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International Pressure to Perform: Counterterrorism Policy Development in Finland

Leena Malkki

Network for European Studies, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

ABSTRACT

The major terrorist attacks in Western countries during the last fifteen years have had consequences way beyond the countries in which they have happened. The article provides a primary source-based account of the development of counterterrorism policy in Finland, which is one of those countries with a low national threat level. The article demonstrates the significant role that international pressure, through obligations, recommendations, and social learning, plays in developing national counterterrorist policies. The article calls also into question whether the pressure to comply with international pressure always contributes toward sound national counterterrorism policies that foster political resilience to terrorism.

The major terrorist attacks in Western countries during the last fifteen years have had consequences way beyond the countries in which they have happened. An important intermedia-tor and multiplier of these effects has been the conclusions that states and international organizations have reached in terms of what kind of action needs to be taken to prevent attacks in the future. As is well known, international cooperation in counterterrorism has intensified and broadened considerably. It has become virtually impossible for any country not to develop some kind of counterterrorist policies without risking its standing and reputa-tion within the international community. This has also made counterterrorism increasingly relevant for those countries that have not witnessed terrorist attacks on their soil.

There is also another development that has made countering terrorism a more important issue for these countries. Since 9/11, the scope of counterterrorist policies has broadened and now include a much stronger emphasis on early prevention than was the case before. This may be seen both in the obligations set down for states by, for example, the UN and the EU to criminalize a range of acts related to the preparation of and rendering assistance to terrorist attacks (e.g., incitement, training, recruitment, and financing) and the programs to prevent the radicalization into violent extremism that have burgeoned especially in Western Europe since 2005.¹ Following this logic, the state should not focus just on preventing attacks, but also search for ways to mitigate the risk of terrorism-related activities in the future.

CONTACT Leena Malkki  leena.malkki@helsinki.fi  Research Director, Network for European Studies, P.O. Box 54, 00014 University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland.

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The changing dynamics of international counterterrorism cooperation become particularly evident when one looks at developments through the lens of the periphery. In this article, Finland provides just such a lens. Finland is undeniably one of those European countries that have had the least experience of terrorism in recent decades. In the Global Terrorism Index, Finland is among those countries with a reading of zero. Zero is also officially the number of terrorist attacks in Finland after the Second World War.² At the same time, Finland is a member of all the major international organizations (with the exception of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO]) and aspires to be seen as a good international partner.

The article provides a historical account, based on primary sources, of the development of Finnish counterterrorism policy since the 1990s. It focuses on identifying the major drivers behind changes in this policy. Through this analysis, the article wishes to demonstrate the significant role that international pressure, through obligations, recommendations, and social learning, can play in developing national counterterrorist policies.

A second set of questions explored in this article is what we should think about this international pressure to perform, especially in the case of countries that have a low national threat level. International pressure to improve counterterrorism is commonly seen as a positive force. The key rationale for introducing international treaties in this field is to make sure that no state becomes a safe haven for terrorism due to its lax counterterrorist policies. While acknowledging the positive influences of international cooperation, the article also calls into question whether international pressure always points in the right direction, that is, toward better national counterterrorism policies. It should not be taken for granted that simply following the recommendations and pressure coming, for example, from the UN and the EU is always the soundest way to work toward a society and political system resilient in the face of terrorism at the national level. It might be argued that political resilience versus terrorism can sometimes also mean resilience against international pressure to excel in creating impressive counterterrorism policies.

The Changing Dynamics of Counterterrorism

Despite the large number of studies on terrorism and the political significance of counterterrorism, there are still surprisingly few studies that address the development of counterterrorism policy, especially from a theoretical perspective. There are various recent studies that create typologies of different counterterrorist tactics and approaches,³ aim at comparing the counterterrorist policies of different countries, assess the consequences or effectiveness of counterterrorism,⁴ analyze counterterrorism from the performative perspective,⁵ or document and analyze counterterrorist initiatives taken by international bodies.⁶ There is also a body of literature that takes a critical stand toward counterterrorist policies by criticizing the “War on Terror” for its excesses⁷ and analyzing how the idea of resilience in counterterrorism thinking, which is currently popular, is tied to neoliberal forms of governmentality.⁸

While many of these studies provide insights that are also helpful for this study, there is a limited number of studies that directly address the question of what drives counterterrorism policymaking. A common argument put forward in the literature is that nothing drives counterterrorism policymaking like a (spectacular) terrorist attack. It is common to link the development of a state’s counterterrorism policy to the terrorist threat that it is facing. This notion is also supported by empirical evidence about policy development at the national and

international level. For example, several researchers have noted that counterterrorism became a major policy area in the European Union only after the “wake-up call” served by the 9/11 attacks, even though there had been activity within the EU in that area already before that. In the years that followed, counterterrorism policymaking was characterized by “successive shock waves, propelled by major attacks, but gradually winding down once the sense of urgency had faded away.”⁹

Studies also point out that the development of counterterrorism policy is a highly politicized undertaking. In the aftermath of terrorist attacks, political leaders face strong pressure to show that they are both determined and capable of acting against the terrorist threat. It may well be that some of the measures taken against terrorism don’t necessarily always reflect the understanding of policymakers about what would “work” best against terrorism, but rather are influenced just as much by what seems politically beneficial. Studies point out that governments may have a tendency to prefer those counterterrorism measures that are observable to the public.¹⁰ The terrorist threat has also sometimes been seen as a good topic for playing politics more broadly. Policies and measures that may have not received enough support otherwise have been pushed through by connecting them to counterterrorism.¹¹

More generally, counterterrorism is always “a reflection of the domestic political process,” as Martha Crenshaw has highlighted.¹² The framing of the terrorism problem (e.g., as a crime or war) will influence which institutions are charged with countering it. Bringing an issue onto the political agenda, and the way that it is framed, is unavoidably linked to political calculations. Moreover, the way in which counterterrorism policy implementation is organized will have its effects on which actors strive to be part of it.

Another well-established observation in the research literature is that states do not develop their counterterrorist policies in a vacuum. Different countries’ counterterrorist policies influence each other and there is a small number of studies that explore these dynamics. One mechanism by which this influencing can happen is through the observed negative externalities that one country’s counterterrorist policy exerts on other countries.¹³ What researchers mean by this is that when one country tightens its defensive counterterrorist policies aiming at protecting potential domestic terrorist targets, other countries come under pressure to introduce similar kinds of measures in order not to become seen as a “soft target” in the eyes of those planning terrorist attacks. Another form of this argument claims that not all countries are equally important points of references, but that the states compare their policies in particular with those countries that face the same threat level.¹⁴

Counterterrorist policy drivers are not in place forever but may change over time as the political situation changes. This seems to have happened recently with regard to international influences over national counterterrorism policymaking. Recent literature suggests that the dynamics of counterterrorism policy have changed since 9/11 as international counterterrorist cooperation has intensified and broadened. This issue has not been systematically analyzed to date, but there are a few studies that point in this direction. If counterterrorism was ever simply countering terrorism, this is definitely not the case anymore. In a recent study, Elena Pokalova concludes that there is a difference between pre-9/11 and post-9/11 in terms of what drives states to adopt new counterterrorism legislation. Whereas the decision to adopt new legislation used to correlate with the number of terrorist organizations in the country, it is not a primary explaining factor anymore. Instead, after 9/11, the most significant predictor has been participation in the War on Terror and existing counterterrorism legislation.¹⁵

This same phenomenon is also apparent in Mariya Y. Omelicheva's study of Estonian counterterrorism policy. Like Finland, the terrorist threat in Estonia has been considered very low. Still, the country has adopted extensive counterterrorism measures in recent years, including taking part in international peacekeeping and counterterrorism operations, including those in Iraq. Omelicheva concludes that Estonia's counterterrorism activities derive from its membership in the EU and NATO and a commitment to contribute to cooperation within these contexts.¹⁶

The following analysis of the policy drivers of Finnish counterterrorism policy builds on these insights. It presents a historical analysis of the policy's development from the bottom up, aiming at documenting its different phases and the rationales behind the decisions that have been made. It is based on an analysis of a comprehensive and extensive collection of documents (policy programs, government reports, parliamentary records, ministerial speeches, news media sources, etc.) and interviews, conducted by the author, with key policymakers involved in the development of counterterrorism policy.

The Development of Counterterrorism Policy in Finland

The Finnish Security Intelligence Service has dealt with terrorist related issues since the late 1950s. The main context in which the threat of terrorism has usually arisen was the arranging of protection during state visits, which required up-to-date knowledge about the terrorist threat situation more widely in Europe and around the world. The resources directed at monitoring the terrorist threat were very small. In the 1970s, there was only one person whose time was fully allocated to that purpose. Even in the early 1980s, the staff of the terrorism section in the Finnish Security Intelligence Service consisted of only six intendants and a secretary.¹⁷

As these numbers indicate, at a time when many other European states were developing their counterterrorism policies to counter the threat of left-wing terrorist movements or Palestinian hijackings of airplanes, terrorism was still considered a very marginal issue in Finland. The terrorist threat only gained a more significant status in the 1990s. Counterterrorism as a separate policy area is an even more recent development.

The concept of a "counterterrorism policy" refers here to all legislation, policies, and functions that are explicitly linked to counterterrorism. The focus is on the development of domestic policies.¹⁸ The analysis starts with the 1990s when terrorism for the first time became an issue that was seen in broader terms, that is, more than just something that the police and immigration officials could deal with. Based on the changes in policy drivers, the measures adopted, and terrorist threat assessments, the development of Finnish counterterrorism policy can be roughly divided into four phases: (1) the introduction of the terrorist threat issue to security policy documents (1990s), (2) policy development as a result of international pressure (2001–2007), (3) the introduction of national policies (2008–2012), and (4) the politicization of counterterrorism (2013–).

Phase 1: The Introduction of the Terrorist Threat Issue to Security Policy Documents (1990s)

The roots of the development of counterterrorism into a separate policy area of its own can be traced back to the 1990s when the word found its way into key security related

documents.¹⁹ At that time, the direct terrorist threat to Finland was considered as minimal as it had been in previous decades. The impetus for developing counterterrorism policies came from another direction.

The development of counterterrorism policy has to be put into the context of a broader rewriting of Finnish foreign and security policy. In these years, Finland was adapting to the new security environment of the post-Cold War era.²⁰ The traditional narrow focus on military threats was replaced (or rather supplemented) by a “broad and comprehensive concept of security,”²¹ largely following the way in which security threats were conceived by many other Western states at the time. This meant that increasing attention was to be paid to so-called new threats. Terrorism entered the threat perceptions as part of this “package” of new threats, along with, for example, organized crime, the drug and illegal arms trade, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction,²² human rights violations, damage to infrastructure, information threats, disasters, environmental change, epidemics, and migration flows.²³ Typical of these new threats was the fact that they crossed state borders. Finnish security, especially when it came to these new threats, was seen as closely intertwined with European security. The foreign and security policy reports from this period also underlined the need for constructive cooperation in the new situation and that it was important for Finland as part of the West to do its share in countering these new threats.²⁴

The reinterpretation of threat perceptions can also be seen, according to Jarno Linnéll, as part of Finnish identity politics. During the Cold War, Finland was caught in an uneasy position between the eastern and the western blocs. Finland did not wish to be perceived as part of the east but, instead, preferred to present itself as a culturally Western but militarily neutral country. The proximity of the Soviet Union made it difficult for Finland to align itself fully with the West. After the end of the Cold War, Finland started increasingly to emphasise and deepen its connections and interdependence with Western states. The alignment of the threat perceptions with those of the Western states was a way of signaling that Finland belonged to the West.²⁵

The “upgrading” of terrorism as an issue of national security, however, did not lead to any significant investment in counterterrorism.²⁶ Nothing in the policy documents or parliamentary discussions indicates that any particular importance was attached to countering the threat of terrorism in Finland. The most visible change from the Finnish perspective was that international cooperation in counterterrorism intensified. What further intensified this change in orientation was the approaching Finnish EU Presidency in 1999. In the annual report of the Finnish Security Intelligence Service (Supo) for the year 1998, it was stated that:

A collective responsibility in countering terrorism has increased. When we intensify the cooperation with the world around us, we do not have a lot of independent discretion in whether or not to participate in the new countermeasures that create new responsibilities, even in the current situation in which terrorism is not an immediate problem for Finland.²⁷

This became all the more evident in the years after the 9/11 attacks.

Phase 2: Development as a Result of International Pressure (2001–2007)

After the 9/11 attacks, the attention directed at terrorism-related issues increased rapidly and dramatically in Finland. Over the next few years, terrorism gained a more central role in Finnish policymaking than before. Again, this was not due to changes in national threat

assessments. Already in the first evaluations one day after the attack, the prime minister reported that the attacks did not indicate that the security situation in Finland had changed. This view was affirmed several times by the Finnish Security Intelligence Service and key politicians over the course of the next few years, although it was argued that it was important to keep a close eye on developments.²⁸

Even though the attacks did not change these threat assessments, their aftermath had many different effects in Finland. One immediate effect was the tremendous increase in the workload of the Finnish Security Intelligence Service. This was mostly due to the number of international queries, which skyrocketed overnight. The situation also challenged the traditional methods of countering terrorism and pushed the service to renew its organization and operations. During 2001–2002, it was given more resources to fulfill its tasks, although the increase was very marginal compared to many other countries. The same goes for the qualitative change in the service's working methods.²⁹ What changed permanently was that counterterrorism became a field thoroughly and increasingly penetrated by intensive international cooperation, and counterterrorism became an issue that concerned various branches of the government.³⁰

The aftermath of the 9/11 attacks also brought counterterrorism issues before the Finnish Parliament like never before. This is illustrated by Figure 1, which shows the number of parliamentary issues (government proposals, written and oral questions, and so forth) that have dealt with terrorism in one way or another. Whereas during the previous decade, there had been in total four parliamentary issues in which terrorism was mentioned, the number of such issues was 19 in the year 2001 alone.

Most of these issues were either reports or legislation that can be traced back to international treaties and discussions. Shortly after the 9/11 attacks, Finland expressed its solidarity with the United States and strong support for international cooperation.³¹ It was announced that Finland would implement all those measures demanded by international treaties. This was very predictable, because being seen as a good international partner had been a long-standing principle of Finnish foreign policy. It was indeed this commitment that was the main driving force behind counterterrorism policymaking in the first years after 2001. Counterterrorism remained an issue that was most of all connected with foreign and security policy commitments.

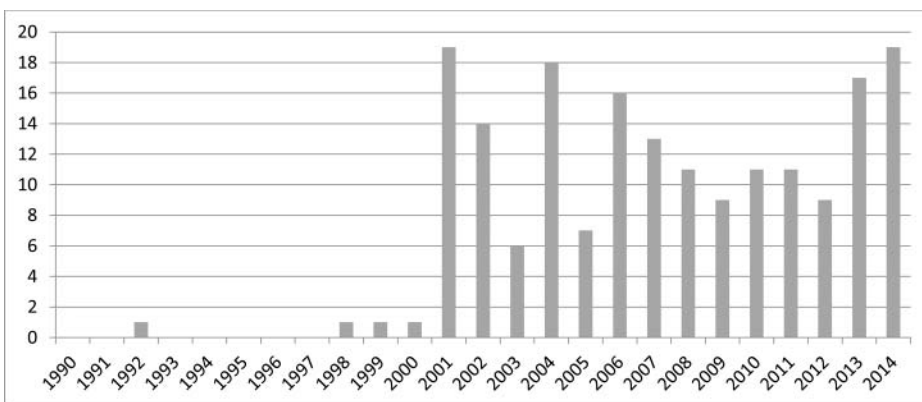


Figure 1. The number of terrorism-related issues in the Finnish Parliament, 1990–2014.

The most visible and long-lasting counterterrorism measure adopted in these years was the introduction of a separate chapter 34a on terrorist offenses in the Criminal Code in early 2003 to comply with the *EU Council framework decision on combating terrorism* (2002/475/JHA). Although an overwhelming majority of the acts (like hostage taking, bomb attacks, assault, or murder) that the framework decision criminalized were already addressed in other sections of the Criminal Code, there was no legislation that would distinguish a terrorist offense from similar kinds of offenses committed without a terrorist intent.³² Several other bills based on international treaties, EU directives, and framework decisions were passed in these years, dealing, among other things, with the financing of terrorism, extradition, port security, data retention, transportation of dangerous goods, and police powers.

Most of these issues passed through parliament without opposition. All the political parties agreed that it was important to be a good partner and to meet one's international obligations. Overall, although the attitude of Finnish politicians was positive, they were largely disinterested in developing a counterterrorism policy. There was a strong consensus that Finland should not be allowed to become a safe haven for terrorists, but no party adopted counterterrorism as one of its flagship projects. A general concern among politicians and policymakers, including the Finnish Security Intelligence Service, was to avoid spreading fear among the population. In the first Internal Security Programme of 2004, it was stated that "the fear of terrorism may become larger than the likelihood [of a terrorist attack] and, in the worst case, it may become a factor limiting people's lives and activities."³³ This reflected the traditional message that the government had communicated to citizens during any crisis—stay calm, the authorities are up to date and taking care of the situation.

There is also evidence that the European Union (EU) and other states were not always completely pleased with Finland's calm and restrained attitude toward counterterrorism. The United States expressed its criticism of Finland's contribution to the War on Terror. Jarno Limnéll relates in his book how the United States tried to convince Finland about the danger of violent Islamism and in particular criticized Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's mellow statements after the Madrid attacks. If the United States had had its way, Vanhanen would have clearly stated that a similar attack could have happened in Finland too.³⁴ Moreover, even though Finland has been relatively conscientious in implementing international obligations, it has had its share of criticism from the EU. In the first EU counterterrorism peer review report, Finland was criticized for its insufficient toolbox for preventing terrorist crimes.

Finnish politicians and policymakers, for their part, were occasionally lamenting the speed and extent of new initiatives coming from the EU and other international bodies. In those cases where the new legislation and measures provoked any debate, a common criticism of these international initiatives was whether the same kind of measures that were found in other countries that faced a considerably more serious terrorism threat were really needed in Finland. Such claims, together with concerns over the seemingly ever expanding powers given to the police in the name of countering terrorism, were expressed in parliament when, for example, the changes requested in the EU peer review report were implemented.³⁵ These international obligations and recommendations were also sometimes criticized because it was believed that they would lead to unnecessarily complicated bureaucracy, heavy costs or processes, and legislation that did not fit very well with the Finnish system. For example, the first drafts of the aforementioned EU framework decision that introduced this terrorism legislation were met with criticism because they included such severe

sentences and vague expressions that it would have been extremely difficult to incorporate them into the Finnish Criminal Code.³⁶ When implementing these international obligations, the guiding line was that criminalization was not to be extended any further than was necessary.³⁷ Consequently, Finland is among those Western liberal democracies that have introduced the least restrictions on privacy rights, procedural rights, and immigration and foreigners laws.³⁸ Also in the context of international cooperation, the Finnish authorities repeatedly emphasized, sometimes with a concerned tone, the importance of respecting individual rights and freedoms in countering terrorism.

Throughout the 2000s, even though terrorism became a much more important political question in Finland than it had been before, counterterrorism remained an issue that was not openly politicized in the sense that it became an issue of public political contestation or that a reference to a terrorist threat was used to legitimate further initiatives beyond those required by international treaties. The policy's development was largely driven by public administration. In very few cases did counterterrorist policymaking receive more publicity and involve visible politicking.³⁹ It seems safe to conclude that Finnish counterterrorism activities in these years consisted of a conglomeration of measures that were taken to fulfill international obligations, respond to other kinds of international pressure, or to address limited practical concerns.

Phase 3: Introduction of National Policies (2008–2012)

During the latter part of the 2000s, Finnish counterterrorism policymaking began to acquire new dimensions. While international obligations had largely driven policymaking up until then, national initiatives now began to increase. Since 2008, Finland has adopted a number of measures that have not been required by any international agreement. Furthermore, counterterrorism started increasingly to penetrate internal security strategies.

The first signs of this development were visible in the Programme for Internal Security for the years 2008–2012. One of the actions in the program was to develop a national counterterrorist strategy for Finland. Another objective mentioned in the program was to develop ways of preventing and detecting violent radicalization at an early stage.⁴⁰

The first national counterterrorist strategy was approved in the spring of 2010. In the first pages of the strategy, it is stated that “the underlying theme of this strategy is to maintain the high level of state activity and to further develop cooperation and coordination.”⁴¹ The desire to improve cooperation and clarify the roles of different branches of government seems to be one of the major reasons for drafting the strategy. This was partly linked to international developments. As terrorism-related issues penetrated the agendas of various policy sectors, an increasing number of Finnish policymakers and politicians participated in international working groups and negotiations. This created a challenge at home—how to make sure that all those representing Finland had all the information they needed and that they were aware of Finland's stand on various matters.

While the purpose of the strategy was expressed in administrative terms, it went beyond just improving cooperation between different authorities. The strategy included action to introduce amendments to current terrorism legislation that were not required by any international treaty. It was stated that the existing legislation on terrorist crimes should be revised so that financing the directing and training of a terrorist group, as well as the recruiting of individuals into such groups was also criminalized. By way of further justification, it was

mentioned that such acts were already criminalized in several other EU countries. These demands were linked to types of activities that had been detected or suspected in Finland, but, due to current legislation, it was difficult for the authorities to investigate them properly and eventually press charges.⁴² The amendments were eventually approved in by parliament in December 2014.

This decision to expand terrorist legislation represented a break from Finland's earlier line of doing only the minimum that was required to meet the obligations set down by international treaties and EU framework decisions.⁴³ This policy change can be linked to changing assessments of the terrorist threat to Finland. Toward the end of the 2000s, the authorities started to view the terrorist threat as increasingly relevant to Finland. The direct threat of terrorist attacks was still considered low, but whether it would remain this way was now questioned. There were two main reasons for this.

First, the threat of terrorism seemed to approach Finland geographically. When looking for signs of things to come with regard to political activism and extremism, the Finnish authorities have traditionally turned their eyes toward other Nordic countries (and Germany). Around these years, the authorities started to emphasize that the number and seriousness of planned terrorist attacks in Nordic countries was increasing. The planned terrorist attacks revealed in other Nordic countries had already been mentioned in the Finnish Security Intelligence Service's annual report for 2005⁴⁴ and had been underlined again in the national counterterrorism strategy five years later. The Danish cartoon crisis was specifically mentioned as an example of "how a European country can quickly become a target for hatred among radical groups."⁴⁵

Another incident that undoubtedly shaped views on the terrorist threat was the suicide bombing attempt in Stockholm in December 2010.⁴⁶ A couple of days after the attack, President Tarja Halonen stated that it was only a matter of time before something similar to that attack happened in Finland. The same point was made by Alexander Stubb, the minister of foreign affairs. The statements differed significantly from the earlier announcements emphasizing the improbability of an attack in the country.⁴⁷

Second, the Finnish Security Intelligence Service started to bring the government's attention to the fact that the terrorist situation in Finland was already changing. According to its assessments, the number of individuals who had ties with terrorist organizations was increasing in Finland and these ties were becoming ever closer. What kind of developments these assessments were exactly based on, is difficult to say, because the Finnish Security Intelligence Service has been very sparing in its comments. What we do know is that a Finnish citizen of Moroccan origin, known for his strong connections to *jihadist* networks, came back to Finland after having been expelled from Sweden in 2008.⁴⁸ The first terrorism-related case that led to a pretrial investigation and eventually a court case started around this time as well. Four individuals were eventually charged with financing and/or recruiting for al-Shabaab and given a suspended prison sentence.⁴⁹

During this period, the Finnish Security Intelligence Service started actively communicating its concerns to political leaders. The message communicated to political leaders was that while future threat scenarios were not that different to those in other western European countries, the resources allocated to countering terrorism were severely lagging behind. The Finnish Security Intelligence Service also sought to bring these issues into the public debate. In June 2009, in a highly unusual and visible op-ed, the head of the service Ilkka Salmi, together with the head of the Finnish Immigration Service Jorma Vuorio claimed that the

days of trial and error in Finnish immigration policy were over and that without significantly heavier investment in integration, Finland would face a more serious terrorism situation in the future.⁵⁰

Changes in the security environment also challenged the working methods of the Finnish Security Intelligence Service. Under the leadership of Ilkka Salmi, the service started to talk about pushing the first lines of defense further away from Finland. As part of this strategy, the service broadened its operations by stationing its employees to Finnish embassies to selected African states. The objective was to prevent potential terrorists from traveling to Finland. While this was not an extraordinary counterterrorist measure as such, it was a historical change in the functions of the Finnish Security Intelligence Service. It was the first time that the service had extended its operations beyond Finland's national borders.⁵¹

Besides the aforementioned National Counterterrorism Strategy, the Programme for Internal Security for the years 2008–2012 also included developing a plan to prevent radicalization into terrorism. Here, international influences are very clear. This idea came from policymakers who had closely followed developments and discussions elsewhere in Europe after the 2005 London attacks. The preparatory documents drafted in 2007 highlighted the fact that the situation in Finland at that moment was good, but that one should take seriously the possibility that violent radicalization similar to that which had already taken place in several other European countries would also happen in the future in Finland.⁵² This part of the program was, however, not implemented. This was because it was decided at ministerial level that it was not (yet) the right time to start such activities. The reason for this was that there were no signs of significant radicalization and the introduction of the program at that moment had the potential to do more harm than good.⁵³

When the time came to draft the next Programme for Internal Security in 2011, the time was now considered ripe for counterradicalization efforts. The first national strategy for preventing violent extremism was published in June 2012.⁵⁴ No international body had demanded such an action plan to be introduced in Finland, although “prevent” is one of the four pillars of the EU's counterterrorism strategy.

Like the national counterterrorism strategy, the action plan to prevent violent extremism also strongly focuses on improving cooperation and information exchange between the various authorities involved, as well as on developing situational awareness. At the time of writing, local cooperative networks between different authorities are developing different ways of conducting (individual level) interventions. It is also worth noting that the action plan is not limited to violent *jihadist* radicalization only. It also includes violent extremism linked to the far right and far left, as well as school shootings.⁵⁵ In practice, though, the main focus has been on *jihadist* radicalization.

Having said all that, it is important to stress that even though the initiative for these national strategies lay in the national level, these developments were also closely tied to international cooperation and Finnish foreign policy considerations. In many ways, these national strategies have made the influence and extent of international pressure and cooperation even more visible. Even if certain policies have only been recommended, their implementation is often monitored and reported in the international level. Willingness to be seen as a good and reliable international partner can be a strong incentive to comply with the recommendations.

The national counterterrorism strategy is a case in point. Even though there was no international-level obligation to introduce a national strategy, there was definitely strong pressure

to do so, through recommendations coming from, for example, the EU level and in the form of expectations that were voiced in international meetings. Policymakers have conflicting recollections about whether EU peer review reports recommended that Finland introduce a national counterterrorist strategy. Having a national strategy, in any case, unquestionably made it easier for Finland to look good at EU meetings. This was well captured by one key Finnish policymaker in an interview with this author:

When you sit around the table in an EU meeting and say that you have done nothing, because you have not considered the [terrorist] threat to be that serious, well, you kind of feel like a backwoodsman. This is also true for ministers. When they talk about these issues at the EU level and it comes up that you have not done anything, well, your country gets placed in a certain category of states. As regards preventing violent extremism, Western European and other Nordic states have actively developed their policies while Eastern European countries are in a different league. When you have a national strategy, it is easier to show that you are doing something.⁵⁶

The influence of international debates, obligations, and recommendations is also visible in Finland's counterterrorism strategy. In the most recent version of the strategy (2014), a lot of space is given to going through the international counterterrorism fora in which Finland participates. Looking at the list of actions to be taken, one cannot escape the impression that their origins lie at least as much in international fora as in national needs. For example, it is hard to see at the moment why improving coordination in chemical, biological, radioactive, nuclear, and explosive materials (CBRNE)-related matters would be a national priority. This does not mean that the actions would not be beneficial from the national perspective too. Rather, it testifies to the fact that international commitments continue to drive the policy agenda in this field to a significant degree.

International influences are also evident in more indirect ways such as in descriptions of changes in the terrorist threat, the analysis of the causes of violent radicalization, and how terrorism and radicalization into violent extremism should be countered all these draw heavily on international debates and "authoritative knowledge." EU-level cooperation, for example within the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN), seems to play a particularly important role. It has been common to criticize the EU for being an inefficient counterterrorism actor. From the Finnish perspective, however, it is impossible to miss the strong effect that peer interaction and social learning have had in national-level policymaking.

Phase 4: Politicization of Counterterrorism (2013-)

When the aforementioned national programs were introduced in 2010 and 2012, respectively, they were hardly even noticed in the media. Interest in counterterrorism issues was already increasing, but it was still limited. It almost seemed like counterterrorism was an issue that politicians, with a couple of rare exceptions, explicitly avoided touching on. What may have restrained the debate on counterterrorism is that open debate about issues related to crises and security have traditionally been considered politically unconstructive.⁵⁷

Around 2013, the dynamics and content of the public debate about terrorism and counterterrorism started to change. These issues are now much more often commented upon by politicians and discussed more broadly in the media. A major reason for this is the flow of foreign (terrorist) fighters from Finland to Syria and Iraq. At the end of 2014, it was estimated that over 50 people have left Finland to travel to Syria or Iraq since 2012. The number is high per capita, although it needs to be kept in mind that the figure includes all those who

have left for Syria and Iraq and not only those who are known to be or suspected of being foreign fighters. It is not clear in every case what those who have left have ended up doing in Syria or Iraq, but the Finnish Security Intelligence Service believes that about 75 percent of those who have left have sought to become fighters in the ranks of jihadist groups. It is believed that most of them have joined armed groups such as ISIS or Jabat al-Nusra. Besides Syria, some people have also left to go and fight in Somalia.⁵⁸

These numbers appear even more striking when they are contrasted with the very limited degree of radical Islamist activities in Finland before the Syrian conflict. The foreign fighter phenomenon, together with the steadily increasing number of individuals interested in violent radical Islamism, has made the Finnish Security Intelligence Service change its publicly communicated assessment of the terrorist threat for the first time. The threat of attacks by terrorist organizations proper is still considered low, but the service is increasingly worried that individuals or small groups of radical Islamists may commit attacks in Finland, either on their own or with support from abroad. In the fall of 2014, four people suspected of terrorist crimes were arrested, most probably in connection with the situation in Syria.⁵⁹ National Police Commissioner Mikko Paatero stated in an interview that “it is... only a question of time before an act of brutal violence takes place in our country. Thinking in any other way would be childish.”⁶⁰ Besides violent attacks inspired by radical Islamism, the authorities are concerned about the possibility of school rampage shootings or other kinds of lone actor attacks.

During the last two years, issues related to terrorism and counterterrorism have become regular topics in the public debate. It was largely during 2014 that counterterrorism and counter-radicalization issues for the first time became widely accepted as questions relevant to Finland in their own right. The foreign fighter phenomenon has led to a lively (for Finland) debate on what kind of implications it may have for Finland in the long term and what kind of measures should be taken to counter it. The discussion has particularly revolved around what could be done to prevent people from leaving for Syria and Iraq and what should be done with those who return. There is a noticeable shift away from developing capabilities to counter terrorism and violent extremism in general toward adopting more specific measures to deal with particular questions, in this case, the foreign fighter phenomenon.

The powers and resources granted to counterterrorism have also been critically evaluated. The police have already been given more funding for countering terrorism.⁶¹ Most of this funding is directed at improving the equipment of special intervention units. Much less attention and resources have been directed at, for example, improving intelligence gathering. Counterterrorism needs are one reason behind current evaluations as to whether the authorities should be given powers for electronic surveillance and intelligence outside Finland. Unlike authorities in many other EU countries, the Finnish authorities do not yet have such powers or capabilities. While the initiative has strong political support, it also has strong opposition.⁶²

Another new feature of the last two years is that the government has been openly criticized for not doing enough to counter terrorism. Representatives of the populist Finns party have been most vocal in this respect. They have blamed the government and the authorities for not taking the threat of radical Islamism seriously, called radical Islamism the biggest security threat in Finland at the moment, and demanded stricter measures to counter terrorism, including outlawing Islamist organizations, banning radical Islamist preachers from entering the country, and revising legislation on immigration and citizenship so that people

with ties to terrorism can be more efficiently deported and prevented from entering the country in the first place as immigrants.⁶³

Support for broadening counterterrorism legislation and for measures against terrorism and radicalization into violent extremism has clearly increased. This seems to be especially the case with measures designed to prevent attacks and/or radicalization. While only a couple of years ago, policymakers had to put quite a lot of effort into getting relevant actors motivated to participate in policy planning and implementation, this is not the case now.

At the same time, the influence of international debates on counterterrorism and counter-radicalization continues to be strong and policymakers actively seek out lessons to be learned from abroad. New international obligations and recommendations are also being introduced, the latest ones being those deriving from the UN Security Council Resolution 2178 and the new additional protocol to the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism. These documents deal with criminalizing traveling abroad with terrorist intentions. Even though Finnish attitudes toward counterterrorism have changed, the friction between international recommendations and national evaluations has not completely disappeared. Again, it strongly looks like the legislative changes recommended in these treaties will be implemented, but if it was solely a matter for Finland, it is far from certain that such changes would be introduced.

International Pressure and Fostering Political Resilience to Terrorism

By now, it should be evident that international pressure and cooperation in developing counterterrorism policies and legislation has clearly influenced Finnish counterterrorism policymaking. It turns out to have been the most important policy driver throughout the whole period analyzed in this article. The question that we will now turn to is what we should think about it.

The attitude of Finnish authorities and policymakers toward international cooperation and its influence on Finnish policy has generally been positive. They seem to have been very aware of international pressure to perform, and this pressure has been seen largely as a good thing. It seems to have helped overcome some of the issues that countries with a low domestic threat assessment face. As politicians have largely been uninterested in counterterrorism issues, international obligations and pressures have provided the necessary driving force for policy development.

Furthermore, as the need to be a good international partner is widely accepted, international obligations and recommendations have provided strong legitimation for introducing counterterrorism legislation and measures. This may also partly explain why counterterrorism has attracted so little political attention. Meeting international expectations in itself gave the impression that Finland was dealing with the terrorist threat responsibly. This state of affairs has also allowed policymakers to keep a low profile in counterterrorism policymaking and thereby avoid stoking fears among the public that there might be terrorist threats out there, which the security authorities were keeping from the public.

What is seen as a positive or negative development, always depends on one's point of view. Here, the influence of international pressure is approached from the point of view of political resilience: Has international pressure helped Finland draft a counterterrorism policy that has mitigated the threat of terrorism in Finland and that is in harmony with Finnish political and legal culture? While it is too early to reach any definite conclusions about this,

and evaluating the role of different factors in policy processes is inherently difficult, it is possible to make some observations.

One benefit undoubtedly enjoyed by Finland until very recently is the fact that it has had the opportunity to prepare and discuss new laws and measures without political pressure. As one representative of the police said in an interview with the author, “these things need to be done in peace time.”⁶⁴ More typically, calls for new legislation and other measures arise and are dealt with in the immediate aftermath of a terrorist attack. With all the shock, feelings of insecurity, and political pressure to prevent further attacks, that is hardly the best time to have an informed and level-headed debate about the pros and cons of proposed laws and measures. On the basis of this study’s findings, it seems very unlikely that Finland would have invested nearly as much on developing its national counterterrorism policy and introducing legislation as early as it did were it not for international pressure to do so.

However, international obligations and expectations have arguably in some cases limited the ability of Finland as a country to consider these issues, even though counterterrorism policy still remains largely a matter for sovereign states. The Finnish legal tradition and international obligations have sometimes collided and led to the introduction of legislation that does not fully meet the criteria usually set for law making. Secondly, there have also been conflicts between international expectations and national traditions when it comes the way, or style, in which the government communicates with the public. A typically Finnish feature of communicating with the public in times of crisis is the desire to avoid unnecessarily alarming the public. The authorities have been very restrained in their use of the term “crisis” when describing various challenging situations in the first place and even more sparing in the use of the word terrorism.⁶⁵ From an international perspective, this sometimes seems to have been interpreted as not taking the threat of terrorism sufficiently seriously.

The most significant concerns are, however, related to policies that are designed to prevent radicalization into terrorism. As mentioned at the beginning of this article, counterterrorism nowadays includes a much stronger preventative element than before. This means, among other things, that even countries that do not have a “terrorism problem” are expected to introduce policies designed to counter violent extremism. Even though it is not always stated explicitly, it is commonly assumed that the earlier one starts with preventative measures against violent radicalization and terrorism, the better. The rationale for this seems to be that it is best to intervene at an early stage when dealing with adverse developments.

One testimony of the pressure to develop preventative policies is the fact that the discussion about introducing such policies started in Finland before any significant radicalization was observed in the country. One might conclude from this that Finland was in a rather good position—the country had a real opportunity to design a genuinely preventative policy.

While countries that get engaged early in this way are often applauded for their far-sightedness, there has been much less debate about the problematics that “starting early” may entail. How Finland got started with its program for preventing violent extremism provides a good window into thinking about these problematics. As already mentioned, the idea of beginning to develop such a program was discussed in 2007. However, at that time, there were no clear signs of violent radicalization and it was considered too early to start such a program. In retrospect, however, it may look as if Finland missed an opportunity here. Soon after 2007, the situation in Finland became more alarming. Since then, the number of individuals who the Finnish Security Intelligence Service considers “risk persons”⁶⁶ has multiplied.

An inherent problem with early prevention is that it is unavoidably based on some kind of prediction about future developments. One could reasonably argue that based on what was happening in other European countries, the direction in which the situation in Finland would develop should have been evident to Finnish policymakers in 2007. This argument is not without its problems. If one looks at other recent transnational waves of violent extremism (e.g., the so-called New Left wave of the 1960s–1980s and far right extremism in the 1990s), their effects in Finland have been very mellow.

One danger that international cooperation can bring derives from the fact that security practices that aim at preventing terrorism and preempting terrorist plans require some kind of construction of terrorist threat scenarios. Marieke de Goede has called this process “premediation” by which she means “imagining a variety of futures... in order to enable action in the present.”⁶⁷

With intensive international orientation, it is possible that national security premediation becomes to be based on an excessive and/or deterministic projection of the international imagining of the terrorist threat onto the national context without sufficient consideration of local variables. This process of imagining is not inconsequential as it also has a performative element. As De Goede writes, “[t]his does not mean that disastrous imagined futures will inevitably play out, but it does mean that the imagination of some scenarios over others, the visualization of some futures and not others, entails profoundly political work that enables and constrains political decision-making in the present.”⁶⁸

Therefore, it does not seem warranted to assume outright that the “the earlier the better” approach in preventing terrorism would automatically lead to increased resilience to terrorism. Preventing violent radicalization is not necessarily a business that follows a “better sorry than safe” logic either. Critical literature on counterradicalization warns that preventative programs may end up producing counterproductive effects and lead, for example, to the “suspected communities” phenomenon.⁶⁹ Any preventative action unavoidably requires some level of premediation and attempts at guessing who might be in danger of being radicalized. The weaker the signals are, the more imagination this process entails. There is a delicate balance between constructive predictions and seeing ghosts where there are none, and thereby even bringing them into existence.

Furthermore, the situation in which Finland developed and is developing its counterradicalization programs continues to be very different from countries such as the United Kingdom and the Netherlands in which significant radicalization had already taken place. Most attempts to prevent violent extremism are based on cases where significant radical milieus were already in existence or at least strongly in the making. To which degree lessons drawn from preventing violent radicalization in these kinds of contexts are applicable to a context in which there is no violent radicalization to speak of, is a question that has been seldom addressed. Another largely unexplored question is at what point it would be best to start trying to prevent violent extremism.

An excessively international orientation in counterterrorism may also lead to paying less attention to domestic history and developments. In this respect, the policy discussions around preventing violent extremism in Finland have had a curious dynamic. Policy documents often note that there has been little political violence in Finland in the post-Second World War period and that the scale of violent radicalization remains limited compared with many other countries. Little attention, however, has been given to what has made Finland such a peaceful place in terms of political violence. The search for useful lessons to be

learnt about terrorism is almost without exception concentrated on examining the experiences of other European countries, which nowadays are faced with and trying to tackle much more serious threats arising from violent radicalization, rather than on analyzing Finland's own history.

This international orientation also carries the risk that, with transnational threats in the limelight, other violent threats of a more domestic nature are left in the shadows. If one looks at violent acts in Finland in the post-9/11 period and evaluates the threat in terms of the number of casualties and the number of plots uncovered, the most relevant threat is undeniably school rampage shootings. To be sure, extensive policies have been developed to prevent school rampage shootings in the future. However, they have received much less political and public attention than one might have expected.

Conclusion

The purpose of this article was to analyze the impact of international cooperation on the dynamics of the development of a national counterterrorism policy by looking at it through the lens of a periphery. Finland's experience clearly shows the powerful role of international cooperation in counterterrorism efforts. It is not only based on obligations, but also works through peer pressure and social learning. Becoming a safe haven for terrorism is something that most countries want to avoid, but foreign policy considerations and a desire to be seen as a reliable international partner seem to have been at least as important motivations for developing counterterrorism policies. It is true that issues related to counterterrorism still remain largely within the remit national sovereign states. Having said that, counterterrorism has become such an important issue and a field that is almost overflowing with recommendations, reporting to international institutions, and peer pressure that there are clear incentives to do more than the bare minimum. Finland's example clearly shows that counterterrorism has also increasingly become an issue for countries with a low threat level. By providing an empirically based case study, the article has hopefully contributed toward understanding the policy dynamics in such countries.

The article has also underlined the need for critical thinking about whether the pressure to comply with international obligations and expectations always contributes toward sound national counterterrorism policies that foster political resilience in the face of terrorism. This is a particularly acute question for countries like Finland where the national threat level is considered to be low. There has been very little debate about what constitutes a proportionate counterterrorism policy in such countries. In developing their policies, they face some questions that those countries with a higher threat level do not face. To what degree are the models and practices developed in countries with higher threat levels applicable? How should, or can, one mobilize support for developing counterterrorism in the absence of a significant domestic threat? How and when should one start to try to prevent violent extremism? Is genuine, early prevention really a feasible and realistic option and worth the risks that it may entail?

Notes

1. Marja Lehto, *International Responsibility for Terrorist Attacks: A Shift Towards More Indirect Forms of Responsibility* (Rovaniemi: Lapland University Press, 2008); Rik Coolsaet, "EU

- Counterterrorism Strategy: Value Added or Chimera?" *International Affairs* 86(4) (2010). See also Marieke de Goede, "The Politics of Preemption and the War on Terror in Europe," *European Journal of International Relations* 14(1) (2008), pp. 161–185; Marieke de Goede, Stephanie Simon, and Marijn Hoijtink, "Performing Preemption," *Security Dialogue* 45(5) (2014), pp. 411–422.
2. What qualifies as a "terrorist attack" is always a matter of definition. There are some minor attacks that could qualify as such, such as the firebomb attack against the Turkish embassy in 2008. In Finland, the attack was not branded as an act of terrorism, but as an act of sabotage. The Global Terrorism Database lists seven attacks for Finland. Most of these were bomb attacks against government institutions, which have been connected to organized crime.
 3. For example, Ronald Crelinsten, "Perspectives on Counterterrorism: From Stovepipes to a Comprehensive Approach," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 8(1) (2014); Teun van Dongen, "Mapping Counterterrorism: A Categorisation of Policies and the Promise of Empirically Based, Systematic Comparisons," *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 3(2) (2010); Todd Sandler and Kevin Siqueira, "Global Terrorism: Deterrence versus Pre-emption," *Canadian Journal of Economics* 39(4) (2006), pp. 1370–1387.
 4. Cynthia Lum and Leslie W. Kennedy (eds.), *Evidence-Based Counter-Terrorism Policy* (New York: Springer 2012); Robert J. Art and Louise Richardson, eds., *Terrorism and Counterterrorism: Lessons from the Past* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2007); Yonah Alexander, ed., *Counterterrorism Strategies: Successes and Failures of Six Nations* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2006); Martha Crenshaw (ed.), *Consequences of Counterterrorism* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2009).
 5. Beatrice de Graaf, *Evaluating Counterterrorism Performance: A Comparative Study* (London & New York: Routledge, 2011).
 6. For example, Oldrich Bures, *EU Counterterrorism Policy: A Paper Tiger?* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011); Javier Argomaniz, *The EU and Counter-Terrorism: Politics, Polity and Policies after 9/11* (London: Routledge, 2011); Raphael Bosson, *The Evolution of EU Counter-Terrorism: European Security Policy after 9/11* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013); Jane Boulden & Thomas G. Weiss, *Terrorism and the UN: Before and After September 11* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004).
 7. For example, John Mueller, *Overblown: How Politicians and the Terrorism Industry Inflate National Security Threats, and Why We Believe Them* (New York: Free Press, 2006); Richard Jackson, *Writing the War on Terrorism: Language, Politics and Counter-Terrorism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005).
 8. For example, Jonathan Joseph, "Resilience as Embedded Neoliberalism: A Governmentality Approach," *Resilience* 1(1) (2013).
 9. Coolsaet, "EU Counterterrorism Strategy," p. 858.
 10. Ethan Bueno de Mesquita, "Politics and the Suboptimal Provision of Counterterror," *International Organization* 61(1) (2007).
 11. See, for example, George Kassimeris (ed.), *Playing Politics with Terrorism: A User's Guide* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008). Using the opportunity window opened by elevated concerns about terrorism to push forward issues with links to terrorism is discussed in several articles, for example, with regard to the EU action plan on combating terrorism in Raphael Bosson, "The Action Plan for Combating Terrorism: A Flawed Instrument of EU Security Governance," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 46(1) (2008).
 12. Martha Crenshaw, "Counterterrorism Policy and the Political Process," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 24 (2001), p. 329.
 13. See, for example, Todd Sandler and Harvey E. Lapan, "The Calculus of Dissent: An Analysis of Terrorists' Choice of Targets," *Synthese* 76(2) (1988); Sandler and Siqueira, "Global Terrorism."
 14. Eric Neumayer, Thomas Plümper, and Mariaelisa Epifanio, "The 'Peer-Effect' in Counterterrorist Policies," *International Organisation* 68 (2014).
 15. Elena Pokalova, "Legislative Responses to Terrorism: What Drives States to Adopt New Counterterrorism Legislation?," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 27(3) (2015).
 16. Maria Y. Omelicheva, "Reference Group Perspective on State Behavior: A Case Study of Estonia's Counterterrorism Policies," *Europe-Asia Studies* 61(3) (2009).

17. On the first decades of counterterrorism in Finland, see Christian Jokinen, *Terrorismista ja sen torjunnasta: Suojelupoliisi ja kansainvälinen terrorismi 1958–2004* (Turku: Painosalama 2015), pp. 52–246.
18. This means that, for example, Finland's engagement in Afghanistan and relations with the United States are not discussed here.
19. To be precise, terrorism was mentioned (to my knowledge) for the first time in a key policy document outlining security threats in the mid-1980s when these reports started to pay more attention to military threats that were less serious than wars (Jarno Limnell, *Suomen uhkakuvapolitiikka 2000-luvun alussa*. National Defence University, Department of Strategic and Defence Studies Series 1: Strategic Research No 29 (Helsinki: Edita Prima, 2009), p. 215). While this development can also be seen in the light of the changing security environment, the shift toward new conceptions of security really came about with the 1995 report mentioned in the text.
20. The development may also be connected to Finland's accession to the European Union in 1995. According to Teemu Palosaari's study on the Europeanization of Finnish foreign and security policy, the change in threat perceptions cannot be seen as a result of Finland's membership as such. Rather, joining the European Union was part of a larger process of adaptation to the new security environment. His study provides a good overview of the development of Finnish foreign policy and state identity in the 1990s and 2000s. See Teemu Palosaari, *The Art of Adaptation: A Study on the Europeanization of Finland's Foreign and Security Policy* (Tampere: TAPRI, 2011), pp. 120–125.
21. Turvallisuus muuttuvassa maailmassa. Suomen turvallisuuspolitiikan suuntalinjat. Valtioneuvoston selonteko eduskunnalle 6 June 1995, pp. 5–6.
22. Euroopan turvallisuuskehitys ja Suomen puolustus. Valtioneuvoston selonteko eduskunnalle 17.3.1997, p. 13.
23. Finnish Security and Defence Policy 2001. Report by the Government to Parliament on 13 June 2001, p. 13.
24. Limnell, *Suomen uhkakuvapolitiikka 2000-luvun alussa*, pp. 236–237.
25. *Ibid.*, pp. 235–242, 377–380.
26. The contradiction between a low national threat level and the degree of importance attached to terrorism as a strategic threat also prevailed after 9/11. See, for example, Mirrka Kreis, *Maailmanpolitiikan pyörteissä: Kansainvälisen terrorismin torjunnan suomalainen strategiaproessi riskienhallinnan näkökulmasta*. Tutkimusraportti 1/2007 (Suojelupoliisi, 2006).
27. Suojelupoliisi, *Vuosikertomus 1998*. At this point, the agency was still using the name “Finnish Security Police” in English, which is a direct translation of its name in Finnish. The translation was later changed into “Finnish Security Intelligence Service.” In this article, the current translation is used consistently throughout the text to avoid confusion. The agency's name in Finnish has stayed the same throughout the entire period discussed here.
28. For example, Pääministerin ilmoitus Yhdysvaltojen tapahtumien johdosta, 13 September 2001 (PI2/2001 vp); Suojelupoliisi, *Vuosikertomus*, years 2002–2007, “Supo: Suomessa ei ole terrorismiuhkaa,” *Helsingin Sanomat* 13 September 2001, “Suojelupoliisi perkasi kytkentöjä Suomessa,” *Helsingin Sanomat* 11 September 2002.
29. Jokinen, *Terrorismista ja sen torjunnasta*, pp. 286–287, 294–299; Matti Simola, *Ratakatu 12: Suojelupoliisi 1949–2009* (Hämeenlinna: WSOY, 2009), pp. 260–262.
30. This is reflected, for example, in the SITRA report on risk management in Finland. *Riskien hallinta Suomessa: Esiselvitys*. Sitran raportteja 23 (Helsinki: Sitra, 2002).
31. For example, “Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism; Statement by Finland 3 October 2001,” Statement by H. E. Marjatta Rasi, Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations. 56th Session of the United Nations, General Assembly, Agenda item 166.
32. On the content of the legislation, see, for example, Tuomas Portaankorva, “Terrorismin määrittelystä rikoslain 34a-luvun pohjalta,” *Politiikka* 46(3) (2004), pp. 209–214.
33. Sisäasiainministeriö, *Arjen turvaa: Sisäisen turvallisuuden ohjelma*. Sisäasiainministeriön julkaisuja 44/2004, p. 3.
34. Jarno Limnell, *Maailma ja Suomi 9/11 jälkeen* (Helsinki: WSOY, 2011), pp. 212–213.
35. For example, Plenary debate of the Finnish Parliament about amendments to the Police Law on 14 June 2005 (PTK 72/2005).

36. See, for example, Valtioneuvoston kirjelmä Eduskunnalle ehdotuksesta neuvoston puitepäätökseksi (terrorismin torjuminen) (U64/2001 vp), 11 October 2001 and the reports of the Legal Affairs Committee and the Committee of Constitutional Law on the aforementioned letter, address of Esko Helle, plenary debate of the Finnish Parliament on 6 November 2002 (PTK 128/2002 vp). The adoption of this terrorism legislation in its final form was still quite remarkable in the Finnish context, because the legislation, even in its final form, challenged some of the key principles of the Finnish legal tradition. See, for example, the statement of Johannes Koskinen, plenary debate of the Finnish Parliament on 5 November 2002 (PTK127/2002 vp), Kimmo Nuotio, “Eurooppalaistuvan rikosoikeuden ääriiviivoja,” *Lakimies* 7–8 (2007).
37. This principle is mentioned in the government proposal, which implemented the EU framework decision on combatting terrorism (2002/475/JHA). See Hallituksen esitys Eduskunnalle terrorismia koskeviksi rikoslain ja pakkokeinolain säädöksiä (HE188/2002 vp).
38. Mariaelisa Epifanio, “Legislative Response to International Terrorism,” *Journal of Peace Research* 48(3) (2011).
39. The two cases of politicking that can be identified from these years concern the role and resources of the police and defense forces. In the early 2000s, there were persistent rumours about the existence of a conflict between the police and the defense forces concerning their respective roles in counterterrorism. The defense forces were accused of trying to “own” the terrorist problem. This put the Finnish Security Intelligence Service on the defensive. However, it is unclear whether the defense forces were really interested in increasing their role in counterterrorism or whether the issue actually rather reflected concerns among the Finnish Security Intelligence Service about its role in the future, perhaps fueled by the internationally common “War on Terror” rhetoric (although it never gained a proper foothold in Finland) and the visible role that the researchers of the National Defence University had in the media in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks (see Jokinen, *Terrorismista ja sen torjunnasta*, pp. 290–294; Timo Hellenberg and Christer Pursiainen, “Terrori-iskut Yhdysvalloissa,” in Tuomas Forsberg et al., eds., *Suomi ja kriisit: Vaaran vuosista terrori-iskuihin* (Helsinki: Gaudeamus, 2003), p. 295). Another politically sensitive question was the introduction of a piece of legislation that gave the police the option of asking the defense forces for their help in preventing or interrupting a terrorist attack. The idea of such assistance was not new: there was already a law about such assistance in other kinds of situations. Left-wing parties have traditionally been strongly opposed to broadening the mandate of the defense forces, especially during peacetime and inside the country. These tensions became visible in the parliamentary debates regarding this amendment, which was, however, approved (see the committee reports and plenary debates of the Finnish parliament on the government proposal “Hallituksen esitys laiksi puolustusvoimien virka-avusta poliisille annetun lain 4 §:n muuttamisesta” (HE 187/2004 vp)).
40. Ministry of the Interior, *Safety First: Internal Security Programme. Government Plenary Session 8 May 2008*, pp. 72–73. In fact, there is a section about terrorism in the first Internal Security Programme that was introduced in 2004. The reason for including terrorism was the need to secure and justify this extra funding for the police (interview with a key policymaker 19 February 2014). The program also required that an action plan to counter terrorism should be drafted and an intergovernmental group should be established to coordinate counterterrorism. Both actions were reported as having been completed (*Sisäisen turvallisuuden ohjelman toimeenpano ja tulokset 2004–2007: Sisäisen turvallisuuden ohjelman toimeenpanon seurantaraportti*. Sisäasiainministeriön julkaisu 29/2007, pp. 39–41), but this author has not found any more specific public information about either of them.
41. Ministry of the Interior, *National Counterterrorism Strategy*. Ministry of the Interior Publication 24/2010, p. 6.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
43. Having said that, it must be added that after the National Counterterrorism Strategy was released, the FATF changed its recommendations so that they also included similar changes to the legislation on financing terrorism. What is crucial here is that at the time when the strategy was drafted, there was no obligation or recommendation from the international level to do so. See Oikeusministeriö, *Terrorismityöryhmän mietintö*. Mietintöjä ja lausuntoja 1/2013.
44. Suojelupoliisi, *Vuosikertomus 2005*, p. 5.

45. *National Counterterrorism Strategy*. Ministry of the Interior Publication 24/2010, p. 6.
46. See, for example, Suojelupoliisi, *Vuosikertomus 2011*.
47. See, for example, "Stubb pitää iskuja Suomessa mahdollisena," YLE 13 December 2010. Available at http://yle.fi/uutiset/stubb_pitaa_iskuja_suomessa_mahdollisena/5685734 (accessed 15 April 2015); "Halonen: Terrori-isku Suomessa vain ajan kysymys," YLE 13 December 2010. Available at http://yle.fi/uutiset/halonen_terrori-isku_suomessa_vain_ajan_kysymys/5686003 (accessed 15 April 2015).
48. Minna Passi, "Karkotettu kiistää terrorismiyhteydet: Suomessa asuva mies otettiin kiinni Ruotsin-matkallaan," *Helsingin Sanomat* 18 November 2009; "Fyra personer med kopplingar till församlingen i Brandbergen," *DN.se* 17 October 2008. Available at <http://www.dn.se/arkiv/nyheter/fyra-personer-med-kopplingar-till-forsamlingen-i-brandbergen> (accessed 17 September 2015).
49. Irina Vähäsarja, "Poliisi aloitti terrorismitutkiminnan: Kahta epäillään terrorismin rahoittamisesta ja terroristien värväyksestä," *Helsingin Sanomat* 17 September 2011; Irina Vähäsarja, "Terrorismitutkiminta kytkeytyy al-Shabaabiin," *Helsingin Sanomat* 28 September 2011; Minna Passi, "Neljälle ehdollista vankeutta terrorismin rahoituksesta: Tuomitut lähettivät rahaa Somaliaan Al-Shabaab—terroristijärjestölle," *Helsingin Sanomat* 20 December 2014.
50. Ilkka Salmi and Jorma Vuorio, "Kotouttamisen etsikkoaika on loppumassa," *Helsingin Sanomat* 7 June 2009, interview with Timo Kilpeläinen, 18 December 2013.
51. See, for example, Suojelupoliisi, *Vuosikertomus 2007*, p. 3; Tuomo Pietiläinen, "Suomen turvallisuuspoliisi Supo laajentaa operaatioitaan Afrikkaan," *Helsingin Sanomat* 19 October 2009.
52. Sisäasiainministeriö, *Arjen turvaa: Sisäisen turvallisuuden ohjelman valmisteluun osallistuneen asiantuntijaryhmän raportti* (Sisäministeriö 2013), pp. 22–23.
53. Interview with a key policymaker, 19 February 2014.
54. Ministry of the Interior, *Towards a Cohesive Society: Action Plan to Prevent Violent Extremism* (Helsinki, 2012).
55. Two Columbine style school rampage shootings have taken place in Finland (2007 in Jokela and 2008 in Kauhajoki). For more, see Ministry of Justice, *Jokela School Shooting on 7 November 2007: Report of the Investigation Commission*, Ministry of Justice publication 2009:1, Ministry of Justice, *Kauhajoki School Shooting on 23 September 2008: Report of the Investigation Commission*, Reports and Guidelines 10 (2010); Atte Oksanen et al., "Jokela: The Social Roots of a School Shooting Tragedy in Finland," in Nils Böckler et al., eds., *School Shootings: International Research, Case Studies and Concepts of Prevention* (New York: Springer, 2012). On the perceptions of these incidents in the Finnish media, see Leena Malkki, "Suomessa ei ole terrorismia, koska 'Suomessa ei ole terrorismia?' 2000-luvun väkivallanteot ja tulkintojen merkitys," in Anssi Kullberg, ed., *Suomi–Terrorismi–Supo* (Helsinki: WSOY, 2011).
56. Interview with a key policymaker, 19 February 2014.
57. Tuomas Forsberg and Christer Pursiainen, "Suomalainen kriisipäätöksenteko," in Forsberg et al. (eds.), *Suomi ja kriisit*, p. 26.
58. *Suojelupoliisin toimintaympäristö vuosina 2015–2016*. See also the statistics compiled by the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation on Peter R. Neumann, "Foreign Fighter Total in Syria/Iraq now exceeds 20,000; Surpasses Afghanistan Conflict in the 1980s." Available at <http://icsr.info/2015/01/foreign-fighter-total-syriairaq-now-exceeds-20000-surpasses-afghanistan-conflict-1980s/> (accessed 22 June 2015). Little is known about those who have left for Syria, as the Finnish Security Intelligence Service has been rather sparing in its communications and it is almost the only source for such information. What the Supo has reported is that they are from 18 different ethnic backgrounds and about 75 percent of them are citizens of Finland. There are reports that even as many as one third of those who have left may have been non-immigrants, meaning that both of their parents were Finns. The Supo has claimed that the number is lower than that, but it still looks as if the share of non-immigrants from non-Muslim backgrounds may be higher in Finland than in many other countries. See "Poliisi: Myös useita kantasuomalaisia Isisin riveissä," YLE 22 January 2015. Available at http://yle.fi/uutiset/poliisi_myoys_useita_kantasuomalaisia_isisin_riveissa/7753063 (accessed 22 June 2015). Besides the Supo reports, the best source for the Finnish contingent is provided by Juha Saarinen's works (e.g., Juha Saarinen, "The Finnish Foreign Fighter Contingent in Syria," *CTC Sentinel* 7(3) (2014)). "Supo: Syyriaan lähteneiden kantasuomalaisten

- määrää liioiteltu,” YLE 23 January 2015. Available at (http://yle.fi/uutiset/supo_syyriaan_lahteneiden_kantasuomalaisten_maaraa_liioiteltu/7755948 (accessed 22 June 2015).
59. See, for example, Suojelupoliisi, *Vuosikertomus* 2014. The Finnish Security Intelligence Service in its annual report of 2014 estimates that the number of people who have links to terrorism increased by 45 percent between 2012 and 2014. The number is still low (300 individuals).
 60. “Paatero: Terroriteko Suomessa vain ajan kysymys,” *Savon Sanomat* 19 March 2015.
 61. “Räsänen: Poliisille lisärahoitusta terrorismin torjuntaan,” *MTV3* 17 November 2014. Available at <http://www.mtv.fi/uutiset/kotimaa/artikkeli/rasanen-poliisille-lisarahoitus-terrorismin-torjuntaan/4536282> (accessed 20 June 2015).
 62. For example, “LVM vaatii lisää keskustelua verkkovalvonnan tehokkuudesta ja vaikutuksista,” 11 January 2015. Available at <http://www.lvm.fi/tiedote/4430353/lvm-vaatii-lisaa-keskustelua-verkkovalvonnan-tehokkuudesta-ja-vaikutuksista> (accessed 25 June 2015); Petja Sajari, “Oikeustieteilijät torjuvat verkkovalvonnan: verkkovalvonta olisi todennäköisesti vastoin EU-tuomioistuimen ratkaisua,” *Helsingin Sanomat* 12 January 2015; Päivi Nerg and Ilkka Salmi, “Poliisi tarvitsee uusia keinoja terrorismin torjuntaan,” *Helsingin Sanomat* 31 January 2015.
 63. For example, Kirjallinen kysymys: Sisäistä turvallisuutta vaarantavien henkilöiden maahantulon estäminen ja islamistijärjestöjen kieltäminen Suomessa (274/2013 vp); Kirjallinen kysymys: Islamilaisen radikalismien torjunta Suomessa (KK756/2013 vp); Kirjallinen kysymys: Suomen vähättelevä asenne islamismia ja terrorismia kohtaan (974/2014 vp).
 64. Interview with Ilkka Salmi, 14 February 2014.
 65. Forsberg and Pursiainen, “Suomalainen kriisipäätöksenteko,” p. 25.
 66. During the last few years, the Finnish Security Intelligence Service has used the term “risk persons” when referring to people with ties to terrorism in the country. A risk person is defined as “for example a person who supports or finances violent radical networks, recruits or radicalizes new people to violent radical activities. A risk person may also try to participate in the training or armed activities of a violent radical network abroad and facilitate such activities in Finland and in the extreme case commit a terrorist attack” (*Valtioneuvoston periaatepäätös kansalliseksi terrorismintorjunnan strategiaksi 2014–2017*).
 67. Marieke de Goede, “Beyond Risk: Premeditation and the Post-9/11 Security Imagination,” *Security Dialogue* 39(2–3) (2008), p. 159.
 68. De Goede, “Beyond Risk,” p. 171.
 69. See, for example, articles in Christopher Baker-Beall, Charlotte Heath-Kelly, and Lee Jarvis, *Counter-Radicalisation: Critical Perspectives* (London & New York: Routledge, 2015).