women. Thirty percent (21%) answer in the affirmative; 32% (22%) of men and 28% (19%) of women.

Among the supporters of the Left Alliance, 88% (83% in 2013) are against membership in Nato while 69% (76%) of the supporters of the Centre Party, 66% (77%) of the supporters of the True Finns, 63% of the supporters of the Social Democratic Party and of the Greens (77% and 66% respectively) and 33% (48%) of the supporters of the Coalition Party share this view.

Among the supporters of the Coalition Party, 62% (41% in 2013) are in favour of membership in Nato while 30% (13%) of the supporters of the Greens, 29% (17%) of the supporters of the Social Democratic Party, 27% (20%) of the supporters of the True Finns, 24% (8%) of the supporters of the Centre Party, and 11% (11%) of the supporters of the Left Alliance share this view. (*figures 9 and 10*)

### **Why to say no - why to say yes?**

All who answered to the question about Nato could justify, with their own words, their opinion on the membership in Nato. A maximum of three reasons could be given. A total of 837 respondents gave reasons to their opinion, which accounts for 82% of all respondents (1023).

#### *Why no (523)*

Those who were against membership in Nato gave most often Russia-related reasons for their opinion ("Russia should not be irritated", "Close proximity of St. Petersburg"). The second most often given reason was that the current situation is good, Finland is secure and the membership would not add to Finland's security (109). The third reason given was the high costs of membership (58).

#### *Why yes (277)*

Those who were for membership in Nato most often stated that the membership would increase Finland's security (103). The second most often given reasons were related to Russia and the threat from Russia (92) ("Security against the neighbouring country", "Russia and its unpredictable leader". The third reason given was that Finland cannot manage by itself (66).

#### *Cannot say (37)*

Those who answered, "Cannot say" most often said that they neither knew enough about the matter nor followed these matters in the news (20).

## **Increased support to general conscription**

Seventy-five percent (68% in 2013) support the current system of conscription; 75% (69%) of men and 75% (66%) of women. Sixty-five percent (61%) in the age group 35 to 49-year-olds and 69% (69%) in the age group of 25 to 34-year-olds are in favour of the current system. As to the oldest and youngest age groups, 83% (72%) among the 50 to 79-year-olds and 75% (65%) among the 15 to 29-year-olds share this view.

Among the supporters of the Social Democratic Party, 86% (68% in 2013) support the current system while 82% (82%) of the supporters of the Greens 78% (78%) of the supporters of the True Finns, 76% (69%) of the supporters of the Coalition Party, 54% (43%) of the supporters of the Greens, and 43% (39%) of the supporters of the Left Alliance shared this view.

Eleven percent thinks that the number of those receiving military training should be cut down selectively (20% in 2013); 12% (19%) of men and 11% (21%) of men shared this view.

Among the supporters of the Left Alliance, one-third or 33% are in favour of adopting a selective system (36% in 2013) while 17% (35%) of the supporters of the Greens, 12% (16%) of the supporters of the Centre Party, 10% (18%) of the supporters of the Coalition Party, 9% (21%) of the supporters of the Social Democratic Party, and 4% (13%) of the supporters of the True Finns shared this view.

Twelve percent were in favour of giving up general conscription and introducing a professional army (11% in 2013); 12% (10%) of men 12% (11%) of women.

Among the supporters of the Greens, 29% (19% in 2013) were in favour of introducing a professional army while 24% (25%) of the supporters of the Left Alliance, 18% (9%) of the supporters of the True Finns, 14% (13%) of the supporters of the Coalition Party, 5% (1%) of the supporters of the Centre Party, and 4% (10%) of the supporters of the Social Democratic Party shared this view. (*figures 11 and 12*)

## **Women's military service on a voluntary basis is widely supported**

It is possible for Finnish women to do conscript service. Ninety-five percent (94% in 2013) of both men and women are in favour of this.

*Should it be compulsory for women to do conscript service?*

A total of 86% of both men and women answered in the negative while 13% answered in the affirmative.

*Should women have the obligation to take part in call-ups?*

One-fourth or 25% (27% in 2010) were in favour of this; 26% of men and 24% of women. A total of 73% (71% in 2010) answered in the negative; 72% of men and 74% of women. (*figure 13*)

## **Russia's recent activities are considered to have a negative effect on Finland's security**

The respondents were asked the following new question: In your opinion, have Russia's recent activities had an effect on Finland's security?

Two-thirds or 63% think that Russia's recent activities have had a negative effect on Finland's security; 60% of men and 65% of women are of this opinion.

Among the supporters of the Coalition Party 70% believe in the negative effect while 69% of the supporters of the Social Democratic Party, 67% of the supporters of the Centre Party, 65% of the supporters of the Greens, 61% of the supporters of the True Finns and 53% of the supporters of the Left Alliance are of this opinion.

Thirty-three percent think that Russia's recent activities have not had a positive or negative effect on Finland's security; 36% of men and 30% of women are of this opinion.

Among the supporters of the Left Alliance, 45% do not believe in the positive or negative effect while 36% of the supporters of the True Finns, 30% of the supporters of the Centre Party, 28% of the supporters of the Social Democratic Party, 27% of the supporters of the Coalition Party and 23% of the supporters of the Greens are of this opinion.

Two percent think that Russia's recent activities have had a positive effect on Finland's security. (*figure 14*)

### **The will to defend the country militarily has grown stronger**

If there was a military aggression against Finland, should Finland in your opinion defend itself militarily in all situations even if the outcome was uncertain? Seventy-six percent of the respondents (71% in 2013) answered in the affirmative; 82% (76%) of men and 70% (65%) of women. Nineteen percent (25%) answered in the negative; 16% (21%) of men and 22% (29%) of women.

Among the supporters of the Coalition Party, 87% (76% in 2013) answered in the affirmative while 83% (75%) of the supporters of the Centre Party, 79% (71%) of the supporters of the Social Democratic Party, 75% (81%) of the supporters of the True Finns, 66% (58%) of the supporters of the Greens, and 61% (55%) of the supporters of the Left Alliance shared this view.

Among the supporters of the Left Alliance, 31% (41% in 2013) answered in the negative while 27% (40%) of the supporters of the Greens, 24% (18%) of the supporters of the True Finns, 19% (27%) of the supporters of the Social Democratic Party, 15% (20%) of the supporters of the Centre Party, and 12% (18%) of the supporters of the Coalition Party shared this view. (*figures 15 and 16*)

### **Personal will to defend the country is on a high level**

Eighty-four percent (85% in 2013) answered in the affirmative when asked "If there was a military aggression against Finland would you be prepared to take part in different tasks of national defence according to your skills and competences?"; 89% (87%) of men and 79% (83%) of women. (*figures 17 and 18*)

### **The possibility of a military threat against Finland is thought to have increased**

In 2013, the ABDI inquired for the first time about the possibility of a military threat against Finland in the next ten years. Seventy-two percent (79% in 2013) regards military threat as very or quite unlikely; 75% (77%) of men and 69% (81%) of women.

One-fifth or 21% (7% in 2013) regards military threat as quite likely or very likely; 17% (6%) of men and 26% (8%) of women.

Five percent thinks that a military threat is not at all likely (13% in 2013); six percent (17%) of men and three percent (9%) of women. (*figure 19*)

## **Finland's employment situation, economic prospects in Europe and the development in Russia cause most concern**

The question listed 11 different factors and the respondents were asked to assess each of them on the following scale: causes a lot of concern, causes some concern, causes little concern or does not cause concern. The situation in Ukraine and religious extremism were new items on the list.

The following were seen as causing a lot of concern or some concern: employment situation in Finland (86%); economic prospects in Europe (78%); development in Russia (75%); the Ukrainian crisis (74%); international terrorism (74%); proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (68%); climate change (63%); cyber threats (63%); religious extremism (62%); the situation in Syria (51%); and the increasing number of immigrants in Finland (43%). (*figures 20–23*)

## **The future looks insecure**

Over one-half or 56% (43% in 2013) expects Finland and Finns to live in a more insecure world in the next five years; 50% (37%) of men and 62% (50%) of women shared this view.

Twenty-eight percent (36% in 2013) thinks that the situation in the future will not be different from the present situation; 32% (36%) of men and 24% (36%) of women shared this view.

Fourteen percent (20% in 2013) thinks that the world will be a more secure place in the future; 17% (26%) of men and 12% (14%) of women shared this view. (*figures 24 and 25*)

## **Finland's participation in military cooperation with Nordic countries is seen as enhancing security**

The question listed eight different factors and the respondents were asked to assess whether they increase or decrease Finland's security or if they have any impact at all on Finland's security

*Finland's participation in Nordic cooperation (75%)*; two percent think that this decreases Finland's security while one-fifth thinks that this has no impact.

*Finland's participation in the EU's common defence (65%)*: one-fourth sees this as not impacting Finland's security while 10% sees it as decreasing it.

*Finland's membership in the European Union (54%)*; nine percent sees this as decreasing Finland's security while 37% thinks that this has no impact.

*Finland's economic interaction increases internationally (45%)*; nine percent sees this as decreasing Finland's security while 40% thinks that this has no impact.

*Finland's military non-alignment (42%)*; over one-fifth sees this as decreasing Finland's security while 31% thinks that this has no impact.

*Finland's participation in international crisis-management tasks (41%)*; 44% sees this as not impacting Finland's security while 11% sees this as decreasing Finland's security.

*Finland's possible membership in Nato (37%)*; one-third sees this as decreasing Finland's security

*Increased foreign ownership in Finland's business life (7%)*; fifty-four percent sees this as decreasing Finland's security while one-third thinks that this has no impact. (*figures 26–29*)

## **Management of foreign policy inspires confidence**

Seventy percent (73% in 2013) thinks that Finland's foreign policy is well managed well; 72% (73%) of men and 68% (72%) of women. One-fourth or 25% (23% in 2013) thinks it is managed badly; 25% (24%) of men and 26% (22%) of women.



Among the supporters of the Greens, 83% (73% in 2013) thinks that foreign policy is managed well; 82% (89%) of the supporters of the Coalition Party, 81% (80%) of the supporters of the Social Democratic Party, 78% (70%) of the supporters of the Centre Party, 77% (70%) of the supporters of the Left Alliance, and 51% (56%) of the supporters of the True Finns shared this view

Among the supporters of the True Finns, 46% (42% in 2013) thinks that foreign policy is managed badly while 22% (29%) of the supporters of the Left Alliance, 20% (26%) of the supporters of the Centre Party, 17% (19%) of the supporters of the Social Democratic Party, and 15% of the supporters of the Coalition Party and of the Greens (10% and 20% respectively) shared this view. (*figures 30 and 31*)

### **Confidence in the management of defence policy has remained the same**

Over two-thirds or 69% (69% in 2013) thinks that Finland's defence policy is managed well; 69% (67%) of men and 71% (73%) of women.

Among the supporters of the Coalition Party, 80% (82% in 2013) thinks that defence policy is managed well; 78% (79%) of the supporters of the Social Democratic Party, 77% (77%) of the supporters of the Centre Party, 75% (61%) of the supporters of the Left Alliance, 71% (71%) of the supporters of the Greens, and 57% (50%) of the supporters of the True Finns shared this view.

One-fourth or 25% (24% in 2013) think that defence policy is managed badly; 28% (30%) of men and 23% (18%) of women.

Among the supporters of the True Finns, 39% (47% in 2013) thinks that defence policy is managed badly while 26% (21%) of the supporters of the Greens, 22% (35%) of the supporters of the Left Alliance, 21% (20%) of the supporters of the Centre Party, 20% of the supporters of the Coalition Party and of the Social Democratic Party (15% and 15%) shared this view. (*figures 32 and 33*)

### **Credible defence consists of a variety of factors**

Thirteen different factors are listed in the question for the respondent to assess on a scale 'has very much or quite a lot of effect on defence-has some effect or very little effect on defence- has no effect on defence'.

Respondents thought the following have very much or quite a lot of effect on credible defence:

Good relations with neighbouring countries (95%), the amount, quality and security of supply of defence materiel (92%); the will to defend of citizens (89%); up-to-date weapons systems (89%); the level of the defence appropriation (88%); defending the territory of the entire country (87%); general conscription of men (87%); the size of the reserve (82%); regular exercises for reservists (73%); Finland's participation in the EU Battlegroup and Nato Response Force (61%); compatibility of command and control systems and of weapons systems with Nato (59%); Finland's participation in international crisis-management operations (58%); and voluntary military service for women (55%). (*figures 34–37*)

### **Good preparedness for epidemics, not as good preparedness for a financial crisis and financial pressure from foreign countries**

It was in 2012 that the ABDI last inquired about preparedness for a number of threats. Foreign financial pressure was added to the list this year.

Respondents think that Finland is very well or rather well prepared for preventing the following threats: contagious diseases and epidemics (83%); various environmental threats (76%); major accidents (75%); an armed attack (62%); terrorism (57%); availability of energy (56%); international crime (56%); climate change (55%); political pressure from foreign countries (52%); and cyber attacks (52%).

Respondents think that Finland is badly prepared for the following: a financial crisis (63%) and financial pressure from foreign countries (49%). (*figures 38–41*)

### **Positive opinions on military cooperation**

The ABDI has in two previous years inquired about opinions on Finland's military cooperation with other Nordic countries, Nato and the European Union. This year there was a further question about military cooperation with Sweden.

Fifty-two percent sees *military cooperation with Sweden* as very positive and 42% as rather positive; these total 94%. Four percent regards it as rather negative.

Forty-eight percent sees *military cooperation with all Nordic countries* as very positive and 46% as rather positive; these total 94% (93% in 2013). Four percent regards it as rather negative.

Eighty-six percent sees *Finland's participation in military cooperation in the European Union* as positive (84% in 2013). Eleven percent regards it as rather negative (13%).

Fifty-six percent sees *Finland's military cooperation with Nato* as positive (49% in 2013); 61% (52%) of men and 51% (46%) of women. Thirty-nine percent (45%) sees it as negative; 36% (46%) of men and 42% (44%) of women. (*figure 42*)

### **The EU measures in connection with the Ukrainian crisis are seen as insufficient**

A new question the respondents were asked about was how well the European Union has acted to solve the Ukrainian crisis. Over one-half or 57% were of the opinion that the EU has acted poorly to solve the crisis; 58% of men and 55% of women shared this view.

Among the supporters of the Left Alliance, 76% were of this opinion while 62% of the supporters of the Coalition Party, 59% of the supporters of the Social Democratic Party and of the Centre Party, 52% of the True Finns and 51% of the Greens are of this opinion.

Thirty-seven percent think that the European Union has acted well to solve the Ukrainian crisis; 35% of men and 36% of women shared this view.

Among the supporters of the Greens, 49% were of this opinion while 42% of the supporters of the True Finns, 39% of the supporters of the Centre Party, 38% of the supporters of the Social

Democratic Party, 36% of the supporters of the Coalition Party, and 20% of the supporters of the Left Alliance shared this view. (*figure 43*)

### **Finland has acted well in connection with the Ukrainian crisis**

Another new question was “How has Finland acted in connection with the Ukrainian crisis?”

Over one-half or 57% thinks that Finland has acted well in connection with the Ukrainian crisis; 59% of men and 54% of women shared this view. Among the supporters of the Coalition Party, 69% were of this opinion while 67% of the supporters of the Centre Party, 66% of the supporters of the Greens, 55% of the supporters of the Social Democratic Party, 52% of the supporters of the True Finns, and 42% of the supporters of the Left Alliance shared this view.

One-third or 35% were of the opinion that Finland has acted poorly in connection with the Ukrainian crisis; 37% of men and 36% of women. Among the supporters of the Left Alliance, 55% were of this opinion while 42% of the supporters of the Social Democratic Party, 38% of the supporters of the True Finns, 31% of the supporters of the Greens, 29% of the supporters of the Coalition Party, and 28% of the supporters of the Centre Party shared this view. (*figure 44*)

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