

PREFACE

An interview study conducted by the Advisory Board for Defence Information (ABDI) investigated Finns' opinions on the foreign, security and defence policy of Finland. The study also included questions on Finland's asylum policy, on the various factors relating to safety and citizens' sense of security, on the direction in which Finland's security will develop over the next five years, and on factors giving rise to concern. The study comprised a total of 22 questions, of which three were completely new.

Commissioned by the ABDI, the study was carried out by market research company Taloustutkimus Oy. The study was performed as part of an omnibus research in the form of personal interviews. A total of 1,005 individuals were interviewed. The target group of the study comprised the entire population aged between 15 and 79, excluding residents of the Åland Islands. The sample was established using quota sampling which comprised age, gender and region distributions, as well as distribution by type of municipality. Interviews were conducted in 104 localities, of which 68 were cities, with the remaining 36 locations representing other municipality types. The sample was weighted to match the target group. The weighted N values correspond to the population aged 15 to 79 in thousands (SVT 31 December 2014). The interviews were conducted between 5 November and 23 November 2015. The error of margin in the study is +/- 3.2 per cent.

In respect of political affiliation as a background variable, it should be taken into consideration that the margin of error regarding the large parties is smaller, enabling the collection of more reliable information on them compared to smaller parties, which have fewer supporters in the sample.

The following question was presented to the study respondents: "If a general election was held now, which party would get your vote?" Of those interviewed, 78 per cent (784 individuals) revealed their political views, while 22 per cent (221) declined to do so.

The report has a textual section, which is supplemented by illustrations showing the time sequences of the questions presented previously. These illustrations were prepared by Taloustutkimus Oy. Some of the questions form a comprehensive time sequence since 1964. The questions were drawn up by the Work Branch of the ABDI. The survey report was drafted for the Work Branch by the ABDI 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).

The ABDI's survey reports are available in Finnish, Swedish and English on the ABDI's home page (www.defmin.fi/mts).

In Sweden, Myndighet för Samhällsskydd och Beredskap (MSB) conducts similar surveys. The most recent report was published in January 2015. It is available at <https://www.msb.se/RibData/Filer/pdf/27502.pdf>

In Norway, Folk og Forsvar conducts opinion surveys on an annual basis on security and defence policy. Their most recent report was published in June 2015. It is available at <http://www.folkogforsvar.no/resources/Folk-og-Forsvar-Meningsmaling-juni-2015.pdf>

The survey reports published by the ABDI are public and accessible by all. When referencing to them, it should be stated that they are from a survey conducted by the ABDI.

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INTRODUCTION

The future appears insecure

The clearest change in the survey conducted by ABDI in 2015 compared with the previous year is the growing sense of insecurity. Today, two-thirds of the respondents see the future in terms of increasing insecurity; a year ago, slightly more than half did so.

The ABDI has presented this question every year since 1990. Never before has the response of so many respondents indicated insecurity on such a high level with regard to the future.

The employment situation in Finland and international terrorism cause most concern

Finland's employment situation, international terrorism and the economic prospects in Europe gave the most cause for concern. Compared with the previous year, concerns have grown due to the increased numbers of immigrants in Finland and the situation in Syria.

Finland was viewed as ill-prepared for the economic crisis and uncontrolled immigration

With regard to preparedness for various threats, the respondents see that Finland is poorly prepared for the financial crisis and uncontrolled immigration.

The broad majority have a negative view of the increasing numbers of asylum seekers both in Finland and in other European countries. A broadly held opinion is that Finland is poorly prepared for this phenomenon.

The great majority would like to see the European Union adopt a common immigration and asylum policy.

Confidence in the management of defence policy has increased

Three-quarters of the respondents are of the opinion that Finnish defence policy is well managed. Less than half of the supporters of the Finns Party held this view.

Citizens' willingness to defend Finland remains at a high level; three out of four think that Finland must be defended by military means, even in the face of an unpredictable outcome.

Confidence in the management of foreign policy has deteriorated

Less than two-thirds of the respondents think that Finnish foreign policy is well managed. This figure has deteriorated by seven per cent compared with the previous year.

Russia and security can be used as arguments both in support of and against NATO membership

Both a negative and a positive attitude towards membership of NATO can be justified with reference to Russia and security.

While support for NATO membership has not grown since the last year, opposition to it has dropped somewhat, and undecidedness has increased.

The future appears insecure

“If you think the state of the world today as a whole, do you think that, in five years’ time, Finns will live in a Finland and in a world that is more secure or more insecure than it is today?”

Two-thirds of the respondents, 65 per cent, responded to this question indicating “more insecure” (as opposed to 56% in 2014): 68 per cent (62%) of women and 62 per cent (50%) of men held this view.

The ABDI has presented this question every year since 1990. Never before has the response of so many respondents indicated insecurity on such a high level with regard to the future. Thus far, the figure has fluctuated between 25 and 57 per cent.

Broken down by age group, older people tend to hold a more insecure view with regard to the future; of those who are 35 or older, 69 per cent think that the future will be more insecure (61% and 55% in 2014); of those between 25 and 34, the corresponding figure is 59 per cent (55%); and of those between 15 and 24, it is 54 per cent (52%).

Fewer than one in four, 23 per cent, see that there is no difference between the current and the previous situation (28% in 2014): 25 per cent (32%) of men think so, while 21 per cent (24%) of women do.

The future is viewed as being more secure by 10 per cent of respondents (14% in 2014): 11 per cent (17%) of men and nine per cent (12%) of women think so. This figure represents the lowest measured result in the ABDI’s time sequence. Thus far, the figure has fluctuated between 14 and 37 per cent. (*Figures 1 and 2*)

Finland’s employment situation, international terrorism and the economic prospects in Europe give the most cause for concern

The ABDI has asked respondents since 2004 whether they think that certain phenomena and factors raise concerns about the future. The list comprises five phenomena that have been on the list from the beginning; while at times one or more factors related to the topical situation have been added to the list.

In 2015, the list included thirteen factors, of which two were new. The new phenomena were:

An increase in the numbers of asylum seekers in Europe and an increase in the numbers of asylum seekers in Finland.

Compared with the previous year, concerns have grown due to the increased numbers of immigrants in Finland (+24 per cent), the situation in Syria (+21 per cent), international terrorism and global warming (+9 per cent), and religious extremism (+8 per cent).

Less concern was caused by the situation in Ukraine (-18 per cent) and developments in Russia (-6 per cent), compared with the previous year.

The factors causing either some or a great deal of concern, listed in the order of magnitude, are the following:

Employment situation in Finland, 87 per cent (86% in 2014); international terrorism, 83 per cent (74%); economic prospects in Europe, 79 per cent (78%); an increase in the numbers of asylum seekers in Europe, 75 per cent; the situation in Syria, 72 per cent (51%); global warming, 72 per cent (63%); an increase in the numbers of asylum seekers in Finland, 71 per cent; proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, 71 per cent (68%); religious extremism, 70 per cent (62%), developments in Russia, 69 per cent (75%); an increase in the number of immigrants in Finland, 67 per cent (43%); cyber threats, 62 per cent (63%), and the situation in Ukraine, 56 per cent (74%).

In examining the results that were gained before (N = 557) and after (N = 5448) the Paris terror attacks on 13 November 2015, a clear change can be discerned.

International terrorism: of those who responded before the terror attacks, 79 per cent saw that terrorism gave cause to some or a great deal of concern; of those who responded after the attacks, 89 per cent held this view. (*Figures 3, 4, 5 and 6*)

Finland's preparedness for epidemics is assessed to be good; preparedness for dealing with the economic crisis and uncontrolled immigration is seen to be less so

The ABDI has asked citizens about their views on how well or poorly Finland is prepared to stave off different threats five times in the past. The various threat scenarios are included in question 12, to which one additional item - uncontrolled immigration - was added this year; this item was also included in the survey in 2007, 2009 and 2010.

Contagious diseases and epidemics: more than four-fifths of the respondents, 84 per cent, hold the view that Finland is well-prepared for dealing with diseases and epidemics (83% in 2014). A total of 13 per cent (15%) think that Finland is ill-prepared.

Disasters: four-fifths of the respondents, 80 per cent, consider Finland's preparedness for disasters to be on a good standing (75% in 2014). Less than one-fifth, 17 per cent (20%) think that Finland is poorly prepared for dealing with disasters.

Various environmental threats (floods, oil spills and the transport of hazardous goods): 77 per cent of the respondents (76% in 2014) think that Finland is well-prepared, as opposed to one-fifth of the survey participants, 20 per cent (22%), who see Finland's preparedness in negative terms.

Access to energy: two-thirds of the respondents, 66 per cent, see that Finland is well-prepared (56% in 2014). A total of 30 per cent (40%) think that Finland is ill-prepared.

Armed attack: Almost two-thirds, 63 per cent, think that Finland's preparedness is at a good level (62% in 2014). Only one-third, 31 per cent, consider Finland's preparedness as being poor (32%).

Attacks on information networks, or cyber attacks: slightly more than a half of the respondents, 55 per cent, think that Finland is well-prepared for cyber attacks (52% in 2014), while one-third, 37 per cent, thinks that Finland's preparedness is poor (42%).

International crime: a half, 53 per cent, think that Finland is well-prepared for international crime (56% in 2014). A total of 42 per cent (41%) think that Finland is ill-prepared.

Climate change: while a half of the respondents, 53 per cent, consider Finland's preparedness to be good (55% in 2014), 42 per cent think that the country is ill-prepared for climate change (40%).

Terrorism: a half, 53 per cent, regard Finland's preparedness as good (57% in 2014), while 43 per cent find it poor (40%).

Political pressure from foreign countries: slightly fewer than a half, 48 per cent, hold the view that Finland is well-prepared for external pressure (42% in 2014), as opposed to the 43 per cent of respondents who think that the country is ill-prepared (49%).

Economic pressure from foreign sources: of the respondents, 43 per cent think that Finland's preparedness is good (42% in 2014); 47 per cent think it is poor (49%).

Uncontrolled immigration: one-third, 31 per cent, considers that Finland is well-prepared for uncontrolled immigration (44% in 2010). Two-thirds, 67 per cent, consider Finland's preparedness for uncontrolled immigration as being poor (53%).

The economic crisis: a quarter, 27 per cent, finds Finland's preparedness to be good (33% in 2014); 70 per cent find it poor (63%). (Figures 7, 8, 9 and 10)

A critical attitude to the growing number of asylum seekers in Finland and elsewhere in Europe

The ABDI asked respondents three topical questions on Finland's immigration and asylum policy and on the country's preparedness for an increasing number of asylum seekers.

How do you stand on the issue of an increasing number of asylum seekers in Finland?

One-half of the respondents, 48 per cent, take a negative view on increasing numbers of in Finland: 52 per cent of men think along these lines, while 44 per cent of women do.

Of the supporters of the Finns Party, 91 per cent had a negative view on the increasing number of asylum seekers; of those of the Centre Party, 60 per cent; of the voters of the Left Alliance, 40 per cent, of those of the Coalition Party, 34 per cent, and of the supporters of the Greens, 23 per cent.

Slightly less than one-third, 29 per cent, take neither a positive nor a negative view: 30 per cent of men and 29 per cent of women. Of the supporters of the Coalition Party, 42 take a neutral view; of those of the Greens, 34; of the supporters of the Centre Party and the Left Alliance, 26 per cent; and of those of the Finns Party, 7 per cent.

One-fifth, 22 per cent, of the respondents take a positive view of an increased number of asylum seekers in Finland; 26 per cent of women and 18 per cent of men. The young generation, those aged 15 to 24, take a slightly more positive view (26 per cent of the respondents held a positive view), than other age groups (21 per cent).

Some 41 per cent of Green Party supporters held a positive view. The same figure for the Left Alliance was 33 per cent, 25 per cent for the Coalition Party, 18 per cent for the Social Democratic Party, 14 per cent for the Centre Party, and two per cent for the Finns Party.

The growing number of asylum seekers elsewhere in Europe

Less than a fifth of the respondents, 17 per cent, take a positive view on the increasing number of asylum seekers in Europe; of women, 23 and of men, 12 per cent.

Almost one-half, 45 per cent, hold a negative view: 50 per cent of men and 40 per cent of women.

One-third, 35 per cent, take neither a positive nor a negative view: 36 per cent of men and 35 per cent of women think along these lines. (*Figures 11, 12 and 13*)

Finland and the European Union are viewed as having done a poor job in preparing for the increasing number of asylum seekers

Two-thirds, 68 per cent, consider that Finland is ill-prepared for the increasing number of asylum seekers: 69 per cent of men and 67 per cent of women hold this view.

A total of 85 per cent of the Finns Party supporters held this view. The same figure for the Centre Party was 78 per cent, 69 per cent for the Coalition Party, 64 per cent for the Social Democratic Party, 62 per cent for the Left Alliance, and 56 per cent for the Green Party.

One-fifth, 18 per cent, think that Finland is neither poorly nor well-prepared for an increase in the number of asylum seekers: 19 per cent of men and 18 per cent of women hold this view.

Some 29 per cent of the supporters of the Green Party hold this view. The same figure for the Left Alliance is 26; for the Social Democratic Party it is 19 per cent; for the Coalition Party it is 14 per cent; for the Centre Party, 13 per cent; and for the Finns Party, seven per cent.

Every tenth respondent, 13 per cent, consider Finland's preparedness for the increasing number of asylum seekers to be good: 14 per cent of women and 11 per cent of men take this view.

Of the supporters of the Coalition Party, 16 take this view; of those of the Social Democratic Party and the Greens, 15 per cent do; of the Left Alliance, 12 per cent agree; while of the Centre Party, nine per cent and of those of the Finns Party, seven per cent agree.

How the European Union has prepared for the increasing number of asylum seekers

Three out of four, 72 per cent, consider that the European Union is ill-prepared for the increasing number of asylum seekers: 73 per cent of men and 70 per cent of women hold this view.

A total of 87 per cent of the Finns Party supporters take this view, while 79 per cent of those of the Centre Party and the Coalition Party, 78 per cent of the Left Alliance, 69 per cent of the Social Democratic Party and 66 per cent of the Green Party agree.

Less than one-fifth, 17 per cent, think that the EU is neither poorly nor well-prepared for an increase in the number of asylum seekers: 18 per cent of men and 17 per cent of women hold this view.

One in ten, or nine per cent, think that the European Union is well-prepared for the increasing number of asylum seekers. *(Figures 14, 15 and 16)*

A common immigration and asylum policy within the European Union is deemed necessary

An overwhelming majority, 86 per cent, believes that the European Union must put in place a common immigration and asylum policy: 88 per cent of women and 84 per cent of men hold this view.

Of the supporters of the Coalition Party, 95 per cent are in favour of a common immigration and asylum policy within the EU; of the sympathisers of the Social Democratic Party and the Green Party, 92 per cent; of those of the Centre Party, 90; of those of the Left Alliance, 86, and of the Finns Party, 74 per cent agree.

A total of 11 per cent of the respondents have a negative view of a common EU immigration and asylum policy; 14 per cent of men, and eight per cent of women are of this opinion.

Of the supporters of the Finns Party, a quarter, or 26 per cent, are opposed to a common EU immigration and asylum policy; of those of the Left Alliance, 11 per cent; of the Centre Party, eight per cent; of those of the Social Democratic Party and the Greens, seven per cent; and of those of the Coalition Party, five per cent share this view. (Figure 17)

Finland's participation in military cooperation with the other Nordic countries and in the organisation of the collective defence within the EU are seen as factors that contribute positively to security

Related to this question, the respondents were presented with ten factors, the effect of which on Finland's and Finns' security was surveyed.

Finland's participation in defence cooperation with the other Nordic countries adds to security, 74 per cent (75% in 2014); has no effect, 19 per cent (20%); reduces security, four per cent (2%).

Finland's participation in the organisation of collective defence within the European Union adds to security, 56 per cent (61% in 2014); has no effect, 26 per cent (25%); reduces security, 12 per cent (10%).

Finland's membership of the European Union adds to security, 50 per cent (54% in 2014); has no effect, 35 per cent (37%); reduces security, 11 per cent (7%).

Finland's increased economic interaction at the international level adds to security, 45 per cent (45% in 2014); has no effect, 40 per cent (40%); reduces security, nine per cent (9%).

Finland's participation in international crisis management tasks adds to security, 40 per cent (41% in 2014); has no effect, 41 per cent (44%); reduces security, 14 per cent (11%).

Finland's military non-alignment adds to security, 38 per cent (42% in 2014); has no effect, 34 per cent (31%); reduces security, 23 per cent (22%).

Finland's potential NATO membership adds to security, 35 per cent (37% in 2014); has no effect, 18 per cent (20%); reduces security, 36 per cent (33%).

Increased foreign ownership in Finland's economy adds to security, seven per cent (7% in 2014); has no effect, 42 per cent (34%); reduces security, 46 per cent (54%). (Figures 18, 19, 20 and 21)

Confidence in the management of defence policy has increased

Three-quarters, or 74 per cent, consider that Finland's defence policy is well managed (69% in 2014): 74 per cent (71%) of women and 73 per cent (69%) of men hold this view.

Of the supporters of the Coalition Party, 85 per cent (80% in 2014) think that Finnish defence policy is well managed; of those of the Centre Party, 79 (77%); of those of the Green Party 78 (71%); of those of the Social Democratic Party 75 (78%); of those of the Left Alliance, 72 (75%); and of those of the Finns Party, 47 per cent (57%) agree with this view.

A fifth, or 21 per cent, consider that Finland's defence policy is poorly managed (25% in 2014): 24 (28%) of women and 17 per cent (23%) of men hold this view.

Of the supporters of the Finns Party, 50 per cent (39% in 2014) think that Finnish defence policy is poorly managed; of those of the Social Democratic Party, 21 (20%); of those of Left Alliance 20 (22%); of those of the Green Party 19 (26%); of those of the Centre Party, 18 (21%); and of those of the Coalition Party, 12 per cent (20%) share this view. (*Figures 22 and 23*)

Citizens' willingness to defend Finland is at a high level

Four-fifths of the respondents, 78 per cent, hold the view that should Finland be subject to an attack, Finns must defend themselves by military means, even in the face of an unpredictable outcome (76% in 2014). Of men, 84 per cent (82%), and of women, 73 per cent (70%) think so.

Of the respondents older than 50 years of age, 87 per cent (77% in 2014) take a positive view towards defence by military means; of those 35 to 49 years of age, 79 per cent (79%); of those 25 to 34 years, 77 per cent (74%); and of those 15 to 24 years of age, 67 per cent (70%) take the same view. Of the supporters of the Centre Party, 89 per cent (83% in 2014) take a positive view of armed resistance; of those of the Social Democratic Party, 83 (79%); of those of the Coalition Party, 81 (87%); of those of the Finns Party 80 (75%); of those of the Left Alliance, 77 (61%); and of those of the Green Party, 67 per cent (66%) agree.

Slightly less than one-fifth, 16 per cent (19%), take the opposite view: 21 per cent (22%) of women and 12 per cent of men (16%). Of the supporters of the Green Party, 26 per cent (27%); of those of the Left Alliance, 19 (31%); of those of the Finns Party and the Coalition Party, 15 (24% and 12%); of those of the Social Democratic Party, 13 (19%); and of those of the Centre Party, eight per cent (15%) take the opposite view.

Five per cent of the respondents declined to state an opinion (5% in 2014). (*Figures 24 and 25*)

Citizens' personal willingness to defend Finland continues to remain at a very high level

The overwhelming majority of the citizens, 87 per cent (84% in 2014), are prepared to participate in tasks involved in the defence of Finland, within the limits of their abilities: 91 per cent (89%) of men and 83 per cent (79%) of women hold this view.

Of the supporters of the Coalition Party and the Finns Party, 93 per cent (95% and 85% in 2014); of those of the Centre Party, 89 (88%); of those of the Green Party 88 (89%); of those of the Social Democratic Party 84 (88%); and of those of the Left Alliance, 79 per cent (77%) hold this view. (*Figures 26 and 27*)

General conscription enjoys widespread support

Three-quarters of the respondents, 75 per cent, think that Finland must retain the current general conscription system (75% in 2014). Some 76 per cent (75%) of women and 73 per cent (75%) of men hold this view. Of the respondents older than 50 years of age, 83 per cent (83%); of those 35 to 49, 70 per cent (65%); of those 25 to 34, 65 per cent (69%); and of those 15 to 24, 64 per cent (75%) agree.

Of the supporters of the Finns Party, 87 per cent (78% in 2014) think that Finland must retain general conscription; of those of the Centre Party, 85 (82%); of those of the Social Democratic Party, 84 (86%); of those of the Coalition Party, 78 (76%); of those of the Left Alliance, 62 (43%); and of those of the Green Party, 59 per cent (54%) agree.

A decrease in the number of those receiving military training - the adoption of selective conscription - is supported by 13 per cent of respondents (11% in 2014): 15 per cent (12%) of men and 11 per cent (11%) of women hold this view.

Of the supporters of the Left Alliance, 23 per cent (33% in 2014); of those of the Green Party, 22 (17%); of those of the Centre Party, the Coalition Party and the Social Democratic Party, 10 per cent (12%, 10% and 9%), and of those of the of the Finns Party, eight per cent (4%).

A total of ten per cent of the respondents (12% in 2014) are in favour of the discontinuation of general conscription and the adoption of a professional army: 11 per cent (12%) of men and nine per cent (12%) of women support this proposition. (*Figures 28 and 29*)

The current or an increased level of defence appropriation enjoys support

One-half, 47 per cent, think that the defence appropriation must be increased (56% in 2014). Of men, more than one-half, 54 per cent (61%), and 40% (51%) of women think so.

Of the supporters of the Coalition Party, 62 per cent (71% in 2014) were in favour of increased defence appropriation; of those of the Finns Party 59 (71%); of those of the Centre Party, 53 (62%); of those of the Social Democratic Party, 49 (56%); of those of the Left Alliance, 27 (29%); and of those of the Green Party, 22 per cent (42%) agree.

Two-fifths of the respondents, 42 per cent (36% in 2014), are in favour of keeping defence appropriation at its current level: 47 per cent (39%) of women and 37 per cent (33%) of men hold this view.

Of the supporters of the Green Party, 60 per cent (42% in 2014) would prefer to keep defence spending at its current level; of those of the Social Democratic Party, 46 (42%); of those of the Left Alliance, 44 (52%); of those of the Centre Party, 43 (35%); of those of the Finns Party, 35 (24%), and of those of the Coalition Party, 33 per cent (23%) are of the same opinion.

Seven per cent of the respondents (6% in 2014) would reduce defence spending from its current level: nine per cent (6%) of men and five per cent (6%) of women hold this view.

Of the supporters of the Left Alliance, a quarter, 24 per cent (19% in 2014) were in favour of a decreased defence appropriation; of those of the Green Party 13 (15%); of those of the Finns Party, six (3%); of those of the Social Democratic Party, five (2%); of those of the Coalition Party, four (6%); and of those of the Centre Party, one per cent (3%) agreed. (*Figures 30 and 31*)

Finland's participation in military cooperation is viewed in a positive light

When asked about the military cooperation that Finland is engaged in with various partners, the majority of the respondents take a positive view. The respondents take a particularly positive view of Finland's military collaboration with the Nordic countries and Sweden; there is hardly any opposition to such cooperation.

With regard to military collaboration between Finland and Sweden, practically all respondents, 94 per cent, take a positive view (94% in 2014). Five per cent (4%) take a negative view.

An equally large proportion, 94 per cent, see *military cooperation with all the Nordic countries* in positive terms (94% in 2014). Five per cent (4%) take a negative view.

A total of 84 per cent (86% in 2014) take a positive view of *Finland engaging in military cooperation within the European Union*. Some 87 per cent (89%) of men and 81 per cent (82%) of women think along these lines.

Of the supporters of the Coalition Party, 95 per cent (95% in 2014); of those of the Centre Party and the Green Party, 87 (89% and 92%); of those of the Social Democratic Party, 86 (96%); of those of the Finns Party, 84 (76%), and of those of the Left Alliance, 74 per cent (76%) take a positive view.

Twelve per cent (11%) take a negative view. Some 13 per cent (9%) of men and 13 per cent (14%) of women think along these lines. Of the supporters of the Left Alliance, 22 per cent (16%) take a negative view of military cooperation within the EU; of those of the Finns Party, 16 (22%); of those of the Social Democratic Party, 13 (4%); of those of the Centre Party 12 (9%); of those of the Green Party, 11 (6%); and of those of the Coalition Party, four per cent (4%).

A total of 58 per cent (56% in 2014) take a positive view of *Finland being engaged in military cooperation with NATO*: 63 per cent (61% in 2014) of men and 52 per cent (51%) of women take this view.

Of the supporters of the Coalition Party, 83 per cent (81% in 2014); of those of the Centre Party, 60 (57%); of those of the Green Party 56 (57%); of those of the Social Democratic Party 55 (57%); of those of the Finns Party, 49 (49%), and of those of the Left Alliance, 35 (30%) held this view.

A total of 37 per cent (39%) take a negative view: 38 per cent (42%) of women and 35 per cent (36%) of men. Of the supporters of the Left Alliance, 59 per cent (70%) take a negative view of military cooperation with NATO; of those of the Finns Party, 51 (46%); of those of the Social Democratic Party, 43 (39%); of those of the Green Party, 41 (42%); of those of the Centre Party 34 (40%); and of those of the Coalition Party, 13 per cent (17%) agree. (*Figures 32, 33, 34, 35 and 36*)

The mission of the Finnish Defence Forces outside Finland

In 2012 the ABDI last presented the question about the military role of the Finnish Defence Forces. This question included three tasks, all of which were assessed separately. Compared with 2012, the recognition of the fact that Finland must participate in crisis management and the warding off of global security threats has intensified (+9%), as has the public's perception that Finland's participation in the defence of the European Union (+8%) is part of the military duties of the Finnish Defence Forces. Even today, there is almost unanimous consensus that the defence of Finland's territorial integrity is part of the duties of the Finnish Defence Forces.

The defence of Finland's territorial integrity

Practically all of the respondents, 96 per cent, think that the defence of Finland's territorial integrity is part of the military duties of the Finnish Defence Forces (95% in 2012); two per cent think that it is not (3%).

Participation in the defence of the European Union

More than half of the respondents, 59 per cent, think that participation in the defence of the European Union is one of the duties of the Finnish Defence Forces (51% in 2012). Some 63 per cent (51%) of women and 56 per cent (52%) of men hold this view.

Of the supporters of the Coalition Party, 67 per cent (58% in 2012); of those of the Centre Party, 63 (63%); of those of the Green Party 59 (61%); of those of the Social Democratic Party 57 (51%); of those of the Finns Party, 50 (39%), and of those of the Left Alliance, 48 per cent (37%) held this view.

One-third, 34 per cent, think that the defence of the European Union does not fall within the duties of the Finnish Defence Forces (42% in 2012): 44 per cent (44%) of men and 33 per cent (41%) of women take this view.

Of the supporters of the Finns Party, 46 per cent (57% in 2012); of those of the Left Alliance, 45 (57%); of those of the Social Democratic Party, 39 (46%); of those of the Centre Party and the Coalition Party, 31 (35% and 37%); and of those of the Green Party, 30 per cent (35%) take this view.

Participation in crisis management and in the staving off of security threats in various parts of the world

More than a half of the respondents, 56 per cent, think that crisis management and the staving off of security threats globally is part of the duties of the Finnish Defence Forces (47% in 2012): 60 per cent (46%) of women and 52 per cent (47%) of men took this view.

Of the supporters of the Green Party, 68 per cent (57% in 2012); of those of the Coalition Party, 65 (55%); of those of the Left Alliance, 57 (42%); of those of the Centre Party, 55 (47%); of those of Social Democratic Party, 54 (44%); and of those of the Finns Party, 53 per cent (29%) take this view.

A total of 39 per cent (48% in 2012) take the opposite view: 44 per cent (47%) of men and 33 per cent (46%) of women.

Of the supporters of the Finns Party, 47 per cent (66%) take a negative view of Finland's participation in crisis management missions; of those of the Left Alliance, 41 (53%); of those of the Social Democratic Party, 40 (52%); of those of the Centre Party, 37 (51%); of those of the Coalition Party, 34 (41%); and of those of the Green Party, 28 (42%) per cent agree. (*Figure 37*)

The probability of a military threat against Finland is assessed to be low

In two previous years, the ABDI has asked respondents about how they would assess the probability of a military threat against Finland. In 2015, the outcome of the survey was basically the same as the previous year.

Almost three-quarters of the respondents, 71 per cent, (72% in 2014), think that a military threat against Finland is fairly or highly unlikely.

Of the supporters of the Coalition Party, 89 per cent (74% in 2014); of those of the Green Party, 79 (80%); of those of the Left Alliance, 75 (71%); of those of the Centre Party, 71 (78%); of those of Social Democratic Party, 65 (82%); and of those of the Finns Party, 54 per cent (74%) take this view.

One-fifth of the respondents, 22 per cent, think that the probability of a military threat to Finland will be quite or very probable over the next ten years (21% in 2014). Of the supporters of the Finns Party, 43 per cent (19%); of those of the Social Democratic Party, 26 (14%); of those of the Centre Party, 22 (17%); of those of the Green Party and the Left Alliance, 14 (14% and 16%); and of those of the Coalition Party, eight per cent (17%) hold this view.

A total of five per cent (5% in 2014) think that a military threat is not probable at all. (*Figure 38*)

No changes are perceived in the military situation in Finland's neighbouring areas

The survey conducted by ABDI in 2014 clearly highlighted Finns' changed view of the direction in which the military situation in Finland's neighbouring areas would develop during the next ten years. In 2015, the results were in line with those obtained the previous year.

Half of the respondents, 48 per cent, think that the military situation in Finland's neighbouring areas will remain unchanged over the next ten years (46% in 2014); more than half of men, 54 per cent (51%), and 43 per cent (42%) of women hold this view.

Of the supporters of the Left Alliance, 56 per cent (54% in 2014); of those of the Green Party, 53 (49%); of those the Coalition Party and the Social Democratic Party, 50 (40% and 49%); of those of the Centre Party, 47 (51%); and of those of the Finns Party, 40 (49%) per cent hold this view.

A total of 44 per cent see the situation as being more threatening (46%): half, 49 per cent (50%) of women and 40 per cent (43%) of men hold this view.

Of the supporters of the Finns Party, 51 per cent (49% in 2014); of those of the Social Democratic Party, 49 (44%); of those of the Centre Party, 47 (43%); of those of the Coalition Party, 45 (52%); of those of the Green Party, 42 (46%); and of those of the Left Alliance, 31 (42%) held this view.

The military situation in Finland's neighbouring areas is viewed in less threatening terms by five per cent of the respondents (6% in 2014): both of men (6%), and of women (6%). (*Figures 39 and 40*)

The negative effects of Russia's recent activities on Finland's security are assessed to have diminished

Last year, the ABDI asked respondents the following question for the first time: "How would you assess Russia's recent activities on Finland's security?"

More than half of the respondents, 57 per cent, assess that Russian activities have a negative effect (63% in 2014); both men (60%) and women (65%) take this view.

Of the supporters of the Green Party, 64 per cent (75% in 2014); of those of the Coalition Party, 63 (70%); of those of the Centre Party, 59 (70%); of those of the Finns Party and the Social Democratic Party 56 (61% and 70%); and of those of the Left Alliance, 42 per cent (53%) held this view.

A good one-third of the respondents, 37 per cent, take neither a positive nor a negative view (33% in 2014): 38 per cent (36%) of men and 36 per cent (30%) of women think along these lines.

Of the supporters of the Left Alliance, 51 per cent (45% in 2014); of those of the Finns Party, 42 (36%) ; of those of the Social Democratic Party, 40 (28%); of those of the Centre Party, 34 (30%); of those of the Coalition Party and the Green Party, 32 per cent (27% and 23%) take this view.

A total of three per cent (4% in 2014) see Russian activities in a positive light. (*Figure 41*)

Finland's defence capabilities in a conventional war

One-third of the respondents, 34 per cent, think that Finland would stand a reasonably good or very good chance of defending itself should it be engaged in a conventional war (33% in 2014). Some 35 per cent (40) of men and 32 per cent (27%) of women hold this view.

Of the supporters of the Finns Party, 44 per cent (31% in 2014) think that Finnish defence capabilities are good; of those of the Centre Party, 42 (40%); of those of the Coalition Party, the Social Democratic Party and the Green Party 31 (30%, 43% and 24%); and of those of the Left Alliance, 20 per cent (35%) hold this view.

Two-thirds of respondents, 64 per cent, think that Finland's chances of defending itself would be quite or very limited (63% in 2014.) Some 64 per cent (69%) of women and 64 per cent (59%) of men hold this view.

Of the supporters of the Left Alliance, 75 per cent (63% in 2014); of those of Coalition Party, 69 (69%); of those of the Social Democratic Party, 67 (56%); of those of the Green

Party, 65 (73%); of those of the Finns Party, 53 (68%); and of those of the Centre Party, 57 per cent (60%) take this view. (*Figures 42 and 43*)

Confidence in the management of Finland's foreign policy has dropped

Less than two-thirds of the respondents, 63 per cent (70% in 2014), think that Finnish foreign policy is well managed: 65 per cent (72%) of men and 61 per cent (68%) of women take this view. This question has been presented to the respondents since 1964; during this period, the proportion of respondents who reported that Finnish foreign policy is well managed has varied between 92 and 62 per cent.

The younger age groups take a more critical view than the older groups. Slightly more than half of the respondents, 55 per cent, among those of 15 to 25 years of age think that Finnish foreign policy is well managed (65% in 2014); of those over 50 years of age, 69 per cent (73%) take this view. Of the supporters of the Coalition Party, 83 per cent (82% in 2014) think that Finnish defence policy is well managed; of those of the Centre Party, 73 (78%); of those of Social Democratic Party, 63 (81%); of those of the Left Alliance, 61 (77%); of those of the Green Party, 57, (83%); and of the Finns Party, 50 per cent (51%) agree.

One-third of the respondents, 32 per cent, think that Finnish foreign policy is poorly managed (25% in 2014): 32 per cent (25%) of men and 31 per cent (26%) of women take this view. Broken down by age group, those that take the most critical view are those aged 35 to 49; of them, 38 per cent think that Finnish foreign policy is poorly managed (29%); among those aged 25 to 34, such a view is taken by 37 per cent (24%); of those 15 to 24 years of age, 29 per cent (22%); and of those of 50 years of age, 27 per cent (24%) agree.

The proportion of those respondents who see that Finnish foreign policy is poorly managed has fluctuated between 32 and 2 per cent.

Of the supporters of the Finns Party, 47 per cent (46% in 2014) think that Finnish foreign policy is poorly managed; of those of the Green Party, 38 (15%); of those of the Left Alliance, 36 (22%); of those of the Social Democratic Party, 35 (17%); of those of the Centre Party, 24 (20%); and of those of the Coalition Party, 15 per cent (15%).

Five per cent of the respondents failed to formulate an opinion (5% in 2014). The largest number of those who are undecided is found among those of 15 to 24 years of age - 16 per cent (12%). (*Figures 44 and 45*)

Support for military non-alignment has dropped somewhat

Slightly over half of the respondents, 54 per cent, support Finland's military non-alignment (58% in 2014): 56 per cent (59%) of men and 52 per cent (57%) of women take this view.

This question has been presented to respondents since 1996; during this period, the proportion of respondents who support Finland's military non-alignment has fluctuated between 79 and 58 per cent.

Of supporters of the Left Alliance, 73 per cent (79% in 2014) are in favour of military non-alliance; of those of the Finns Party and the Social Democratic Party, 66 (61% and 69%); of those of the Centre Party and the Green Party, 57 (65% and 61%); and of those of the Coalition Party, 32 per cent (32%) take this view.

A third of the respondents, 33 per cent, support Finland's military non-alignment (34% in 2014): some 37 per cent (36%) of men and 30 per cent (32%) of women.

Of the supporters of the Coalition Party, 57 per cent (64% in 2014) support military alignment; of those of the Green Party, 33 (34%); of those the Finns Party and the Social Democratic Party, 30 (30% and 27%); of those of the Centre Party, 29 (27%); and of those of the Left Alliance 16 per cent (20%) agree.

Twelve per cent of the respondents (8% in 2014) failed to formulate an opinion; 18 per cent (11%) of women and seven per cent (6%) of men. Of the supporters of the Centre Party, 13 per cent (4%) declined to voice a view; of those of the Coalition Party and the Green Party, 11 (4% and 4%); of those of the Left Alliance, 10 (0%); and of those of the Social Democratic Party, four per cent (4%) did so.

Of those younger than 25, 18 per cent (11% in 2014), declined to give an opinion; of those 25 to 49 years of age, 16 (9%); of those older than 50 years, 10 (6%); and of those 25 to 35-years of age, eight per cent (10%) did so. (*Figures 46 and 47*)

Should Finland seek NATO membership or not? Undecidedness regarding this issue has increased

More than a half of the respondents, 58 per cent (60% in 2014), gave a negative answer to the question of whether Finland should seek membership of NATO: 61 per cent (60%) of men and 55 per cent (60%) of women.

The ABDI has presented this question to respondents since 2005; during this period, the proportion of respondents with a negative view of Finland's membership of NATO has fluctuated between 60 and 71 per cent.

A total of 27 per cent (30% in 2014) take a positive view: 31 per cent (32%) of men and 24 per cent (28%) of women. Fifteen per cent of the respondents (10%) declined to give an opinion: 21 per cent (13%) of women and eight per cent of men (8%).

Thus far, the proportion of those who take a positive view of Finland's NATO membership has fluctuated between 18 and 30 per cent, and of those who declined to give their view between 5 and 12 per cent.

Of the supporters of the Left Alliance, 81 per cent (88% in 2014) are against Finland's NATO membership; of those of the Centre Party and the Social Democratic Party, (69% and 63%); of those of the Green Party, 62 (63%); of those of the Finns Party, 61 (66%); and of those of the Coalition Party, 28 per cent (33%) take this view.

Of the supporters of the Coalition Party, more than half, 56 per cent (62% in 2014) support Finland's membership of NATO; of those of the Social Democratic Party, 27 (29%); of those of the Finns Party, 25 (27%); of those of the Centre Party, 22 (24%); of those of the Green Party, 21 (30%); and of those of the Left Alliance, 14 per cent (11%) do.

Fifteen per cent of the respondents declined to give an opinion (10% in 2014). The proportion of those undecided among Green Party supporters is 17 per cent (7%); among those of the Coalition Party, 15 (5%); among those of the Finns Party, 14 (6%); among those of the Centre Party, 12 (8%); among those of the Social Democratic Party, seven (8%); and among those of the Left Alliance, five per cent (7%) are undecided. (*Figures 48 and 49*)

Russia and security can be used as arguments both in support of and against NATO membership

For the second year running, all the respondents were given the chance to give their reasons for answering "yes", "no" or "don't know" in their own words. This year, a total of 815 respondents justified their views; in other words, 81 per cent of all those who responded.

The arguments given both for and against NATO membership included the same factors.

Why should Finland not join NATO? (N = 512)

The most frequently cited reasons against Finland's NATO membership included Russia, the eastern neighbour, totalling 139 ("we should not vex our eastern neighbour" and "Russia would not appreciate it.")

The second most frequently reported argument highlighted the current situation, stating that non-alignment and neutrality work well for Finland ("non-alignment is the best policy for Finland".)

Other issues raised was the fact that Finns would get involved in other countries' wars and conflicts against their will, accompanied by Finland losing its independence and its say in its own affairs. ("Young men would be sent to fight in conflicts outside Finland"

and “It’s better to stay outside an alliance, in order not to be compelled to send young conscripts to fight in wars.”) The cost of membership also gave cause for concern (“Membership would bring costs with it, as Finland would have to participate in others’ wars.”)

Why Finland should join NATO (N = 257)

The most frequently cited reasons stated in favour of joining NATO were justified by security, totalling 130 comments (“We would obtain assistance, more support and enhanced security”; “Membership of NATO would bring with it security in an unstable world”).

Russia and the threat posed by Russia were highlighted - 48 comments in total - (“A bigger risk for Finland is the one posed by the east” and “Hopefully, Finland would get some help if Putin were to make the decision to invade Finland.”)

Concerns about Finland not being able to manage on its own: 32 comments (“We wouldn’t be able to manage on our own.”)

Don’t know (N = 46)

Where respondents declined to give their views, they most frequently cited their ignorance on the subject or reported that they had not followed the issue in question: 27 comments (“I’m unable to comment; my background information is insufficient.”)

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