

Democratising intelligence

News media discourses of Finnish intelligence reform shaping the national intelligence culture

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<p>Intelligence agencies have become a significant element of security in contemporary societies. While new, more expansive intelligence methods have been utilised to contain potential security threats, national intelligence cultures have been challenged by more democratic understandings of intelligence and security on a societal level. As part of this transformation, intelligence agencies have encountered growing demands in the public sphere to strengthen their transparency and accountability. In this process, news media have a special role as an arena and an intelligence stakeholder to promote the democratisation of intelligence.</p> <p>The aim of this thesis is to study the democratisation of intelligence by analysing the shaping of national intelligence culture in news media discourses that covered the intelligence reform in Finland. Its theoretical framework is anchored to the concept of national intelligence culture and intelligence stakeholder theory which are linked to security and human security intelligence paradigms. The theoretical framework is complemented with Hallin's theory on news media coverage in the spheres of consensus, legitimate controversy, and deviance to study how the news media discourses regarding Finnish intelligence reform have shaped the national intelligence culture in Finland.</p> <p>The qualitative case study is based on a data set of 216 online news articles published between August 2015 and June 2019 in a national news media outlet <i>Helsingin Sanomat</i>. The news content is analysed using qualitative content analysis and Fairclough's approach to critical discourse analysis.</p> <p>The results of this study imply that the intelligence stakeholders represented in news media discourses can agree on the foundations of Finnish national intelligence culture. The study findings indicate that in the sphere of consensus, the stakeholders agreed on the necessity of intelligence reform, the existence of new threats in the security environment and the stagnant development of Finland's intelligence powers compared to its Western counterparts. However, in the sphere of legitimate controversy, several intelligence stakeholders including news media considered constitutional rights more important than national security interests, demanded more transparency and accountability in intelligence operations and challenged the public trust in the legislative process. Finally, the findings in the sphere of deviance revealed that significant stakeholders, such as citizens, civil society organisations and businesses, were excluded from the news media discourses. Thus, the results indicated that the stakeholders who were strongly represented in the news media have been able to significantly influence the discourses on the purpose and future of intelligence in Finland.</p>			
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<p>Tiedusteluorganisaatioista on muodostunut merkittävä osa turvallisuutta nyky-yhteiskunnissa. Samalla kun mahdollisten turvallisuusuhkien torjumiseksi on käytetty uusia, laajempia tiedustelumenetelmiä, kansallisia tiedustelukulttuureita on haastettu entistä demokraattisemmillä käsityksillä tiedustelusta ja turvallisuudesta yhteiskunnallisella tasolla. Osana tätä muutosta tiedusteluorganisaatiot ovat kohdanneet julkisuudessa kasvavia vaatimuksia avoimuuden ja vastuun lisäämiseksi. Tässä prosessissa medialla on ollut erityinen rooli, sillä se on toiminut sekä julkisen keskustelun areenana että tiedustelun sidosryhmänä edistämässä tiedustelun demokratisoitumista.</p> <p>Tämän tutkimuksen tavoitteena on tutkia kansallisen tiedustelukulttuurin demokratisaatiokehitystä analysoimalla uutismedian artikkeleita, jotka käsittelevät tiedustelulainsäädännön uudistusta suomalaisessa kontekstissa. Tutkimuksen teoreettisena kehyksenä käytetään kansallisen tiedustelukulttuurin ja tiedustelun sidosryhmäteorian käsitteitä, jotka nivoutuvat kansallisen turvallisuuden ja inhimillisen turvallisuuden tiedusteluparadigmoihin. Tutkimuksen teoreettista kehystä täydennetään Hallinin teorialla konsensuksen, legitimiin erimielisyyksien ja ei-legitiimien näkemysten ja toimijoiden kehistä, joilla tutkitaan uutismediassa julkaistuja diskursseja tiedustelulainsäädännöstä ja niiden vaikutuksista kansallisen tiedustelukulttuurin muodostumiseen Suomessa.</p> <p>Laadullinen tapaustutkimus perustuu 216 verkossa julkaistuun uutisartikkeliin, jotka julkaistiin elokuun 2015 ja kesäkuun 2019 välisenä aikana Helsingin Sanomissa. Tutkimusmetodina tutkielmassa on käytetty kvalitatiivista sisällönanalyysiä ja Fairclough'n lähestymistapaan pohjautuvaa kriittistä diskurssianalyysiä.</p> <p>Hallinin konsensuksen kehälle sijoittuvat diskurssit osoittavat, että tiedustelukulttuuria muodostavat sidosryhmät olivat yhtä mieltä tiedustelulainsäädännön uudistuksen välttämättömyydestä, turvallisuusympäristössä ilmenneiden uusien uhkien olemassaolosta ja suomalaisen tiedustelun hitaasta kehityksestä verrattuna muihin länsimaihin. Legitiimien erimielisyyksien kehälle sijoittuneissa diskursseissa useat tiedustelupalvelujen sidosryhmät, kuten uutismedia, valtion virkahenkilöt ja tiedeyhteisö, pitivät perusoikeuksia kansallisen turvallisuuden etuja tärkeäimpinä, vaativat tiedusteluorganisaatioilta enemmän avoimuutta ja vastuullisuutta ja kyseenalaistivat kansalaisten luottamusta lainsäädäntöprosessiin. Lopuksi ei-legitiimien näkemysten ja toimijoiden alueella havaittiin, että keskeisiä tiedustelun sidosryhmiä, kuten kansalaisia, kansalaisyhteiskunnan toimijoita ja yrityksiä, jäi julkisen keskustelun ulkopuolelle, ja näin ollen uutismediassa vahvasti edustettuina olleet sidosryhmät ovat voineet vaikuttaa merkittävästi diskursseihin tiedustelun tarkoituksesta ja tulevaisuudesta Suomessa.</p>			
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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Intelligence reform in Finland.....	3
1.2 Research aim and research question.....	3
1.3 Structure of the thesis	4
2 ELEMENTS OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE CULTURE.....	5
2.1 Development of intelligence studies	5
2.2 Definition of national intelligence culture.....	10
2.3 Intelligence as a product, an instrument, and a source of power.....	14
2.4 National security intelligence paradigm.....	17
2.5 Human security intelligence paradigm.....	18
2.6 News media and democratisation of national intelligence culture.....	23
3 METHODOLOGY	29
3.1 Research strategy and design	30
3.2 Data collection.....	31
3.3 Data analysis.....	35
3.4 Reliability and validity in research.....	38
4 DISCOURSES SHAPING NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE CULTURE.....	40
4.1 Overview of the research sample	40
4.1.1 Timeline of the findings.....	40
4.1.2 Different intelligence stakeholders	42
4.1.3 Types of security threats	44
4.1.4 Media as a platform for intelligence discourses.....	45
4.2 Discourses in the sphere of consensus	47
4.2.1 Intelligence reform is necessary.....	47

4.2.2	New threats demand new laws.....	50
4.2.3	Finland has fallen behind the Western standards.....	53
4.3	Discourses in the sphere of legitimate controversy.....	56
4.3.1	Constitutional rights over national security	56
4.3.2	Need for greater transparency	59
4.3.3	Public distrust of the legislative process	64
4.4	Discourses in the sphere of deviance	67
4.4.1	The silent stakeholders.....	67
4.5	Discussion of key findings	69
5	CONCLUSION.....	76
5.1	Significance and contributions of the study	76
5.2	Limitations of the study.....	76
5.3	Implications for future research	78
	REFERENCES.....	80

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: The spheres of news media coverage27

Figure 4.1: Overall number of contents in the research period.....40

Figure 4.2: Shares of stakeholders42

Figure 4.3: Types of security threats.....44

Figure 4.4: Types of content46

INTRODUCTION

"The history, culture and collective memory of each country also influence their decisions in a strategic context. Finland is no exception."

Harri Ohra-aho
Former Chief Intelligence Officer
of the Finnish Defence Command
and current ministerial adviser
at the Finnish Ministry of Defence

(Immonen, 2015)

Intelligence operations conducted by security authorities are no longer the sole guarantee of our security – if they ever were. National intelligence culture, the way we define the purpose of intelligence and its impact on security, has a significant impact not only on immediate security environments but also on the democratic values upheld in our societies. This calls for more culturally specific understandings of intelligence practices in different countries. With the rise of non-traditional security threats, the number of intelligence stakeholders and targets have increased as well. As the influx of information and different actors in the security environment have surged on an unprecedented scale, the perceptions of security have shifted towards more diverse and inclusive paradigms that consider a broad set of threat scenarios.

Intelligence reform in Finland was one of the largest legislative initiatives in the 2010s that was aimed to enhance the capabilities of the authorities to enhance collective security. Intelligence legislation enacted in 2019 introduced a formal framework for intelligence operations for the very first time in Finnish society. Consequently, the study of this legislative reform provides unique opportunities to analyse how the national intelligence culture was created alongside the very first formal framework to conduct intelligence operations. It offered chances to analyse the stakeholders that were involved in the public sphere, i.e. in the news content published by *Helsingin Sanomat*, and the power of the different stakeholders to voice their opinions in the largest national newspaper.

Also, the sheer size of the legislative project and the involvement of several stakeholders ensured active public discussions in several societal arenas. These discussions varied from the definitions of intelligence and security to the impact of the expanded intelligence powers on the everyday life of Finnish citizens. The initial idea to combine the intelligence reform discourses to the study of news media in this thesis was inspired by the book *Suomalaisen tiedustelukulttuurin jäljillä* (trans. On the tracks of Finnish intelligence culture) and especially Jarmo Mäkelä and Olli

Teirilä's articles regarding the relations of intelligence and publicity in the Finnish context (Koivula et al., 2020; Mäkelä, 2020; Teirilä, 2020). Thus, the intelligence reform provided a great opportunity to study the shaping of national intelligence culture, as it brought together different stakeholders from all sectors of society and reflected their differing perspectives.

The study of intelligence reform reflects the broader societal transformation that involves several dimensions from security to digitalisation. In addition to Finland, many other European countries, such as France and Switzerland, have reformed their intelligence legislation in recent years to answer more effectively to transnational threats. As the intelligence reforms have become more prevalent in Europe, the definitions of intelligence have transformed.

Consequently, this thesis also studies the different understandings regarding the purpose of intelligence in society. Traditionally intelligence agencies have been perceived and even mystified as clandestine organisations that have supported decision-makers from the shadows. Moreover, their operations have been seen from an instrumental perspective that has emphasised their technocratic capabilities to provide valuable and timely information for the national elites. In addition, a large part of the intelligence field is related to the security threats that have determined the ways that intelligence operations have been conducted and how they have engaged with the larger societal structures. Traditionally, these security threats have been mostly physical in nature.

However, digitalisation and decentralisation of societal structures have changed the rules of the game. The networked intelligence environment has enabled the emergence of new security threats that demand new responses from intelligence agencies. Non-traditional security threats, such as terrorism and cyber espionage, exist in increasingly intertwined digitalised structures with physical spaces and consequently, the networked nature of current world affairs have diffused the threats to multiple locations with no spatial or temporal limitations. At the time of writing this thesis, the global coronavirus pandemic is a yet another reminder of the interconnections that influence national security environments far and wide.

The traditional secrecy and power of intelligence agencies have been increasingly challenged in liberal democratic societies that have embraced more transparent and open ways of ensuring security. This has been partly reflected in the normative and legal standards of intelligence operations. Thus, the operations of intelligence agencies have been increasingly intertwined with the ideals of democracy. Meanwhile also intelligence studies have turned towards more holistic approaches by not only considering the nation-state interests but also the protection of individuals.

The engagement of citizens has been a cornerstone of this ideal to guarantee greater human security and, thus, to enhance national security.

New intelligence definitions have included the ideas that intelligence has the potential to cause insecurity, and, for this reason, several scholars have suggested that the intelligence agencies and their operations should be held accountable by the same democratic ideals as the decision-makers who utilise the end products of intelligence operations. News media has a special role in this quest for better accountability and transparency in the intelligence field. In this context, Finland offers an interesting case of a liberal democratic society that is on the verge of a new, more open intelligence era. Finland has been internationally acclaimed for its independent, free, and high-quality press, which provided an interesting opportunity to study the transparency and accountability of intelligence in the public sphere. For this reason, this thesis is aiming to contribute to this objective by providing an analysis of the shaping of national intelligence culture in the Finnish context.

This thesis also takes a step towards an unknown territory in Finnish intelligence research that has only recently seen the first academic contributions and theoretical frameworks in the context of intelligence reform. As the field was and still is novel, it provides unique opportunities to combine different fields of research from intelligence and security studies to media research and democracy. Thus, with the support of an interdisciplinary approach, this thesis studies the democratisation of intelligence and how it has been developed in the Finnish context.

1.1 Intelligence reform in Finland

New Civilian and Military Intelligence Acts, the end result of an intelligence reform process, entered into force on 1 June 2019 in Finland. This date marked the end of a lengthy legislative drafting process but also a beginning for the formalised development of national intelligence culture in Finland, which now had enacted its first intelligence legislation. Intelligence reform covered several areas including military intelligence, civilian intelligence, parliamentary oversight of intelligence activities and judicial review legislation. Thus, it has been one of the single most important legislative reforms to counter threats in the Finnish security environment in recent years and stirred active debates in the news media over the meanings of intelligence in Finnish society.

The enactment of intelligence legislation was preceded by years of governmental preparations, sessions, and reports to promote the reformation of intelligence legislation in Finland. These materials reflected the development of national intelligence culture towards a more formalised direction that aimed to provide answers for the new, networked threats emerging in the

operational environments. Among the first official documents to pronounce the need for new intelligence legislation was Finland's cyber security strategy, which was completed on 24 January 2013 (Peuhkurinen, 2017). In the same year, the President of the Republic and the Government's Committee on Foreign and Security Policy discussed cyber security and concluded that since there were no existing intelligence laws in Finland, the work to improve the legislative framework should begin immediately (Peuhkurinen, 2017). These perspectives were further complemented with a report published by the Working Group of the Ministry of Defence, which recommended that the Finnish government should take necessary steps to establish a legal basis for intelligence operations (Peuhkurinen, 2017).

Intelligence reform can be regarded as one of the greatest legislative processes of former Prime Minister Juha Sipilä's administration. This marked the first time Finland had formal legislation to regulate intelligence-gathering operations. In addition to the introduction of the first formal framework for intelligence agencies to conduct their operations, the legislation also significantly broadened the possibilities of the Finnish Security and Intelligence Service (FSIS, *Suojelupoliisi*, SUPO) and the Finnish Defence Intelligence Agency (FDIA, *Puolustusvoimien tiedustelulaitos*, PVTIEDL) to conduct civil and military intelligence operations both in Finland and abroad (Ministry of the Interior, 2019; Ministry of Defence, 2019). The laws broadened the spectrum of available intelligence techniques to include network traffic intelligence operations for civilian intelligence-gathering, which essentially means a form of intelligence-gathering that was based on the collection of communication metadata (FSIS, 2019). Intelligence agencies received new opportunities to contain potential threats by gathering intelligence from network communications abroad or across Finnish borders (FSIS, n.d.).

In addition to its novelty and expanded powers, the intelligence reform also required changes to the Finnish Constitution, and the rarity of such changes created high public interest in the news media. The amendment to section 10 in the Constitution of Finland allowed the intelligence-gathering services, i.e. FSIS and FDIA, to interfere with the secrecy of confidential communications if they consider it necessary for the protection of national security and necessary for intelligence-gathering (Ministry of Justice, 2018). In other words, the amendment provided the practical means for the intelligence agency officials to gather information from confidential communications that they do not yet have grounds to suspect as criminal offences but that are considered as serious threats to national security.

The new statutory powers not only led to more expansive methods to gather intelligence, but also transformed the military and civilian intelligence organisations into a combination of domestic

security and foreign intelligence services (Lohse, 2020). Thus, as Lohse (2020) argued, the Civilian and Military Intelligence Acts marked the most significant transformation process in the Finnish security sector, which will have major implications for the Finnish security and intelligence agencies in the future. After the new legislation, FSIS transformed to the sole civilian intelligence authority in Finland, which meant the removal of its status as a police authority (FSIS, n.d.). Thus, the legislative reform brought substantial changes especially for the civilian intelligence legislation.

New, more expansive intelligence powers also required greater oversight from authorities. Thus, in addition to the intelligence reform and constitutional amendment, the Finnish Parliament also passed related laws in February 2019 to set up a new Intelligence Ombudsman and Parliament's Intelligence Oversight Committee to oversee the intelligence operations of FSIS and FDIA (Ministry of the Interior, n.d.). These actors hold autonomous and independent position and have extensive rights to access information both in the FSIS and FDIA to ensure the legality of their operations (Ministry of the Interior, n.d.).

1.2 Research aim and research question

This thesis aims to analyse the shaping of national intelligence culture in the news media discourses that covered the progress of the Finnish intelligence reform. The purpose of this study is to enhance the understanding of the cultural dimension in intelligence research, and how public arenas, such as news media, can contribute to the shaping of national intelligence culture. Thus, this thesis introduces a theoretical and conceptual framework that combines the fields of intelligence studies, security studies and media research. The multidisciplinary perspective will support this case study on the relation of national intelligence culture and media in Finland. More specifically, this study will utilise concepts of intelligence, security, and culture to create a contextually specific understanding of the intelligence reform discourses in the Finnish context.

Therefore, my thesis presents the following research question:

RQ: *How did news media discourses on the Finnish intelligence reform shape the national intelligence culture?*

More specifically, this thesis will analyse how intelligence was perceived by different actors, how the intelligence environment was perceived in the discourses and what security paradigms were utilised to justify the different emphases in the discourses. Consequently, the objective of this study is to outline the prominent actors, the most significant discourses of the

debate and to study the overall influence of these actors to set and guide the agenda of the public debate.

This thesis utilises the novel concept of national intelligence culture to contribute to the development of more culturally specific understandings of intelligence traditions in different countries. As the focus on culture is a fairly new dimension in intelligence studies, this theme provides a vast variety of research opportunities that also has practical importance for the conduct and practices of intelligence in countries like Finland. In addition, this study also enables a more detailed evaluation of the intelligence reform process and the possible stakeholders that had an impact on the outcome of the legislative drafting process. Thus, this thesis provides both theoretical value for intelligence scholars and practical insights for practitioners of intelligence.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

In chapter 2, this thesis will provide a brief literature review of intelligence studies and establish a theoretical framework that defines the different purposes for intelligence, intelligence stakeholders and concepts of national intelligence culture. The chapter will also discuss the development of national security and human security intelligence paradigms. Finally, chapter 2 will introduce the role of news media in intelligence research and discuss its influence in the Finnish context.

Chapter 3 will introduce the methodological choices made in this thesis and provide an overview of the qualitative content analysis and critical discourse analysis methods utilised in this study. Chapter 3 will also discuss the data collection and data analysis phases of this study and conclude with an analysis on questions of reliability and validity in this research.

Chapter 4 will start with an overview of the findings of the qualitative content analysis and continue to the results of critical discourse analysis. The chapter introduces the timeline of the research, the different intelligence stakeholders, types of security threats and finally, types of different news content. The chapter continues with a study of discourses in Hallin's (1984) spheres of consensus, legitimate controversy, and deviance. The section will conclude with a discussion on key findings and takeaways from the study.

Finally, chapter 5, I will conclude this study with contributions and limitations of the study and a brief overview of the potential future research themes that could benefit from the theoretical framework, methodology and findings of this thesis.

2 ELEMENTS OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE CULTURE

Intelligence definitions and discourses regarding security are part of a larger framework that guides the decision-making both in intelligence services and among their stakeholders. This framework, defined as intelligence culture, considers the meanings created in specific cultural conditions and how they impact intelligence processes. However, intelligence cultures do not evolve in a vacuum. They are influenced by the historical development of the intelligence tradition and contemporary societal conditions.

This chapter begins with a discussion on the broad branches of intelligence studies and the factors that have inspired recent scholars to engage with more culturally specific modes of research. This discussion will be combined with a brief overview of the intelligence scholarship and its historical conditions in the Finnish context. After the discussion on national intelligence culture, the chapter will continue to outline the intelligence definitions and security paradigms as the essential parts of national intelligence culture. The chapter will conclude with a discussion on how the theories of news media can benefit the study of national intelligence culture.

2.1 Development of intelligence studies

Intelligence studies is a relatively new discipline that has been significantly influenced by multiple academic traditions from International Relations (IR), Security Studies and Strategic Studies. Because of the novelty related to the research tradition, it has only recently adopted more culturally sensitive and contextually dependent approaches to study the operations of intelligence communities. The reason for the limited academic scholarship on intelligence culture can be found in the historical roots of the research tradition and practical nature of the intelligence-gathering that restricted the open access of scholars and thus, hindered the development of intelligence studies until very recently.

The beginning of intelligence studies can be traced to the 1950s when Sherman Kent, the pioneer of intelligence research, suggested that there was a growing need for professional orientation in the intelligence analysis literature (Gill & Phythian, 2016, p. 8). Thus, an early branch of intelligence studies was created to serve professional interests in intelligence services rather than academic research endeavours outside of the practical intelligence operations. This foundation utilised realism for ontological and epistemological assumptions that treated intelligence as part of the objective, observable reality (Makkonen, 2020, p. 36). Consequently, the early intelligence

studies favoured the study of intelligence by positivist means that emphasised empirical observations. This has arguably had a strong impact on intelligence studies, as the focus has been on the interests of intelligence agencies and more broadly, national security that these organisations have aimed to maintain.

In addition to the positivist nature of the research, intelligence studies have traditionally discussed only a few specific countries in the Anglo-Saxon mainstream. As stated by Davies and Gustafson (2013, p. 9), the field of intelligence studies has produced substantive knowledge on the intelligence systems in America, Great Britain, Australia and Canada and to a smaller extent, also within major European powers, such as France, Germany, and Russia. Other scholars, like Graaff and Nyce (2016), have argued that although intelligence studies have produced comparative analyses on the different systems around the world, “the academic and public knowledge on the world of intelligence seems to begin and end with America, the United Kingdom and Russia” (p. xxxii-xxxiii) and result in “colonialism of the mind” (p. xxxii-xxxiii) in intelligence studies, as the country-specific traditions have been universalised to other regions of the world. Thus, intelligence research has been highly focused on countries that have been identified either as liberal democracies or their traditional opponents.

This focus on specific countries as the primary sources of knowledge may have narrowed the possible contextually sensitive explanations for different intelligence traditions. The establishment of dedicated university programmes in the Anglosphere, dedicated research resources and publications for intelligence research, such as *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence* as well as *Intelligence and National Security* have further enabled the cumulation of research efforts in these countries (Kari, 2020, p. 105-112). For this reason, intelligence studies have not been able to reach their full potential in countries that have not been power players in the global competition over intelligence resources and capabilities.

However, despite the geopolitical disparities, there have been increasing calls for more inclusive intelligence theories beyond the Anglosphere that could better recognise and manage cross-border, networked threats to security. To explicate this development in intelligence studies, Scott and Jackson provided a categorisation of three different branches of intelligence studies that highlight the development of intelligence studies since the early days of Sherman Kent.

The first has been the most prevalent in the historical accounts of intelligence research and it has considered intelligence as a method to acquire information for officials and politicians and thus, an important factor to explicate decision-making processes (Scott & Jackson, 2004, p. 143).

Historical accounts have been a natural way to increase knowledge in the field of intelligence studies. The clandestine nature of intelligence services and intelligence-gathering has maintained barriers for more in-depth analysis of ongoing practices, but recent years have seen an increase in theories as the archives from Second World War and Cold War eras have been publicised (Teirilä, 2020, p. 165). Consequently, the publication of important historical documents has guided intelligence studies to approach the phenomena from a historical perspective instead of a focus on contemporary trajectories (Gill & Phythian, 2018, p. 78-79). Besides the availability of resources, the development of historical accounts of intelligence has provided tools to legitimate intelligence practices in current contexts, as they have been placed within a broader evolution of the intelligence tradition (Teirilä & Nykänen, 2016). Thus, the reconstruction of past events from historical records has provided invaluable resources for contemporary researchers and practitioners of intelligence.

The second branch has approached intelligence as a quest of generalisation that aims to elaborate the successful and failed features of intelligence-gathering and how these have affected policy-making abilities (Scott & Jackson, 2004, p. 143). Media has been a powerful force to place these intelligence failures to the agenda in the public sphere, which has recently played a part in the increased interest in intelligence studies beyond historical accounts (Teirilä, 2020, p. 165). Intelligence failures have been studied from a psychological perspective as a deficiency of leadership characteristics that distort perceptions (Betts, 1978), challenges in the prediction of surprises (Handel, 1980) as well as the failures to both gather accurate information and utilise it in large organisations hindered by political pressure and psychological barriers (Jervis, 2010). In sum, as noted by Scott and Jackson (2004), both the first and second branch of intelligence have approached intelligence “as a tool of foreign and defence policy-making” (p. 143). Thus, the information itself has been treated as non-biased but the human factor has often informed the research on intelligence history and failures.

According to Scott and Jackson (2004, p. 143), the third approach of intelligence has aimed to broaden the research focus beyond the primacy of traditional nation-state interests. This approach studies intelligence as a political method of state power and how states have utilised intelligence to oversee social, cultural, and political spheres (Ibid.). Thus, the third approach introduced by Scott and Jackson has been the most interested in the questions of culturally specific influences in intelligence traditions.

Moreover, this branch of literature has utilised extensively the concept of surveillance to analyse the relation of security and liberties in societies (Scott & Jackson, 2004, p. 143). Thus, the approach recognises that the relationship between power and knowledge has been an inherent part

of intelligence processes. These have enabled more post-positivist approaches to emerge alongside traditional realist notions in intelligence studies (Makkonen, 2020, p. 37).

Hence, the historically prevalent approach to intelligence studies has encountered more critical theorists who have questioned its universality in contexts outside of the Anglosphere intelligence realm. As Phythian (2014, p. 33) stated, states have differing approaches to intelligence “in the extent to which they invest in it, the roles, reach and intrusiveness of intelligence bodies, and the nature and extent of their oversight”. Consequently, the scholars of intelligence studies have continued on the path introduced in many other disciplines in social sciences during the last few decades and incorporated the concept of culture into the analysis of different intelligence practices.

The intelligence tradition in Finland has developed alongside the international counterparts but the research field has only recently received more attention in academia. Much like their international counterparts, traditional intelligence studies in Finland have focused on the historical dimension, but recent years have seen a surge of interdisciplinary studies conducted in the fields of political science, administrative science, law, and military affairs (Kari, 2020, p. 113). Part of the reason for the relatively late arrival of multidisciplinary discussions in Finnish intelligence studies can be found from historical trajectories that defined the purpose and operational environment of Finnish intelligence services.

The history of intelligence in Finland is largely a history of silence. Intelligence services were present in Finland already before the declaration of independence in 1917, but their essence was defined by secrecy and withdrawal from the public sphere for most of the 20th century (Koivula, 2020, p. 3). The intelligence services in Finland focused on domestic threats and consequently, the intelligence collection targeted specific groups that threatened the state elites until the 1970s (Luukkonen, 2020, p. 23). This labelled Finnish intelligence services and especially the civilian intelligence service FSIS as a tool of repression and political control that was defined by secrecy and withdrawal from the public sphere (Koivula, 2020, p. 3). For this reason, intelligence services have not been traditionally perceived as forerunners of democracy and transparency. Their position in society has simply not enabled such perceptions.

In addition to the developments in the intelligence organisations, Finnish relations with the international powers provided yet another set of challenges for intelligence organisations. The Cold War was a particularly important period for Finnish intelligence services as the Russian Control Commission became a prevalent part of Finnish public institutions and especially, in the policing system (Teirilä & Nykänen, 2016). The strong influence of the Soviet Union and their perpetual

representation in the Finnish politics during the Cold War led to a sphere of silence where any mentions of intelligence operations conducted by Finns, Soviets or other foreign intelligence services were omitted from the public discussion in the fear of Soviet retaliation (Himanen, 2020, p. 126). Thus, this tradition of silence and dismissal of any public scrutiny regarding intelligence practices continues to have repercussions on Finnish intelligence studies to this day.

In addition to the specific historical conditions, contemporary Finnish intelligence scholarship has encountered similar kind of challenges as their international counterparts. The studies have been hindered by the lack of public documentation on intelligence operations and practices (Kari, 2020). However, recent researchers have increasingly been able to utilise materials that have been previously unavailable in public archives. For example, the scientific inquiries to military intelligence were greatly enhanced after the Defence Command of Finnish Defence Forces transferred their original documents of the post-World War II era to public archives at the beginning of the 2000s (Palokangas, 2018, p. 21). Consequently, the scholarship is gradually shifting towards a more open culture.

Moreover, the recent intelligence reform enacted in 2019 has sparked some renewed interest in the study of Finnish intelligence studies in the political and administrative sciences. As Teirilä suggested, the nascent field has increasingly conducted studies that have focused on the present institutions and their practices across disciplinary boundaries (2020, p. 165). The research efforts have focused on the overall development of Finnish intelligence culture from historical, educational and institutional perspectives in *Suomalaisen tiedustelukulttuurin jäljillä* (Koivula et al., 2020), the dimension of publicity that has determined the relationship between intelligence services and the media (Tierilä & Nykänen, 2016), prevalent discourses in media outlets (Kurttila, 2015) as well as in the perspectives maintained in the publications and media articles regarding Finnish cybersecurity strategy and civilian intelligence reform (Tanner, 2019).

In addition to these publications, scholars have recently published academic textbooks to discuss the role and methods of intelligence in the Finnish context. For example, *Johdatus tiedusteluun* (Lohse, 2019) and *Tiedustelumenetelmät* (Lohse et al., 2019) have been able to fill the previous research gap of introductory intelligence books in Finnish intelligence literature. Based on these examples, it seems that although intelligence research in Finland has been traditionally focused on the historical dimension, the balance has started to shift towards more comprehensive research literature that discusses the essence, features, and future of intelligence in Finland.

However, the study of Finnish intelligence culture is only taking its first steps towards a more structured and scientific approach in studies regarding intelligence culture (Koivula et al., 2020). The lack of previous studies can be attributed to a plethora of historical and cultural factors that have been discussed in this section. Thus, there is a recognised need to study intelligence culture and practices in the Finnish context, and this thesis aims to contribute to this objective. The following sections will continue to map out the concept of intelligence and combine it with the broader understandings of intelligence culture and security as a central dimension of discourses that have built Finnish national intelligence culture.

2.2 Definition of national intelligence culture

This thesis will utilise a concept of national intelligence culture to analyse how the discourses of intelligence reform shaped the cultural understandings of the purpose and future of intelligence in Finnish society. As part of the cultural understanding, several definitions of intelligence and security will be explored in detail in the following sections. Finally, the role of publicity and secrecy of intelligence in news media will also be discussed in the final section of this chapter. All these elements provide an overview of the potential directions that specific national intelligence cultures may evolve in.

As Gill and Phythian (2018, p. 78) argued, the field of intelligence studies lacks a systematised social scientific approach that could elaborate the relations between intelligence-gathering, national security, state power and democratic rights. Intelligence culture as such has been an ambiguous concept, as it is a combination of slippery concepts that have produced perspectives dependent on the researcher.

Phythian (2014, p. 34-35) introduced four levels for intelligence culture research, i.e. strategic environment, regime type, organisational and societal. Strategic environment refers to the theories created in the field of strategic studies, which have considered the role of history and geopolitical conditions in the adopted approaches to specific security communities (Gray, 2007; Phythian, 2014, p. 34-35). Instead, the level of regime type considers the differences between communities that have been placed in different positions on the democratic, transitional, and non-democratic spectrum (Phythian, 2014, p. 36-38). Moreover, the organisational level of intelligence culture has discussed how different intelligence organisations and country-specific intelligence communities have been structured and operated (Phythian, 2014, p. 39). These approaches, however, lack the analytic broadness that the societal level can bring to the studies of intelligence

culture (Phythian, 2014, p. 34). Hence, this thesis will adopt the societal level of intelligence culture to provide the necessary broadness for the analysis.

According to Phythian (2014, p. 40), the societal level of intelligence culture considers how intelligence is approached in the wider society and how these perceptions influence the intelligence actors that create the practices of information gathering. The societal level involves objectives to seek security that may often clash with aims to maintain liberties (Phythian, 2014, p. 40). Thus, intelligence culture contains both ideas regarding the purpose and nature of intelligence as well as ideas of security. In sum, definitions of intelligence and security ultimately define the priorities of intelligence operations and whose security is considered the most important in society.

The societal level of intelligence culture also includes the dimension of legitimacy that is one of the most significant elements that differentiate strong and weak intelligence cultures from each other (Koivula, 2020, p. 2). Although intelligence agencies operate away from the public eye, different intelligence failures and potential violations of constitutional rights ensure that intelligence agencies are constantly required to legitimise their existence and actions in public (Koivula, 2020, p. 2-3). It is this tension between secrecy and publicity that delineates intelligence culture and how strongly society supports intelligence agencies in their efforts to protect security. In addition to this balance between security and liberties, the questions of legitimacy and accountability of intelligence operations are an important part of the intelligence culture research (Teirilä, 2020, p. 165).

Consequently, the questions related to intelligence reform are highly relevant on this level of analysis, as they cover the issues related to the problems of national security and human rights, legitimisation of intelligence and accountability of intelligence services. This thesis approaches these questions by the study of discourses on intelligence reform and whether they have been represented by different actors in Finnish news media. For this reason, the societal level provides an important theoretical basis for this thesis, as it forms a basis to study how discourses presented in news media influence intelligence culture and perceptions of Finnish intelligence reform.

In this thesis, intelligence culture refers specifically to national intelligence culture as defined by Makkonen (2020). This definition enables the delimitation of the study to a specific national context and in this case, the Finnish news media as an arena of public discourses on intelligence. As such, the scale of intelligence culture covers the key actors in Finnish society, but the expressions of this culture will be reflected by the study of discourses represented in Finnish news media articles. Consequently, the thesis utilises a definition of national intelligence culture as

a social system of ideas and observable actions that can be interpreted as expressions of intelligence perspectives.

According to Makkonen (2020), national intelligence culture includes, for example, “collective assumptions, beliefs, perceptions, attitudes, values, norms, information and expectations about intelligence, which reflect people’s thoughts and actions as well as social practices” (p. 49). Makkonen’s (2020) definition suggests that intelligence meanings and practices are not only created in intelligence services, but interconnections and interactions between several actors produce the cultural dimension. Consequently, the focus of analysis shifts from practical operations to a more abstract level of meaning-making and discourses. This shift in the analytical focus has called for more constructivist and interpretivist approaches in intelligence studies instead of sole dependency on observable reality (Makkonen, 2020). The focus on cultural dimension allows the integration of socially constructed meanings and physical structures and, consequently, provides more opportunities for a broader analysis (Phythian, 2014, p. 37). Thus, this thesis will recognise the socially constructed meanings as situated within empirical reality.

Following Makkonen’s (2020, p. 49) definition, national intelligence culture is produced by multiple different actors. The categorisations of these actors have often followed stakeholder theories from other scientific disciplines, such as management studies and public relations (Acron, 2013, p. 333). In this thesis, the definitions of two scholars, Acron and Makkonen, will be combined to establish a comprehensive framework of intelligence culture actors. Actors often involved in the shaping of intelligence culture include the intelligence community, a government consisting of policymakers and lawmakers, academia, businesses, citizens, agents in popular culture and media (Acron, 2013; Makkonen, 2020, p. 47). Therefore, the shaping of national intelligence culture is dependent on a complex web of actors that simultaneously promote their interests and shape the values and normative framework of intelligence production.

The intelligence community exists at the core of national intelligence culture as they conduct intelligence operations to produce knowledge within the established norms (Makkonen, 2020, p. 47). Thus, they have both a practical role in the operations but also a symbolic status as the focus point of intelligence culture as it is evaluated at the societal level.

Policymakers have a special relation to the intelligence community, as they are often the consumer of products that result from the intelligence cycle (Acron, 2013, p. 335). This means that they might promote broader intelligence production capabilities as it practically benefits their situational awareness and thus, may provide more accurate information for decision-making. Thus,

their objective is to both execute the decisions of the government but also to promote their intelligence interests (Acron, 2013, p. 335).

In contrast to policymakers, lawmakers have more regulative characteristics in the stakeholder network of national intelligence culture. Lawmakers have the power to set broad regulations for intelligence operations and practical oversight to monitor whether the intelligence services operate within the value and normative frameworks (Acron, 2013, p. 335-336; Makkonen, 2020, p. 47). Therefore, their responsibility is also to balance differing interests existing in the stakeholder network of national intelligence culture.

It should be noted that although the theoretical framework by Acron (2013) and Makkonen (2020) established categories of lawmakers and policymakers, this thesis will slightly finetune these concepts to ensure their adaptability in Finnish context. The stakeholder theory in this thesis will replace the policymakers and lawmakers with politicians and government officials to illustrate further the difference between political and public administration functions in the Finnish government and their potential implications for national intelligence culture.

Businesses as stakeholders interact with other intelligence actors to protect interests in digitalised infrastructures (Makkonen, 2020, p. 47; Susiluoto, 2020). Consequently, their inherent logic is to promote profitable capabilities of intelligence services and contain threats that may harm their strategic objectives.

Academia produces knowledge that can have a significant impact on the development of practical intelligence operations, but scholars also have an important role in the creation of trust and public perceptions of intelligence in society (Acron, 2013, p. 338; Makkonen, 2020, p. 47). Moreover, it should be noted that studies produced by academia participate in the shaping of intelligence culture and may provide important insights to promote shared value frameworks in intelligence practices. Academia does not only produce information for society but is an active participant in societal discourses.

In addition, citizens are an important actor for intelligence culture as their support constitutes another layer of legitimation that complements the legal frameworks related to intelligence operations (Makkonen, 2020, p. 47). Without the support of the citizens, intelligence agencies may encounter difficulties to justify their existence and operations in liberal democracies.

Finally, agents in popular culture and media both produce public imaginaries and society-wide meanings of intelligence (Makkonen, 2020, p. 47). Thus, they also have an important role in the level of trust and, consequently, resources that intelligence agencies required to conduct their

operations. In sum, the sphere of intelligence consists of a wide variety of interconnections that diffuse the power to determine intelligence meanings to multiple fronts.

2.3 Intelligence as a product, an instrument, and a source of power

National intelligence culture is a phenomenon that is intertwined with the definitions regarding the purpose of intelligence and who is it for. Definitions of intelligence create national intelligence culture (Makkonen, 2020, p. 50) and for this reason, it is important to analyse the different perspectives to intelligence that have varied across academia. In addition, defining intelligence also delineates the research framework. As Scott and Jackson stated, “the way intelligence is defined necessarily conditions approaches to research and writing about the subject” (2004, p. 141). Thus, this section will explore the different intelligence definitions to establish a theoretical basis for further analysis.

The prevalent notion in intelligence literature has concluded that there may be multiple definitions of intelligence, but they all fall short of a comprehensive generalisation that could be accepted by most of the research community (Scott & Jackson, 2004; Kahn, 2009; Gentry, 2016). Scholars have also warned against academic endeavours towards a grand theory of intelligence, as its inclusion in a complex sphere of social sciences problematises any attempts to create scientific laws prevalent in natural sciences (Johnson, 2009, p. 51-52). The avoidance of grand scientific theories has not meant that the definitions of intelligence should not strive for conceptual clarity. As an example of this objective, an active SIGINT (signals intelligence) practitioner, Professor Wilhelm Argell (2002) from the University of Lund argued against the acceptance of ambiguity in intelligence analysis by stating “when everything intelligence – nothing is intelligence” (p. 5). Thus, intelligence scholars should focus on the conceptual foundations to ensure that intelligence theories have clearly demarcated boundaries and distinctive theoretical value in social sciences.

Traditional accounts have regarded intelligence as a tool of decision-makers to produce coherent responses in a world that is full of uncertainties and chaos (Betts, 1978). To establish responses for decision-makers, the concept of intelligence has been often approached from three different perspectives. It has been defined as a product, activities or organisations that aim to support decision-making processes (Goldman, 2011, p. 155). These definitions, however, have not been tailored to different culturally specific contexts.

As a product, intelligence has been perceived mostly as tangible analyses of the gathered information for decision-makers. Thus, the product view has considered as different information sources and analysis of the collected information, e.g. OSINT (open-source intelligence) as

intelligence gathered from publicly available sources, SIGINT as information collected from radars and other sources emitting electromagnetic signals, and HUMINT (human source intelligence) as intelligence collected from and by human agents (Goldman, 2011, p. 139, 155, 202, 234). The product perspective also implies that there are service providers, i.e. intelligence services, and consumers of said products, which refer to decision-makers.

Following Goldman's categorisations, intelligence can be also perceived as activities. In this perspective, intelligence is seen as a processual tool that enhances leadership abilities and governmental responses to threat scenarios. Consequently, intelligence is perceived as a service that produces analysed information to support governmental decision-making (Luukkonen, 2020, p. 10). Important in this view is the notion that intelligence is more than information acquisition. Thus, intelligence is treated as an instrument of decision-making that has potentially utilised multiple sources and methods to achieve the provided product.

This instrumental service mindset is often combined with a definition of intelligence cycle that includes five phases as follows: "planning and direction, collection, processing, production and analysis, and dissemination" (Johnson, 2009, p. 34). Essential in the intelligence cycle is the notion that governmental intelligence demands are transformed into questions that intelligence services aim to offer answers to with acquired information (Luukkonen, 2020, p. 10). This perspective of intelligence is highly dependent on the processual view that perceives government as the source of intelligence demands and the receiver of the final analysed intelligence product (Luukkonen, 2020, p. 10). Consequently, intelligence services act as a technological enabler of information acquisition, but their role is often not analysed beyond the intelligence cycle. The cultural context, political interests and even different perceptions of security have been left out of the picture, which makes it difficult to analyse the real impact of intelligence on a societal scale.

In addition to the dimension of instrumentality, theoretical models have tended to depict the intelligence cycle as a linear model that progresses straightforwardly from one sequence to another. However, as researchers have suggested the reality of the intelligence cycle is often dictated by multiple simultaneous processes that interact and influence different parts of the cycle (Johnson, 2009, p. 34). Following this shift from a linear model to cyclical understanding, Johnson (2009, p. 34) argued that although decision-makers may provide the explicit demands for intelligence, intelligence services often produce intelligence based on what "decision-makers should know". Therefore, intelligence services often act based on their value frameworks rather than according to the demands of decision-makers.

However, some theorists have ventured beyond Goldman's triangle on intelligence definitions to consider the wider societal impact of intelligence. These definitions have further elaborated the notions of power relations by active promotion of interests and management of potential risks. As a nod towards Clausewitz, intelligence has been described as a continuation of war between states by clandestine means (Der Derian, 1992). This notion creates a network of actors that aim to contain threats by acquiring information from their opponents and possibly expanding their power.

Maintaining this understanding, Warner (2009, p. 23-24) has stated that intelligence is based on the uncertainty that is managed by a volatile mode of risk shifting from one sovereignty and its allies to opposing sovereignties. Important in this view is the notion of sovereignty that can include other independent actors besides states (Warner, 2009, p. 23-24). Intelligence in this view is treated as a source of power for all actors from states to organisations and individuals.

Gill has continued this contestation of traditional technocratic definitions of intelligence and provides a more comprehensive approach to intelligence as a social phenomenon, which consist of:

The mainly secret activities – targeting, collection, analysis, dissemination, and action – intended to enhance security and/or maintain power relative to competitors by forewarning of threats and opportunities. (Gill, 2009, p. 214)

In this view, intelligence is not only acquired information by secret means but also includes the quest for security and power over some other entity. Consequently, Gill's definition includes the process aspect of the intelligence cycle but complements it with a notion of agents influenced by power relations and perceived security issues.

In sum, it is important to note that all these definitions provide one aspect to intelligence as a social scientific concept. Traditionally intelligence has been perceived as a method for decision-makers to create better responses in situations where the resources and time are limited. Some of the intelligence definitions have also focused on the technical aspects of intelligence-gathering or the processes maintained in the intelligence cycle. However, in the same way as the evolution of the intelligence environment is not only a history of state-led warfare, it is also important to recognise the variety of scientific definitions on intelligence to critically reflect them in new studies.

Thus, scholars have aimed to complement the traditional definitions by introducing the aspects of power relations, risk management and surveillance to the conceptual landscape. These definitions have also emphasised the notion that intelligence is a contextually dependent conceptualisation. Understandings of its essence and functions are dependent on the worldview of

researchers and more importantly, on the established cultural and political frameworks that generate the ontological and epistemological conditions for intelligence research. Consequently, it is important to understand what delimits the security environment and surrounding society where intelligence agencies operate.

2.4 National security intelligence paradigm

Different security paradigms are an inherent part of national intelligence culture. These paradigms have been important sources in determining what is considered a threat in societies and how intelligence could promote security to contain the threats. Consequently, security paradigms have aimed to describe and categorise the vast field of threats, opportunities, and actors that emanate from the surrounding environment.

Traditional intelligence studies were dictated by the notions of national security and state interests, and the beginning of intelligence studies signified the first instance when these notions were incorporated into academic research. However, as the intelligence environment has shifted to a more complex network of actors, the field of intelligence studies has encountered new demands for more comprehensive theories that consider dimensions beyond nation-states. Hence, the contemporary field of intelligence studies has been influenced by two broad paradigms on security, namely the national security intelligence paradigm and the human security intelligence paradigm (Sheptycki, 2009). Thus, this section will explicate the essential features of both security paradigms to illustrate their influences on intelligence culture.

Intelligence and security are centrally linked both in theoretical and practical terms. Security can be defined as “a joint venture between timely information, surveillance and intelligence capacity, and preventative and protective actions” (Bigo, 2012, p. 277). Thus, intelligence is often perceived as a method that not only controls the present but attempts to create a more manageable and predictable future (Bigo, 2012, p. 284). According to this view, intelligence provides possibilities to maintain situational awareness and act in a timely manner. As a result, security is achieved by appropriate methods of intelligence.

This discussion on security, however, has mainly focused on the national dimension. The study and analysis of intelligence studies have been traditionally based on the “national security intelligence paradigm” (Sheptycki, 2009, p. 166) and intelligence studies have been seen as an academic response that complements “the practice of national security intelligence” (Marrin, 2016). In this framework, much of the traditional research tradition of intelligence studies has derived insights from the Realist school of IR (Gill & Phythian, 2018, p. 469). Realism and *Realpolitik*, as

pragmatic decision-making based on the context in diplomatic affairs instead of normative ideals, has emphasised the primacy of the state over the individual citizens and consequently, the national security objectives inherent in intelligence studies have been the point of reference for intelligence analysis (Sheptycki, 2009, p. 166-167). Consequently, the national security intelligence paradigm has largely ignored the non-state actors and individuals as the subjects of security, as national security objectives have primarily considered the importance of collective defences.

Besides the broad foundations established in the realist tradition, intelligence studies have derived plenty of insights from IR theory in structural realism that assumes a condition of international anarchy. In this anarchy, there is no higher authority beyond the state level to ensure peace and thus, states as rational actors must protect their interests without any guarantee that their neighbours will collaborate with them (Mearsheimer, 2001, p. 30-31). In this framework, intelligence serves as a means to ensure that states have at least some level of knowledge on the intentions of other states especially in terms of warfare, as the condition of anarchy implies that there is a low level of collaboration and trust in the international system (Phythian, 2009, p. 58; Waltz, 2018, p. 232). Consequently, the focus of early intelligence studies was on military conflicts that emphasised the primacy of decision-making at the state level. This removed all other possible actors, such as individuals and non-state organisations from the analytic scope and regarded them as irrelevant for the security of the nation.

The foundations established in realism have guided traditional intelligence studies towards ontological and epistemological perspectives that have regarded reality as an independent realm from perception and thus, its study is enabled by positivist means (Makkonen, 2020, p. 36). Thus, intelligence studies have been traditionally focused on monitoring and measuring independently existing entities, instead of utilising constructivist accounts to understand intelligence as a socially constructed meaning or interpretations as a method to approach the culturally relative phenomenon (Makkonen, 2020, p. 36). These foundations explicate the tradition of intelligence research that has not necessarily considered the political and cultural implications of intelligence practices in different communities.

2.5 Human security intelligence paradigm

Although realism has dictated much of the early intelligence literature during the Cold War, it has not been the only theoretical tradition that has established understandings on the essence and purposes of intelligence in modern societies. After the collapse of the bipolar world order in the 1990s, broader approaches to security became more recognised in IR as scholars contemplated the

future of state-oriented research. The discipline of critical security studies evolved as a response to developing an international network of multiple nodal points that were no longer dominated by bipolar power structures (Peoples & Vaughan-Williams, 2010, p. 7). Consequently, the disappearance of traditional power structures and the following power vacuum provided more space to create alternative meanings for intelligence and security. The focus of the discipline started to shift towards the transnational, non-state actors that had been traditionally excluded from Western security understandings.

A particularly significant example regarding broadening the security landscape and the beginning of an era for the human security intelligence paradigm was published in the early 1990s in the *Human Development Report* of the United Nations Development Programme (Sheptycki, 2009; UNDP, 1994). This report was the first to introduce a concept of human security and directed the debate in security studies towards individuals and threats that considered their freedoms and rights (Bigo, 2012, p. 279). UNDP divided human security into two distinctive categorisations. “Freedom from fear” referred to the protection of individuals from the immediate threat of violence and “freedom from want”, in turn, was introduced as more structural, long-term challenges that included several, widely differing threats from development to environmental concerns (UNDP, 1994, p. 24).

In addition to the UNDP report, there has been specific points in recent history that have highlighted the outcomes of the slow systemic shift in the perceptions of intelligence and security. The development of violent non-state actors has created new transnational threats, such as terrorism, cyber-attacks, and hybrid threats, that demand a more comprehensive flux of responses from security agents (Dunn Cavelty & Balzacq, 2017). However, what differentiates violent non-state actors from previous agents in the intelligence field is the dimension of threat that often defines them as enemies of the state-led intelligence communities instead of collaborators that enhance intelligence operations. Consequently, as these actors have transformed the power structures in the intelligence environment, they have also introduced new threats that define their operations.

Non-state actors have often been defined as terrorist groups that have conducted several highly publicised attacks in Western countries. Their impact increased after the fall of the Soviet Union, as security authorities recognised that multiple new threats infiltrated the zones of everyday life and transformed understandings of security to more inclusive definitions beyond nation-state frameworks (Dunn Cavelty & Balzacq, 2017). The attacks on World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, have been widely regarded as a turning point for the globalized surveillance systems, as

the collective insecurity urged citizens to give up part of their privacy to ensure that the fears of new terror attacks would not be realised (Petersen, 2013, p. 3). The Patriotic Act introduced after 9/11 in the United States and further terrorist attacks in Europe, such as the London and Madrid bombings, provided a powerful, yet controversial reminder for the public to consider the potential benefits of more expanded intelligence-gathering powers.

More recently, the European governments and citizens have been alarmed by several highly covered terrorist acts in their urban centres, such as in Paris in 2015, which was followed by more expanded surveillance powers for French authorities (Willsher, 2015). In the Finnish context, the increased perception of domestic threats escalated after the first terrorist attack in 2017, which demanded public responses from the governmental parties to deliberate their stances regarding the upcoming changes in intelligence legislation (YLE News, 2017; YLE News, 2018). These fears of terrorism have been intertwined with the phenomenon of foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq and created more demands for the states to gather and share intelligence of returning nationals with the wider intelligence community (Bonfanti, 2016). Consequently, the threat scenarios produced by non-state actors and broadened sense of security in the 21st century have in many cases resulted in intelligence reforms.

Intelligence reforms represent one aspect of this contemporary trajectory and legislative changes have often been closely related to escalated threat scenarios in both domestic and international spheres. These events have often activated a national security discourse to enable expanded powers to gather intelligence and protect citizens from further harm (Ball & Webster, 2003). Moreover, the escalation of threats often reveals the failures of intelligence services to prevent violence or espionage and end up in the headlines in the media (Teirilä, 2020). As violent non-state actors are often the ones to realise these threats and expose the apparent failures of intelligence services to contain threats, it is evident that they may have a significant role in the security paradigms and discourses related to national intelligence culture.

In addition to the rise of transnational threats, the tension between intelligence accountability and possibilities to protect states from foreign interference has intensified. Snowden's global surveillance disclosures regarding the United States National Security Agency (NSA) in 2013 strengthened the fear that government institutions may collect and share extensive amounts of data not just to protect citizens, but to also monitor them for control (Bolin & Jerslev, 2018, p. 4). Moreover, many states, embassies, and international institutions, such as the EU, were not able to escape the global reach of American surveillance as Snowden revealed that NSA had

intercepted their communications (BBC, 2014). This raised concerns of other global surveillance systems potentially gathering information on large collectives and individuals.

In the Finnish context, the large-scale cyber espionage of the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) was described as a major security breach that paced up the discourses surrounding intelligence reform in 2013. According to the revelations published in a national news media MTV3, the data breaches of MFA had continued for several years and the suspected perpetrators included Chinese and Russian intelligence services (Haapala, 2013). Another example of foreign interference, the Chinese-linked APT-31 group was identified as the perpetrator of a recent cyber espionage hack against the Finnish Parliament (YLE News, 2021). Thus, foreign interference has further highlighted the importance of digital security and counterintelligence in high-level governmental institutions. In addition, published stories regarding espionage and privacy breaches called into question the secrecy of intelligence agencies, as the public has increasingly questioned the legitimacy and accountability of their operations (Teirilä, 2020). It is this tension between national security and human rights, such as the right to privacy, that often define contemporary debates on intelligence.

However, not all contemporary security threats emanate solely from non-state sources. Instead, the great power rivalry between the states has resurged in contemporary international affairs, which has further complicated the global interconnected system. The annexation of Crimea in 2014 and subsequent separatist developments in Ukraine have illustrated the Russian ambitions to re-establish its great power status while China has aimed to assert its position by continuing the disputes over the South China Sea (Gheciu & Wohlforth, 2018). Although these conflicts have characteristics of traditional territorial disputes, the methods of warfare have transformed into a state of hybrid warfare with unmasked soldiers and ambiguous context of conflict (Gheciu & Wohlforth, 2018). Thus, the threats emerging from states have not disappeared, but they have adapted to modern networked structures and spilt over from established systems of warfare to new, uncharted territories.

In addition to threats, there is an increasing number of other actors that collaborate and compete with traditional nation-states and their intelligence organisations in the public sector. Thus, intelligence is increasingly used to promote objectives that are considered valuable and good instead of merely containing threats and maintaining the status quo. Intelligence is highly intertwined with economic development in advanced industrial societies, and its provision of new information has been centrally linked to the ideas of efficiency and business intelligence in private corporations (Cohen, 2017, p. 457). National intelligence operations have increasingly been

outsourced to private corporations, which has created more synergies between private and public sector intelligence organisations (Voelz, 2009). However, not all relations bring solely beneficial results, as private corporations have been able to sell collected data for questionable purposes as revealed in the Facebook-Cambridge Analytica data leak scandal (Kortesoja et al., 2019, p. 78). This trajectory has blurred traditional dividing lines between public and private sectors as the commercialisation of intelligence has affected both sides.

In addition, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have a significant impact on today's intelligence environment. For example, large political advocacy NGOs, such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, are highly efficient in their intelligence collection as they promote political advocacy campaigns and produce reports on the state of human rights in different parts of the world (Gentry, 2016, p. 477). In addition to the NGOs, also several individuals, such as Edward Snowden, have aimed to promote better accountability and democratisation of intelligence with citizen engagement and activism. This widening spectrum of intelligence stakeholders also means that various actors from states to international organisations have engaged in humanitarian interventions that have been initiated by more efficient intelligence-gathering (Johnson, 2009, p. 41). Consequently, intelligence is not only a tool to promote nation-state's interests, but it can be utilised to promote individual, regional, and even global security interests.

These widening scopes of both intelligence and security have also introduced a notion in which intelligence is not an apolitical technique to collect information, but one that contains political contestation and normative positions. The recognition that both intelligence and security are bounded by cultural and political meaning-making processes has opened a way for more critical approaches in the field of intelligence studies (Makkonen, 2020, p. 36). In addition, the human security approach can be combined with approaches that emphasise the democratisation of intelligence and human rights perspectives in the legitimisation of intelligence practices (Teirilä, 2020).

Scholars have increasingly utilised the human security intelligence paradigm in discussions on intelligence culture and thus, aimed to broaden the scope of the intelligence field to include more reflexive and culturally aware discussions on the meanings of intelligence in different societies. As these meanings vary from one context to another, this shift in the understanding of intelligence in security has contested the realist assumptions of intelligence as something that can be approached objectively. Moreover, intelligence in the human security paradigm creates new questions on how the concept and related phenomena should be studied and analysed, as the complex intelligence environment calls for more in-depth knowledge on country-specific intelligence cultures.

2.6 News media and democratisation of national intelligence culture

This thesis has a specific focus on news media articles and, therefore, it is important to evaluate the role of news media in the shaping of intelligence reform discourses and further development of national intelligence culture. Consequently, this evaluation also considers the power structures that have formed the interrelations between media and societal elites that maintain the policy-making processes.

Finnish news media is an interesting focus for intelligence research as it has been characterised by a consensus-oriented tradition where journalists and decision-makers have maintained collaborative relations (Kunelius et al, 2009, p. 41-42). Hallin and Mancini (2004) have categorised Finnish media system as part of the Democratic-Corporatist model, a theoretical framework to study the Northern and Central European media systems. The Democratic-Corporatist model is characterised by extensive newspaper circulation, a tradition of partisan parallelism expressed in the media, high levels of professionalisation among the journalists as well as welfare policies that enable state interventionism in the media sphere (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). As Kunelius et al. (2009) noted, the press in the democratic-corporatist model actively advocates press freedom and rely on the legislative frameworks that protect its independence.

These features have been traditionally regarded distinctively different from the liberal model prevalent in the Anglosphere, where the press maintains a more confrontational stance towards the political and social elites (Hallin & Mancini, 2004; Kunelius et al., 2009, p. 42). However, a recent research by Reunanen and Kunelius (2021) indicated that the decision-making stances of Finnish political and societal elites have slightly changed towards a culture of more open confrontation and power struggles between the years 2009-2019. The political and societal elites recognised more apparent risks in publicity, but also assessed the collaboration with the press more positively in 2019 than in 2009 (Reunanen & Kunelius, 2021). Therefore, the traditional consensus-oriented negotiations that have defined Democratic-Corporatist model and the Finnish public sphere have been gradually challenged by fragmented power interests.

In addition to synergies between the press and the political and societal elites, the Finnish news media also follows strict ethical guidelines. As argued by Mäkelä (2020), Finnish news media that follows the democratic values outlined in ethical guidelines for journalists provides significant support for liberal democratic objectives that have been challenged by disinformation and post-truth discourses disseminated on social media. Following this argumentation, traditional news media can be approached both as an informant of the public and an active agent that supports the objectives of

liberal democracies. Consequently, this relationship between the intelligence community and media should be analysed more profoundly, as it is one of the most important links to democracy in the field of intelligence.

The thesis will focus on Finnish news media as a specific actor and mediator of intelligence culture for four reasons. News media has a powerful role in intelligence culture because firstly, it monitors the surrounding society and provides knowledge for the public. Secondly, news media operates as an independent agent by supporting or criticising newsworthy events. Thirdly, news media also provides an arena for various voices that can promote their interests in the public sphere. (Christians et al., 2009, p. 116.) And fourthly, news media can also collaborate with the government and promote state interests, although this might in some cases question the independence of the press and the journalistic integrity (Christians et al., 2009, p. 127, 129-130). It is this mixture of influences that can support and challenge the policymaking processes and have a significant influence on the topics that surface in the public sphere.

The power of news media should not be overlooked when analysing the national intelligence culture and discourses that interacted during the intelligence reform in Finland. Researchers have found that news media can generate and contribute to widely shared opinion trends that determine the public perceptions on intelligence (Dumitru, 2014, p. 577). In addition, news media can influence the level of trust in intelligence agencies in the public sphere (Makkonen, 2020, p. 46). Therefore, media is one of the most important actors that can balance the need for more transparency in an operative environment that is inherently reliant on secrecy and clandestine operations (Dumitru, 2014, p. 586-587). Thus, the news media challenges the intelligence community to evaluate the established truths of publicity and secrecy to further legitimise their existence.

It is this balance of publicity and secrecy that has established the foundations of the roles that have been adopted by different intelligence actors. The dimension of secrecy is an inherent feature of intelligence whereas the importance of publicity has increased following the demands of a larger societal demands to democratise intelligence (Mäkelä, 2020). These dimensions are not fixed categories, but they have a varying influence on the operations, discourses, and values that these actors maintain. Still, some fundamental ideals guide the activities and objectives. Democratic societies have increasingly challenged the secrecy of intelligence services by demanding more accountability and openness of intelligence operations (Makkonen, 2020, p. 44). Thus, intelligence services and other actors participating in the intelligence collection have a continuous demand to

justify their existence and manage their legitimacy in the public sphere. Media and more specifically news media have a powerful role in this process.

The rise of publicity has resulted in increasing demands to determine the purpose of different organisations and their operations. Consequently, although intelligence and actors that are centrally related to it have become an important topic for debates in the public sphere, their representations in news media have not been based on consensus or unanimous imaginaries. Thus, these debates have resulted in studies that have analysed how media can democratise intelligence in emerging democracies (Matei, 2014), the legitimisation discourses regarding surveillance in news media following Snowden's revelations (Tiainen, 2017; Heikkilä & Kunelius, 2017) and the relations of the government and news media in the context of intelligence leaks in 2017 (Kortesoja et al., 2019). These research endeavours indicate that there is a growing demand to understand the relations between secrecy and publicity that determine the legitimate domains of intelligence operations.

Discourses produced in the news media reflect the complexity of stakeholder network in the national intelligence culture. Scholars have presented distinctively different perceptions on the power of media to influence the topics that have political or societal importance. The journalistic ideals of objectivity and balance have created an argument that the primary purpose of media is to inform the public rather than offer independent opinions on topical issues (Hallin, 1984, p.116). Other perspectives, however, have recognised media's potential to act as "information nodes" that organise large flows of information and its abilities to collaborate with different grassroots actors in the networked media space, such as citizen journalists and bloggers (Heinrich, 2011). Some have argued that mainstream media outlets may still have the greatest influence on public opinion and the views of the decision-makers, but the fast-paced development of protest movements and activism has decentralised the control over news production (Russell, 2016).

These perceptions have often differed in terms of the level of consensus and controversy that media maintains with the societal elites and the spectrum of media's roles has varied from the mediator of elite interests to the important watchdog functions. Hallin has illustrated this spectrum of different media roles in the discourse construction by referring to three spheres of news coverage.

The first and central part in this circle of news coverage is the sphere of consensus, which includes issues that journalists agree on with the societal elites and, thus, aim to promote for the wider public (Hallin, 1984, p. 117). Therefore, the journalists align with the prevalent narratives and seek to maintain the consensus in the public discussions. The consensus-seeking perception

regarding the power of media has been shared by other scholars. Christians et al. have argued that although it is not often publicly stated, media may have interests and even eagerness to collaborate with governments, state officials and other institutional sources (2009, p. 130).

Other scholars have introduced an idea that the media is a mere reflector and supporter of the views established by the political and economic elites (Kunelius et al., 2009, p. 11). These “institutional sources” have been regarded as the “primary identifiers” of the societal meaning-making processes, as they produce the context of knowledge where media places the newsworthy items (Hall et al., 1987, p. 57). The emphasis on institutional sources is a result of the media’s pressure to constantly produce newsworthy content and the media’s tendency to uphold values of objectivity and impartiality that privilege political and economic elites as the trusted sources of media (Hall et al., 1987, p. 58).

The sphere of consensus has been further elaborated based on the different categories of content that media produces. Kunelius et al. argue that the way media participates in societal debates is reflected in the focus on news content or more subjective, opinion-based content, such as editorials, commentaries and columns by the journalists and outside sources (2009, p. 104). Based on this argumentation, the news-focused media outlets have been described as actors that tend to position themselves on the sidelines of the debate to ensure objective and impartial coverage of the events (Kunelius et al., 2009, p. 104). In contrast, more opinion-based outlets have stronger tendencies to express their subjective perspectives vocally in the societal debates (Kunelius et al., 2009, p. 104). Consequently, as the news-focused outlets are hesitant to criticise their institutional sources, they would fit the perception of media as a reflector and mediator of institutional interests.

However, Hallin argues that this consensus-oriented part in the news coverage theory is encircled by the sphere of legitimate controversy, which seeks to balance competing narratives and challenge the perspectives upheld by the societal elites (1986, p. 116-117). According to Hallin, this is the sphere of “electoral contests and legislative debates” (1986, p.116), which would place the Finnish intelligence reform within this framework of news coverage. In this sphere, the media’s aim is to provide different perspectives and interests to fulfil the standard of balance that is often demanded from informative content. Thus, the journalist seeks to contrast and highlight the differences, instead of seeking a unanimous consensus on the topical issues.

Hallin’s sphere of legitimate controversy is aligned with the perceptions that have emphasised the media’s abilities as a powerful actor in the public sphere, which can and should compete with political and governmental systems for the agenda (Kunelius et al., 2009, p. 11). In

this approach, the media has the power to challenge the prevalent notions of consensus by directing the public attention to political and societal tensions (Kortesoja et al., 2019, p. 80). Consequently, media has a significant role as a creator and mediator of public discourses.

The media's ability to contest elite narratives, however, requires at least some level of specialisation from the journalists. As Kunelius et al. stated elites may often support this specialisation if they find consensus with the journalists but they consider the more independent position of the journalists as a risk if the chosen topics criticise the prevalent elite narratives (2009, p. 331). Thus, media can steer the tone of voice and newsworthy topics in the public sphere, but this comes with its limits. The agenda-setting power of the media often culminates in published stories regarding recognised challenges that have strong moral inclinations and, consequently, the agenda-setting power is dependent on the collective ideas of right and wrong (Kunelius et al., 2009, p. 455). According to this view, media may have significant power in society, but it has to find stories that provide the necessary piece for the shared normative puzzle. Thus, media's power is dependent on the complex network of societal influences rather than independent and socially isolated capacities.

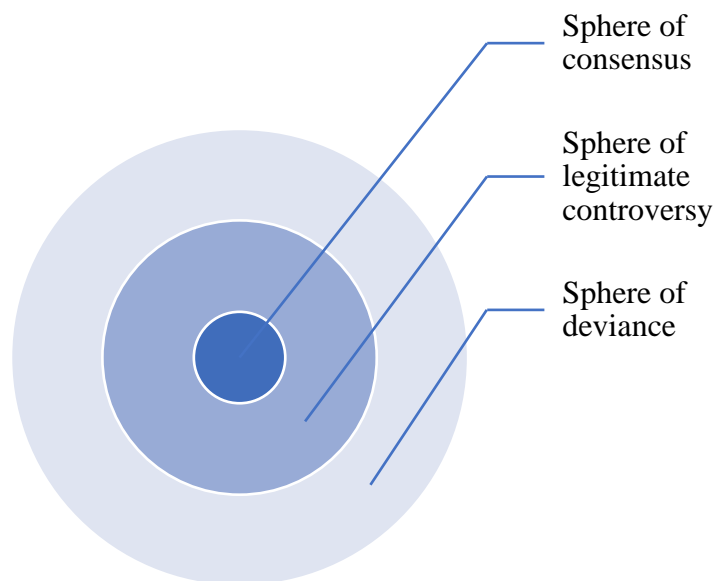


Figure 2.1: The spheres of news media coverage (based on Hallin, 1986, p. 117; Lounasmeri, 2010, p. 28)

As the third and final part that describes the power of media and journalists, Hallin (1986) introduced a sphere of deviance at the very outer edge of this theoretical circle model. This sphere aims to draw the boundaries of legitimate “political conflict” by the marginalisation of voices that are deemed as irrelevant by the media and public (Hallin, 1986, p. 117). In the sphere of deviance, the media aims to draw boundaries over what are deemed as legitimate challenges for the political consensus and what issues should be excluded from the discussions in the public sphere (Hallin, 1986, p. 117). According to Hallin (1986, p. 117), the sphere of deviance is where the mainstream aims to dominate the views that have been deemed as irrelevant or unimportant for the majority. Therefore, although the sphere of deviance is the outermost area in Hallin’s model of news coverage, it provides important insights into what values and normative frameworks are maintained in the public sphere. In addition, the absence of actors and views that would challenge the narratives of the political and societal elites as well as the press can provide valuable perspectives on the marginalised voices in the shaping of national intelligence culture.

3 METHODOLOGY

This thesis aims to analyse how intelligence reform discourses in news media may have contributed to the Finnish national intelligence culture. Finnish intelligence reform is one of the most recent examples that has shaped the intelligence practices and responsibilities in the intelligence community. It has also been one of the first instances where the purpose and role of intelligence services has been widely discussed in the news media. Consequently, the study of intelligence reform provides an opportunity to analyse how the news media may have shaped the national intelligence culture.

I chose *Helsingin Sanomat* as my primary source, as it is the most prominent daily news media outlet in the Nordics (Sanoma, 2020) and the largest news media outlet in Finland (Media Audit Finland, 2019). In 2019 readership statistics regarding *Helsingin Sanomat*, the daily average of overall readership both in digital and printed versions was 1 669 000 (Media Audit Finland, 2019). The digital version accounted for 1 225 000 and printed version for 674 000 readers (Media Audit Finland, 2019). To clarify the differences in the total readership and sub-sections in online and printed platforms, each reader was counted in the statistics only once (Media Audit Finland, 2019). In addition to the readership statistics, studies conducted by Reunanen and Kunelius (2021, p. 48) as well as Kunelius et al. (2010, p. 88) have revealed that *Helsingin Sanomat* has been one of the most followed news media outlets among the Finnish decision-makers. Consequently, these statistics and findings illustrate the scale of the perspectives published in this *Helsingin Sanomat*, and further affirm that they have a significant influence on the public discussion of national intelligence culture in the Finnish context.

In this study, I intend to study how intelligence reform was represented and discussed in the news media. The analysis of these discourses will focus on how different actors approach intelligence reform in the news media and what kind of perspectives they share in the published articles. Moreover, with this specific case study I aim to analyse what role news media has had for the shaping of national intelligence culture in Finland. To study the interplay between different actors in the intelligence reform discourses, my thesis presents the following research question:

RQ: *How did news media discourses on the Finnish intelligence reform shape the national intelligence culture?*

More specifically, this thesis will analyse how intelligence has defined by different intelligence stakeholders, how the intelligence environment was perceived in the discourses and

how security paradigms were utilised to justify the different emphases in the discourses. This thesis will focus on the concept of national intelligence culture and aims to research the culturally specific understandings of intelligence in Finland. Consequently, the objective of this study is to outline the prominent stakeholders, the most significant discourses of the debate and the study how the stakeholders have promoted their intelligence and security interests in the news media.

The following sections will introduce the research strategy and design and establish the methodological foundations for this study. The chapter will continue to outline the data collection and analysis methods. Finally, the chapter will discuss the questions of reliability and validity of the study.

3.1 Research strategy and design

My thesis is based on qualitative research strategy. Qualitative research strategy provides a possibility to generate theories inductively in a specific context rather than testing predetermined theoretical models of natural sciences (Bryman, 2012, p. 36). Thus, qualitative research “engages in-depth studies that generally produce historically and culturally situated knowledge” and consequently, this knowledge cannot be transferred to other settings (Tracy, 2010, p. 845). Consequently, qualitative research strategy provides opportunities to study the intelligence reform discourses in Finland and provide a further compass to develop analytical tools to study national intelligence culture in Finland. However, this research strategy does not suggest generalisability of these country-specific findings, but rather recognises and emphasises the contextuality of this research endeavour.

This thesis does not share either the traditional notions of objectivity and positivism of the quantitative research strategy or the prevalent perspectives of constructionism and interpretivism in the qualitative research strategy (Bryman, 2012, p. 36, 616). Qualitative research strategy is refined by the utilisation of the critical realist approach, which differentiates the natural and social world as two different realities. This differentiation is derived from human action that has no effect on the natural world but existentially shapes the social world, as humans create social constructs to manage and maintain relations with each other (Fairclough, 2010, p. 4). Critical realism combines the study of social constructs but accepts the existence of a reality that is not created in human interaction (Fairclough, 2010, p. 204). Thus, it allows this study to approach the construction of national intelligence culture as a combination of social and physical worlds that constitute the discourses related to intelligence reform. This broadens the analytical focus from social constructs to also consider the wider structural factors in Finnish society.

As a distinctive branch of realism, critical realism argues that objects of scientific inquiries exist and operate independently in reality and thus, they are not dependent on the subjective belief and value systems of the researcher (Lewis-Beck et al., 2004, p. 222). However, critical realism does not assume that this reality would be fixed and motionless. Instead, as Roy Bhaskar (2011) argued, “the social world is reproduced and transformed in daily life” (p. 4) and thus, critical realism recognises the ever-present changes in the surrounding environment that may influence scientific inquiries. Hence, although there is a distinction between natural and social worlds, critical realism suggests that these realities co-exist as humans are both situated in the natural world and social world.

However, whereas positivists state that scientific knowledge is a direct representation of the observable reality, critical realists argue that scientifically produced concepts and frameworks are only “a way of knowing that reality” (Bryman, 2012, p. 29). This means that critical realists distinguish the phenomena they study and concepts that they utilise to analyse these phenomena (Bryman, 2012, p. 29). Consequently, critical realist accepts that their conceptualisations may be subject to transformation as the knowledge of reality may change over time.

This thesis will adopt the case study as a research design, as it provides opportunity to develop in-depth knowledge on social phenomena in specific contexts. The case study can be defined as a “detailed and intensive analysis of a single case” (Bryman, 2012, p. 66). The researcher conducts a case study to reveal the complexities of a certain phenomenon in a greater detail and analyse the particularities involved in a social setting (Mabry, 2012, p. 214-216). As this thesis will analyse the construction and development of national intelligence culture only in one country and including just its largest news media outlet, the case study research design provides a suitable framework to generate in-depth knowledge on the topic.

3.2 Data collection

The scope of the data collection spanned from the beginning of the legislative process in August 2015 to the enactment date of the intelligence reform in June 2019. Although it has been indicated in the governmental sources, news media and previous research that the preparations for the legislative reform began already after the introduction of cyber security strategy in 2013, the time period from 2015-2019 provided clearly demarcated boundaries to study specifically the news media discourses related to intelligence reform. I also considered to delimit this study only to the years 2017-2019 as these years produced most of the relevant contents included in this study. However, it was necessary to include the data also from the previous years to provide a

comprehensive outlook on the discourses that influenced the construction of national intelligence culture in Finnish news media.

The data sample of this study is formed by 216 articles that were published in the online news platform of *Helsingin Sanomat*. The study includes news articles, editorials, commentaries, and opinions in a digital format. Inclusion of different news content types supported my aim to find a representative sample of discourses that were involved in the development of Finnish national intelligence culture. These articles were further divided to different time periods to form a timeline of the specific news media events that had impact on the intelligence reform discourses in the Finnish context.

As the analytical focus was on news contents published in *Helsingin Sanomat's* online platform, the printed contents were not included in this study. The digital articles were chosen because of the substantially higher readership statistics compared to printed newspaper readership (Media Audit Finland, 2019) and the more efficient data collection possibilities available online. In addition, most of the digitally published contents have been also featured in the printed newspaper and thus, the representation of relevant articles in this study was not substantially different depending on the publishing platform.

In the beginning of this research process, I searched the article database of *Helsingin Sanomat* with keywords “tiedustelu” (intelligence), “tiedustelulainsäädäntö” (intelligence legislation) and “tiedustelulaki” (intelligence law) with their relevant derivative forms. After the initial search, I complemented these search terms with other related keywords, such as “SUPO” (FSIS), “Puolustusvoimat” (Finnish Defence Forces) and “turvallisuus” (security). *Helsingin Sanomat* also had a broad “tiedustelulaki” (intelligence law) database, which was based on the tagged categories in articles. This database provided a considerable number of relevant news articles that were included in this study.

During the initial data collection period, I systematically read the articles several times and evaluated whether they were relevant for my study. My aim was to create a data sample that would achieve a necessary level of theoretical saturation and, thus, guide my sampling to relevant concepts and categories in the research process (Bryman, 2012, p. 420). I excluded news content that summarised news articles published in other news sources and news articles that may have mentioned intelligence reform but were clearly focused on other topics, such as health and social services reform (*sote-uudistus*).

I also manually analysed the search results to exclude duplicate contents and materials that were delimited out of this study. These included articles that focused on legislative reforms in general and mentioned intelligence reform as an example of the ongoing legislative projects in the government. In addition, I did not include the news regarding the police investigations and legal proceedings related to *Helsingin Sanomat* publication of classified documents in a news article regarding Finnish Intelligence Research Centre (*Viestikoekeskus*). The news article that initiated the legal action and the following discussions that were centrally related to intelligence reform, however, were included in this study.

While collecting the data sample, I read complementary materials from *Helsingin Sanomat*, YLE News articles and Governmental proposals to further develop the coding for the content analysis and interpretations regarding discourses represented in the research material. Although they were not included in the research sample, these sources provided a larger context that enabled me to refine and focus the discourse analysis to include relevant aspects of the national intelligence culture construction represented in *Helsingin Sanomat*.

As I searched for the relevant news content for my study, I created five different Excel sheets that were named after my data collection period, i.e. years 2015-2019. I collected all relevant materials to the Excel sheets and organised them according to a specific coding schedule. I modified the coding schedule introduced in Bryman's discussion on content analysis (2012, p. 299). However, I did not utilise any kind of number systems introduced in Bryman's coding schedule and manual (2012, p. 299), but instead utilised predetermined, single-word categories for my different coding elements. My initial coding schedule included the date and time of the publication and links to the web sources of the news content and the names of the journalists that had written the specific content.

In addition, I also coded predetermined news categories as follows: news articles, feature article, commentaries, analyses, editorials, opinions, guest commentaries. The predetermined news content categories were mainly derived from the categories that were used by *Helsingin Sanomat*. However, *Helsingin Sanomat* had not established categories to separate news articles and feature articles. As I wanted to research further the frequency of specific news content categories, I also cross-checked and refined these categories with the studies introduced in Kunelius et al. (2009). As their prevalent themes of power, political elites and the news media were close to my research topic, these categories provided a good basis to analyse my data and refine the categories to match the news content in the collected sample.

Consequently, I separated news articles from more detailed and extensive interviews of the key national intelligence culture stakeholders and labelled this category as feature articles. According to the Kunelius et al. (2009) content categories, news articles focused on specific news events and included commentaries from people regarding the specific news event. In contrast, Kunelius et al. (2009) defined feature articles as a distinctive category from news articles as their primary purpose was to establish an image of the interviewee instead of conveying information on newsworthy events. In addition to these categories, Kunelius et al. (2009) also utilised categories such as journalist commentaries, journalist analyses, letters to the editor and guest commentaries. All these categories are present in my research sample, but I excluded the words “journalist” from commentaries and analyses.

As the data collection progressed, I collected further information from individual articles to count the number of included stakeholders. In the beginning, I only recorded the names and titles of the specific stakeholder spokespersons and after re-reading the research materials, I further coded them into specific stakeholder groups following the stakeholder theory introduced in the chapter on national intelligence culture. The coding schedule dimension was named “stakeholder” and the categories were as follows: politicians, members of academic community, government officials employed in the ministries and other governmental institutions, members of the intelligence community, media, and citizens. Although the theoretical framework established categories of lawmakers and policymakers, I changed these categories to politicians and government officials as these categories illustrated better the difference between political and public administration functions in the Finnish government.

I found 9 different threat categories that were activated at least more than once in the research materials: violation of constitutional rights, terrorism, mass surveillance, violation of journalist source protection, military threats, cyber threats, hybrid threats, foreign fighters, and refugees. These categories were based on the direct word-by-word mentions of the possible threats in the individual news articles and mentions of different threats were added to the coding schedule systematically with the other details.

If there were more than one stakeholder or threat mentioned in the article, I recorded their appearances only once. As the stakeholder analysis does not identify individuals that are representatives of their specific groups, I did not count each individual member of stakeholder group from the articles. Instead, I treated the individuals as representatives of their stakeholder group and, thus, quantified the represented group only once per article. Thus, for example if there were three individual members of the intelligence community interviewed or mentioned in the news

article, their overall count was one per news article. Similarly, threats were recorded only once as representative of a specific threat category in the article. This decision to categorise a rather complex network stakeholders and threats with word-for-word mentions allowed me to further analyse a diverse set of different stakeholder and threat categories and place them in Hallin's discourse spheres.

3.3 Data analysis

I combined qualitative content analysis and critical discourse analysis as my methods to analyse the news media discussions regarding intelligence reform. The intelligence reform process activated multiple different discourse groups in the media sphere created by *Helsingin Sanomat*. With the combination of qualitative content analysis and critical discourse analysis, I was able to analyse how intelligence and security threats were perceived within different discourses and how news media either amplified or excluded different stakeholders in the published content.

I analysed a sample of documents, i.e. news media content, in this thesis that have created and maintained intelligence reform discourses. Content analysis provided robust foundations for this study as it is a systematic and highly replicable method to study various forms of qualitative data, e.g. documents and texts, with a selection of pre-established categories (Bryman, 2012, p. 290). As the data collection does not require engagement with research subjects, it is considered as an unobtrusive research method that can maintain high transparency (Bryman, 2012, p. 304). Thus, content analysis provided a great starting point to begin to trace tracing what discourses actors utilised in news media to promote their perspectives of intelligence and how these discourses interacted with each other in the news media debates.

However, content analysis had significant limitations that needed to be addressed in this research inquiry. Despite its ability to produce unobtrusive knowledge, researchers utilising content analysis as their method need to consider whether their selected sample is credible enough and large enough to represent the research object comprehensively (Bryman, 2012, p. 306). In other words, this layer can explicate certain features of reality from a distinctive perspective, but it cannot provide all encompassing answers to the issue. Bryman explicates this view further by stating that the articles and other documents should be always studied in the context for whom they are written for, what message the content aims to communicate and what motives the authors and other central voices in the content may have (2012, p. 555). Thus, the researcher's choices may have significant influence on the results.

In addition, content analysis is not able to provide comprehensive responses to why a certain social scientific phenomenon is happening (Bryman, 2012, p. 307). These news media contents formulate larger discursive structures that guide the opinion trends in the public sphere. For this reason, the main analytical method in this thesis is a critical discourse analysis as it enables the study of the discourses that shaped national intelligence culture in Finnish news media. Thus, the individual news media contents will be positioned within the larger discourse structures to analyse the meanings and context of intelligence reform in Finland and, consequently, how the reform has reflected and shaped national intelligence culture.

Critical discourse analysis provides means to study the ideological basis of different, competing discourses (Bryman, 2012, p. 557) and thus, it illustrates the complexity of discussions that have surrounded Finnish intelligence reform. For Fairclough, critical discourse analysis provides means to analyse the complex relations of power and causation “between a) discursive practices, events and texts and b) wider social and cultural structures, relations, and processes” (Fairclough, 2010, p. 93). Consequently, the aim of my thesis is to illustrate the shaping of national intelligence culture by analysing how different stakeholders can use the public news media space to promote their interests and how they have shaped the discourses of intelligence reform presented in the Finnish news media.

Essentially, discourses are either written or spoken manifestations of human communication (Antaki, 2008, p. 431). Consequently, critical discourse analysis was a useful method to analyse the discussions on intelligence reform and how the larger context of national intelligence culture was shaped during the legislative reform. According to Fairclough, discourses are defined as complex set of relations between humans who communicate with each other, experience “concrete communicative events” such as news media articles, and maintain abstract systems of communication meanings, such as languages (2010, p. 5). Moreover, Fairclough argued that discourse cannot be perceived as a mere object, but the analysis should include the complex networks of relations that permeate the creation and existence of discourses in a social world (2010, p. 4-5).

To elaborate the position of discourses in the larger societal structures further, Fairclough introduced an analytical framework that approached discursive events, i.e. “particular instances of language use”, from three different dimensions. Discursive events can be approached as a text, as a discourse and as a social practice (Fairclough, 2010, p. 94). According to Fairclough, a text dimension considers the actual words included in spoken or written communication whereas a discourse aims to produce a larger interpretation of the communicated words (2010, p. 94). As the

widest dimension in the analytical framework, the social practice considers the societal structures of power and language use (Fairclough, 2010, p. 94). Thus, the critical discourse analysis forms a layered method to study social phenomena that aims to uncover systematically the power relations inherent in language use. As such, Fairclough's framework provided the methodological foundations that supported my aim to study the specific articles to find larger discourse patterns and trace their development in the research period.

Critical discourse analysis in this thesis was mainly theory-driven and derived insights from the established framework of intelligence studies, security studies, and media studies. These theoretical understandings were however complemented by the data that was the source of the specific discourses analysed in this thesis. The analytical scope started to shift from individual news articles as the units of analysis to study the larger discursive patterns that provided the building blocks for the national intelligence culture in Hallin's spheres of consensus, legitimate controversy, and deviance.

After the initial data collection period and creation of annual Excel articles, I began to study any common patterns mentioned in the articles. This part of the analysis was data-driven as most of the content categories were derived from the research sample during the reading of the news content. 216 individual news articles formed the research units for this analysis, and my aim was to categorise these units into different discursive groups and trace whether they reflected specific security paradigms established in the theoretical framework. The news articles formed my primary units of analysis, which had several sub-units in the form of content types, journalists, threats, and stakeholder groups.

After I had established a timeline and coded the share of content, journalists, stakeholders, and threats in the content analysis phase, I was able to start tracing specific discourses that were the most prevalent in the research sample. While I refined my coding in the Excels, I also collected specific citations from the articles to illustrate my findings. I categorised the citations by the year of publication and colour-coded them in Word. As part of this coding process, I also translated the selected quotations from Finnish to English. In addition, I studied the frequency of different categories, e.g. specific threats mentioned in news content, and compared them to other categories to understand their development during the research period. This allowed me to begin to form a wider picture of the discourses that were commonly associated together.

During the coding process I was able to start the critical discourse analysis, as the threats and citations began to form larger discourses that were evident in the public debates over the

intelligence reform in *Helsingin Sanomat*. As the coding of threats and citations progressed, I was able to start placing them within Hallin's spheres of consensus, legitimate controversy, and deviance. By adding the three specific spheres to the analysis, I aimed to illustrate the discourses that were commonly shared by the stakeholders, discourses that were only shared by specific stakeholders, e.g. news media, as well as stakeholders that were excluded from the public debates but had great importance for the intelligence reform. With Hallin's spheres, I was able to analyse which stakeholders promoted the status quo of intelligence services as technocratic institutions and which stakeholders aimed to democratise intelligence and enhance its transparency and accountability in the public sphere.

3.4 Reliability and validity in research

Considerations regarding reliability and validity are central part of research processes. The objectives of these two cornerstones of research are very different depending on whether the research has been based on quantitative or qualitative foundations. Whereas quantitative research aims to achieve reliability and validity by predicting the future and providing relevant variables for statistical analyses, qualitative research derives insights from more subjective interpretations and experiences of the researcher.

Validity in research considers the integrity of research, which includes the appropriateness of the methodological choices, methods, research process and collected data sample (Bryman, 2012, p. 47). However, the traditional evaluations of validity have been often based on quantitative studies and, consequently, the criterion is not easily transferable to qualitative contexts. To answer to this challenge, Bryman among other scholars has suggested trustworthiness as an evaluative framework to increase the validity in qualitative research (Bryman, 2012, p. 48). Trustworthiness can be increased by triangulation, i.e. using more than one method or set of data in research, as well as utilising rich descriptions of specific contexts, providing careful documentation of the research process, and striving towards independence from personal values.

I utilised triangulation by choosing two specific methods, qualitative content analysis and critical discourse analysis, to approach my data sample. I believe that the basis provided by content analysis offered a great framework for further critical discourse analysis that derived insights from the completed coding schedules in Excel sheets. In addition, collection of other data sets from other news sources might have provided interesting opportunities for comparative research regarding the discourse formation of national intelligence culture. However, the scope of this thesis delimited other news sources from this study and, thus, triangulation was not possible in this regard. To

promote trustworthiness, my objective in this chapter has been to offer a detailed description of how I have collected my sample and how my research process progressed through different analytical stages.

This description also includes the recognition of personal values that may have influenced the research process and results. Although this qualitative research has striven for objectivity, it should be noted that theoretical frameworks, concepts, and methods guide the analysis of the research material and thus, the predetermined choices may influence on the interpretations derived from the research material. As Risjord (2014, p. 64) argued, it is difficult to differentiate one's value and belief frameworks from the research and even more difficult to produce interpretations that would not derive influences from these fundamental systems of knowledge. Thus, I recognise this research as an inherently value-laden inquiry and intend to provide a clear explication of the theoretical foundations and source materials that have contributed to my research results.

Reliability in research maps out the elements that enable the research to be repeatable (Bryman, 2012, p. 46). Thus, it promotes the objectivity of research that is independent from the researcher. However, this is often an ideal pronounced in the quantitative research, and the path of qualitative research is slightly different. The research can be influenced by the decisions of the researchers and scholars on how they have generated their sample and how they have created the conclusions based on the sample (Bryman, 2012, p. 406). For this reason, the reliability of my coding schedule and manual has been one of the aspects that has been carefully considered in this research.

In addition to considerations of the researcher's position it is important to acknowledge the restrictions posed by the method choices. According to Bryman (2012, p. 304), there are two aspects that should be considered in coding of content. One is the consistency of the coders, i.e. the inter-coder reliability, and the second is the consistency of individual coders over time, i.e. the intra-coder reliability. As I was the only researcher in this study, I aimed to enhance the reliability of my coding by establishing clear structures for specific categories that I included to my Excel coding scheme. Thus, the detailed descriptions of my content categories and coding schedule hopefully help future researchers to conduct similar studies that combine two methods to broaden the analytical scope.

4 DISCOURSES SHAPING NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE CULTURE

4.1 Overview of the research sample

This section will introduce the findings of the content analysis and create a basis for further critical discourse analysis. The section will start with a discussion of the timeline and central events that explain the surges in news media content during certain months. In addition, this section will also provide an analysis of the types and numbers of national intelligence culture stakeholders, types of security threats and media as a platform for different types of content.

4.1.1 Timeline of the findings

This timeline analysis revealed that national intelligence culture is not only dependent on the specific definitions of intelligence culture and established understandings of how intelligence agencies should operate. They were also bounded by external factors that emerged from the networked intelligence environment. Some of these events will be discussed in more detail in the sections regarding different discourses, but this brief overview highlights the importance of understanding the interplay of exogenous and endogenous factors in intelligence research.

The results of this timeline revealed that there were significant differences in the number of annual articles published during the research period. In Figure 4.1, the overall number of contents shows that during the first years of the intelligence reform, the legislative changes had little coverage in the *Helsingin Sanomat*. However, this trajectory changed during 2017 and to a lesser extent in 2018, which accounted for 81 and 60 news media content pieces. The year 2019 saw a decrease in the number of published contents, but this may be influenced by the limitation of the research period.

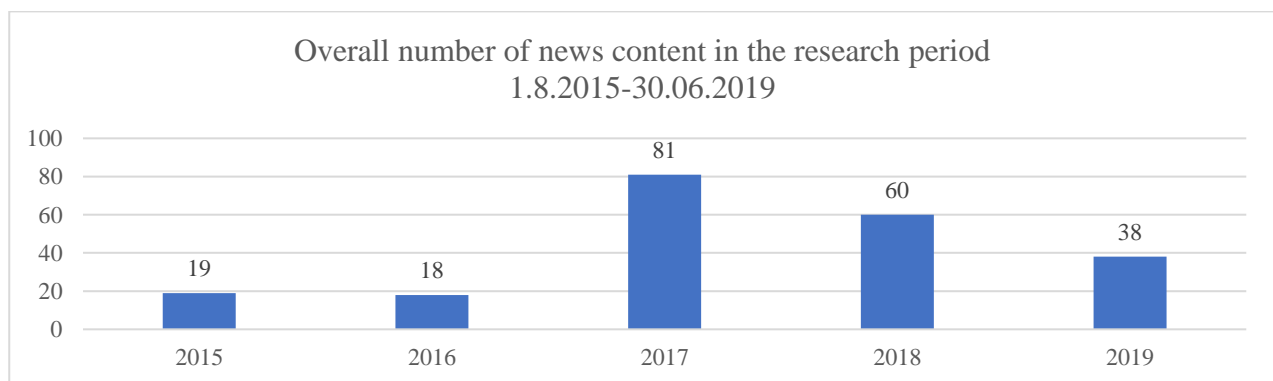


Figure 4.1: Overall number of contents in the research period

It should be noted, however, that the research period does not follow the calendar year but instead is based on the timeline established in the legislative process by the Finnish Government. Consequently, the choice to follow the timeline of the legislative process limits the comparability of annual content statistics, but, nevertheless, it provides a basis to understand the distribution and frequency of content in different years.

A more detailed analysis of the individual months revealed that there were specific news events that accounted for increases in news content. Some of the surges in the published content were related to events that had political and societal significance, such as the decision of the Court of Justice of the European Union in October 2015 to declare the US Safe Harbour agreement invalid and challenge the possibilities of organisations, including intelligence services, to transfer data between the European Union and the US.

Politically and societally significant events could also explain the surge of content in August 2018 as the intelligence reform was a frequent theme after the first terrorist attack in the city of Turku. In addition, the political and societal importance was also present in the decision of *Helsingin Sanomat* to publish classified defence documents in December 2017 that stirred controversy in the public sphere and was followed by a criminal investigation of the journalist involved in the editorial process.

Monthly increases in April 2017 and February 2018 were not easily traced to specific political and societal events. The content in these months was focused on the coverage of the legislative process, discussions between different political parties and ideological fronts, and the detailed explications of the changes in intelligence-gathering that would influence the everyday life of Finnish citizens.

In contrast, the increase in the number of published articles in 2019 was related to the exceptional and newsworthy development in the legislative process, as the parliament made an extraordinary decision to return the government proposals back to the reviewal of the constitutional committee after highly publicised criticism from the constitutional law experts in the media. To summarise, the timeline and specific surges in news content formed the basis for further study of the specific discourses that influenced the shaping of national intelligence culture in the contents of *Helsingin Sanomat*.

4.1.2 Different intelligence stakeholders

The shares of stakeholders were analysed and quantified based on the stakeholder analysis literature introduced in the national intelligence culture studies. Individual stakeholder groups were mentioned 267 times in the research material of 216 news content articles. Many articles comprised multiple stakeholder groups, which were calculated individually. A mention, in this case, was defined as a reference to a stakeholder's perspective that may have been published elsewhere, e.g. government proposals, or media's interview with a stakeholder that contained their comments or rephrased perspectives.

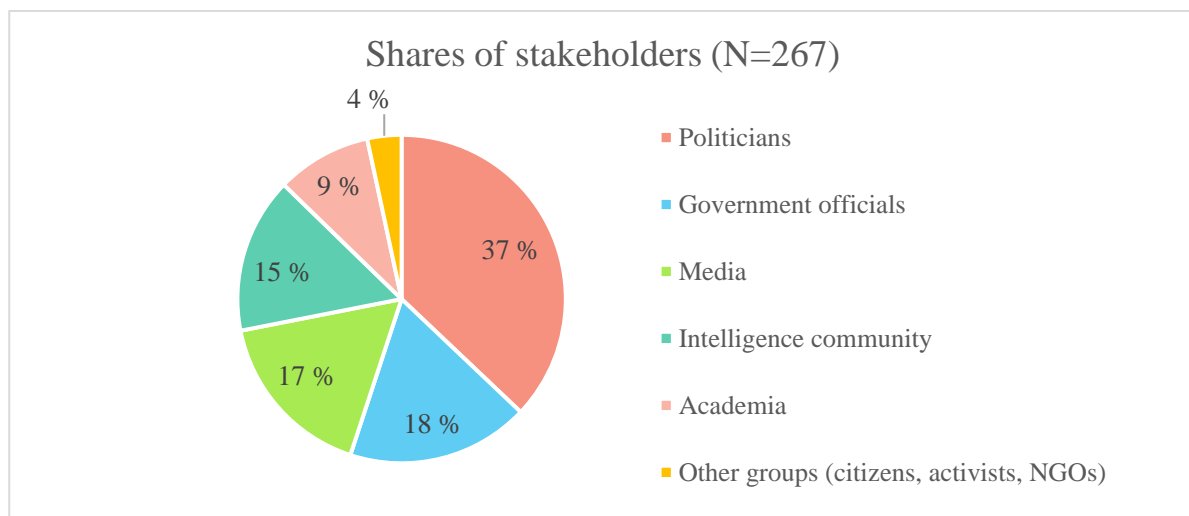


Figure 4.2: Shares of stakeholders

The stakeholder group of politicians included holders of public offices, such as the President of the Republic of Finland, ministers of the Finnish government and members of the Finnish parliament. This group and their perspectives regarding the intelligence reform formed a major force in the media, as they were mentioned most often in the research materials with a 37% share (Figure 4.2). They also represented the institutional sources that the media utilised to provide information and arguments regarding the legislative reform. Thus, they formed the core of the intelligence reform that actively promoted and debated the details of the expanded intelligence powers in the public sphere. Interestingly, this finding indicates that instead of large-scale discussion over the purpose and impact of intelligence reform in society, the power to set and promote the agenda was centralised to the top level of society. This was confirmed in more detail in the sections discussing intelligence discourses.

The second most prominent stakeholder group was the group of government officials that consisted of advisers and officials of ministries as well as overseers of legality that formed 18% share of the mentions (Figure 4.2). Whereas the politicians had a more varied spectrum of

statements, the government officials remained mostly impartial and neutral in their views to support the rule of law. Consequently, the common denominator of these groups was their non-political, in some respects even technocratic nature and their public duties, as these groups are responsible for the preparation of policy proposals and manage the administration of the government. In this group, the ministerial advisers and officials of ministries often commented on the process of the legislative reform and questions related to their field of expertise. In addition, overseers of legality consisted of government or parliament appointed legal professionals, such as the Chancellor of Justice and Parliamentary Ombudsman, who evaluated the legality of the reform and suggested measures to guarantee necessary oversight of the expanded intelligence powers.

Media as a stakeholder group was an active member in the democratisation of intelligence discourse with a 17% share (Figure 4.2). Thus, it did not only publish the content and interviews of others but also actively participated in the discourses and aimed to promote its own interests in the intelligence reform process. The media as a stakeholder group included the journalists who wrote for *Helsingin Sanomat* as well as organisations that promoted the interests of the journalists nationwide. Based on the analysis of the news content, *Helsingin Sanomat* aimed largely to balance the power of politicians with the perspectives of government officials and media representatives. Thus, it was the only stakeholder that had a dual role as the platform for the intelligence discourses and a participant of the discourse formation. In this specific case, mentions of media representatives covered all the commentaries and analyses of the journalists that reflected their individual views. In addition, this stakeholder group also covered the members of other newspaper outlets that took part in the debates over the constitutional rights and democratisation of intelligence discourses.

The stakeholder group of intelligence community included the spokespersons of both intelligence organisations in Finland, i.e. FSIS and FDIA. Interestingly, the intelligence community received almost as large share of the mentions as the media and the intelligence community (Figure 4.2). One potential reason for this was that the legislative reform had a significant impact on their daily operations and contained potential reputational possibilities among the public. Also, individual members of the intelligence community were interviewed in multiple feature articles and, thus, the most prominent spokespersons were often in the spotlight.

The stakeholder group of academia consisted of several professors and researchers from different universities that commented and shared their views on the intelligence reform in *Helsingin Sanomat*. In contrast to the intelligence community, the representatives of the academia were active participants in the discussions that promoted constitutional rights over national security. This was an interesting detail especially because the tradition of intelligence studies has not been strong in

the Finnish context. However, the representatives of academia were not featured in the intelligence related feature articles and, thus, their publicity was limited to occasional comments from individual researchers in the news content.

Finally, the smallest group consisted of the citizens, activists such as Edward Snowden, NGOs, and businesses, that were rarely mentioned or interviewed in the news contents. This group were largely marginalised in the discussions of intelligence reform, which supports the notion that *Helsingin Sanomat* utilised institutional sources as primary identifiers and, thus, delimited the discussions to the spheres of the societal elites.

4.1.3 Types of security threats

Intelligence operations are often defined by their success rate in containing threats to either national or human security. Thus, the broader framework of national intelligence culture has strong interconnections to the definitions of security and especially insecurity. To support my critical discourse analysis, I created 9 categories of threats from the research materials to provide foundations for further analysis of the national intelligence culture in Finland.

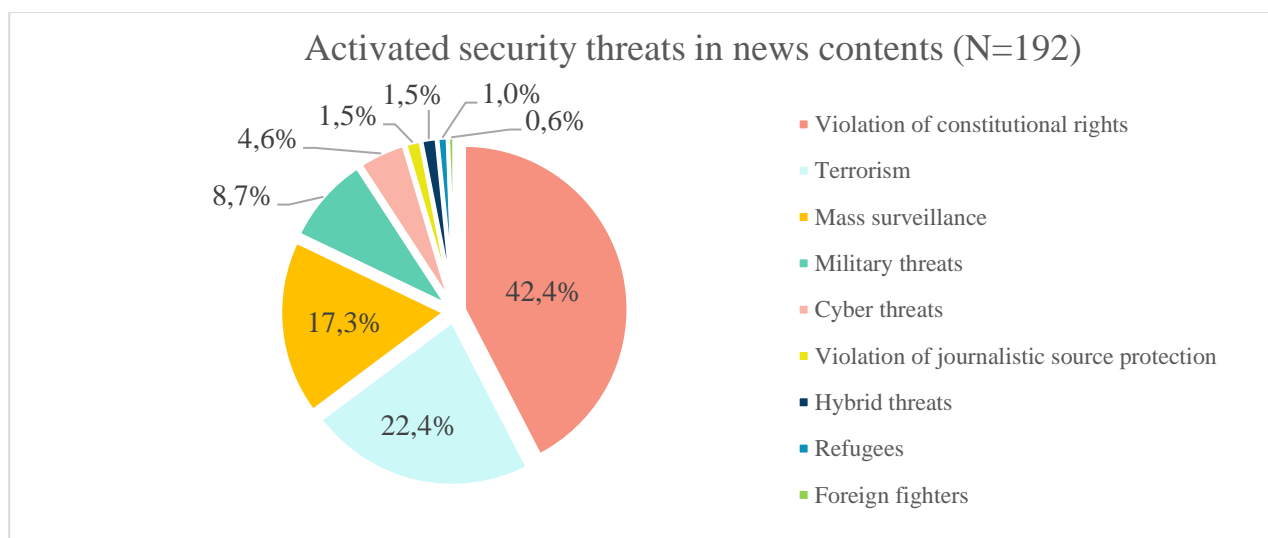


Figure 4.3: Types of security threats

Interestingly, the violation of constitutional rights was the most often activated threat in the analysed news contents (Figure 4.3). It was often associated with the threat of mass surveillance, which would follow from the expanded intelligence powers if they were left without parliamentary oversight. In addition, violation of constitutional rights was also occasionally associated with the violation of journalistic source protection, as the interception of confidential communications could have potentially threatened the anonymity of the newspaper sources.

Violation of constitutional rights was followed by the threat of terrorism and military threats (Figure 4.3). Both threats contained a dimension of violence, but their targets differentiated the discourses and contexts where they were utilised. Terrorism was often associated with soft targets, i.e. civilians, and ideals of human rights and democracy, whereas military threats were combined with stronger referrals to the ideas of the nation-state and national security interests. Thus, they shared the dimension of violence but as the targets of the violence were at the opposite ends of the spectrum, the differing understandings of security set these threats apart in the discourses.

However, intelligence associated with terrorism and military threats was often defined as a tool for decision-makers that promoted the technocratic nature of the intelligence processes instead of the agency and power of the intelligence organisations to shape the intelligence-gathering processes. As the focus was not on the targets of the intelligence but the dimension of violence inherent in terrorism and military threats, these definitions did not include the democratisation of intelligence. Although it may have been recognised as a possibility, it was not regarded as the primary objective of the intelligence reform.

In addition, threats such as terrorism, cyber espionage, hybrid threats and risks posed by people moving across borders and between nation-states, were perceived from a transnational, cross-border perspective (Figure 4.3). These threats were often combined with an understanding of digitalisation that not only provided opportunities but also further weaponisation by technological development. Thus, intelligence and its cultural meanings were not only defined by their national stakeholders, but they also contained a cross-border nature that had been further weaponised by technological development. All in all, threat categorisations revealed key elements in national intelligence discourses, i.e. power structures vs. technocratic definitions of intelligence, the dimension of violence and national vs. cross-border features of intelligence-gathering, that were further elaborated in the critical discourse analysis.

4.1.4 Media as a platform for intelligence discourses

As the news media *Helsingin Sanomat* was the platform of published content in this thesis, it was important to study what types of content the news outlet utilised to discuss the intelligence reform. Different categories for content types enabled a more extensive analysis of the ways *Helsingin Sanomat* participated in the societal debate over intelligence reform. They also provided another dimension of how stakeholders were able to participate in the discussions and how the discourses were formed in the newspaper.

The data on types of content revealed that 69.9% of content published in *Helsingin Sanomat* was classified as news articles (Figure 4.4). This content category included reports, short interviews, and coverage of events in the parliament as well as in the surrounding society related to intelligence reform. In addition, 6.9% of the content was classified as feature articles that were extensive interviews of the key media spokespersons related to intelligence reform. These articles discussed the life and work of their subjects in detail but also included sections that were related to intelligence reform. They provided a spotlight mainly for politicians involved in the intelligence reform, such as Paula Risikko, the former Speaker of the Government, and intelligence community members, such as Harri Ohra-aho, the Chief Intelligence Officer of the FDF at the time and Antti Pelttari, the Chief of FSIS. The limited distribution of the interviewees among merely two stakeholder groups, i.e. politicians and intelligence community members, indicate that the space for opinions outside of the newspaper was reserved for the powerful actors in the intelligence reform process.

A large part of the published news content were news articles (Figure 4.4). These articles often featured vocal stakeholders, such as politicians and the intelligence community, and the media representatives, such as journalists. Opinions accounted for only 6.0% of the overall content and most of these pieces were written by citizens. In addition, 1.9% percentage of guest commentaries offered a space for experts from different fields to voice their opinions and concerns related to intelligence reform. These commentaries often featured representatives of academia or government officials.

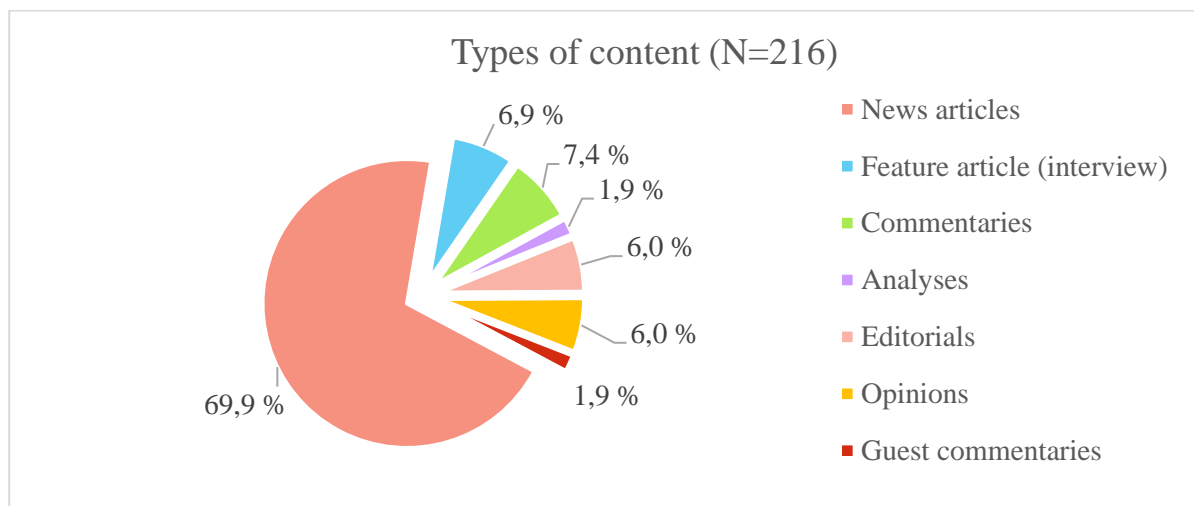


Figure 4.4: Types of content

Based on these findings, it seems that *Helsingin Sanomat* acted as a news-focused media outlet that aimed to position itself as an objective perceiver and informer of the societal debate. Consequently, it can be argued that *Helsingin Sanomat* aimed to uphold the values of impartiality by focusing on the newsworthy events that were related to Finnish intelligence reform. This stance to news differentiates *Helsingin Sanomat* from opinion-focused newspapers that voice more vocally their perspectives and focus on the promotion of their subjective interests. The distinctively smaller shares of content that had more subjective features, e.g. opinions, editorials and commentaries support this finding.

However, the findings in this section only provide a partial view of the discourses that were maintained in *Helsingin Sanomat*, as content classifications were not able to reveal the editorial choices to promote certain stakeholders and exclude others from the public debate. The following sections will offer a more in-depth analysis of how the distribution of content types resulted in the saturation of the public debate. In these debates, the powerful stakeholders had the most opportunities to voice their opinions and influence the public perceptions regarding the intelligence reform, whereas the less prominent actors, such as individual citizens, civil society actors and businesses had only a few possibilities to participate and voice their opinions in public.

4.2 Discourses in the sphere of consensus

The sphere of consensus consisted of various elements that were largely agreed upon issues among the different national intelligence culture stakeholders. This sphere was also largely dominated by discourse groups that activated threats to national security. In the following sections, the most prevalent discourses of this group, i.e. discourses of necessity in intelligence reform, the security environment's rapid change, and Finland's development in comparison to other Western states, will be discussed in detail. The sphere of consensus highlighted specific security threats, such as aggression of other states in the form of military threats, terrorist attacks in Finland and cross-border threats in the form of cyber-attacks and hybrid threats that necessitated the legal reform.

4.2.1 Intelligence reform is necessary

One of the most important matters was the widely shared notion that intelligence reform was a necessary transformation to protect security interests (Huusko, 2016). Moreover, other stakeholders, such as media and government officials, recognised the struggles of the intelligence services with the limited methods that were at their disposal before the reform (Huusko, 2016). Thus, this discourse was among the strongest discursive themes throughout the research period.

Although there were hardly any explicit statements that would have questioned this discourse and the need for the intelligence reform process, the intelligence community leadership actively dismissed the idea of not proceeding with the intelligence reform as “absurd” (Kauhanen, 2015d). Thus, the objective of the reform, the necessity to protect security interests, was not only passively maintained in the sphere of consensus but the key stakeholders, such as the intelligence community, actively aimed to promote this discourse across the stakeholder groups to strengthen the prevalent status quo that was sympathetic towards the expansion of intelligence powers.

This discourse was also deeply intertwined with the ideas of security, and the purpose of the reform was to improve the means to achieve greater national security. Thus, national security was a dominant security paradigm in the necessity discourse throughout the research period, and the paradigm established an important basis for the intelligence reform especially among the intelligence community and politicians that formed the government. As an example of this realism, the Minister of Defence Jussi Niinistö discussed the broader framework of the Finnish security environment and stated:

Intelligence and espionage have always been part of the range of means available to states in their efforts to advance their national interests. (Halminen, 2015)

The reference to history provided legitimation to continue the intelligence practices as outlined by the status quo. More specifically, it called for the continuation of the clandestine nature of intelligence that remains solely in the hands of the intelligence community and state elites instead of larger transparency and accountability to the public.

The necessity of the intelligence reform was further emphasised by concrete examples that highlighted the perceived security threats and limited capabilities in the intelligence services to counter them. The news content on intelligence reform featured highly covered threats, such as Russia’s belligerent hybrid operations near the Finnish borders and its cyber-attacks, terrorism in Europe as well as refugee crisis and potential foreign fighters, which all had received large public attention and were familiar topics for the audience (HS Editorial, 2016a; HS Editorial, 2016c; Hakonen, 2016; Pietiläinen, 2018a). References to specific threats provided more support for the discourse to create imaginaries of different security scenarios and future where the digital threats, such as cyber-attacks, could be combined with the threats of traditional warfare. Thus, the necessity discourse reflects the structure of the networked intelligence environment, which has created complex systems and layers of security interests.

However, although the Members of the Parliament provided a unified front for the necessity of the intelligence reform and their role as the authority to decide whether the governmental proposal should be passed, there were several nuances across the party-political divides that revealed the differing understandings of intelligence and security in the Finnish context:

Only the response of the Parliamentary Group of the National Coalition Party referred to the possibility that mass surveillance might be necessary. -- Only the Parliamentary Group of Christian Democrats had reservations about the strict oversight of the intelligence operations. -- There was a full consensus among the chairmen of the parliamentary groups that the final decision on the legislation on intelligence reform should be made by the Parliament. None of the chairmen of the parliamentary group supported the Swiss model, where the passage of the new intelligence law is decided in a referendum. (Pietiläinen, 2016a)

Moreover, the differences in party-political stances were most evident in the opinions regarding mass surveillance, which was perceived as a potential opportunity by the National Coalition and opposed by the members of the Finns, the Greens, the Social Democrats, the Left Alliance, and the Christian Democrats (Pietiläinen, 2016a). National Coalition and the Finns were part of the government, whereas the other four parties formed a significant part of the opposition.

This division in stances indicates that the questions related to intelligence reform followed the party-political standpoints instead of governmental divides. Moreover, the example illustrates that there were no large-scale controversies regarding the necessity of the reform among the parliamentary groups, although its extent and oversight were not agreed upon. It further emphasises that the necessity discourse was largely accepted across the stakeholder group of politicians.

In addition to the intelligence community and politicians, media and journalists did recognise the discourse of necessity and depicted national interests as a significant contributor to the governmental law reforms:

National security and the interests of the state have become central themes in several law reform projects over the last two years. Proposals for amendments have progressed surprisingly smoothly [in the government]. (Huhtanen, 2016)

This quotation illustrates the sphere of consensus where the necessity of intelligence reform and its importance for the state elites are recognised by the media. Thus, the national security interests

were accepted as a powerful influence in the intelligence reform and remained in the sphere of consensus.

However, the media did not fully collaborate with the government although its apparent alignment with other stakeholders in the necessity discourse. In the quotation by Huhtanen (2016), the media also implicitly communicates the lack of alternatives and political debates that could refine the proposals further. Thus, although the consensus over the necessity of intelligence reform was widely shared across the stakeholder groups especially in the early stages of the intelligence reform, there were undertones in the media that questioned this discourse. These issues were amplified in the sphere of legitimate controversy.

Consequently, the discursive necessity of intelligence reform was first created in the combined narratives of two different stakeholders, the politicians, and the intelligence community. These discourses were first shaped by the intelligence community and politicians, and, eventually, they spread to the sphere of consensus in media after the topic of intelligence reform rose to the agenda. Thus, the key stakeholders shared the abstract objective of the Finnish intelligence reform, i.e. the necessity to provide more security, but varied in their responses to contain the practical threats that emerged from the legislative process.

4.2.2 New threats demand new laws

The discourse of necessity was supported by a discourse of new threats that highlighted the rapid changes in the networked intelligence and security environments. These discourses emphasised the novelty and speed of the threats and demanded rapid responses to contain security threats. They also contained dimensions of violence as well as national vs. cross-border debate that were revealed in the threat categorisations.

The novelty of the threats was a prevalent dimension in this discourse. All stakeholders maintained that new threats require new laws to contain the escalation of potential risks. Thus, there was a consensus that the networked security environment had transformed the demands for intelligence operations and, thus, the intelligence agencies required new resources to contain the wide variety of risks. However, the stakeholders had differing understandings of what exactly constituted the primary threats and what were the secondary risks that could be overruled by the primary threats if necessary.

The discourse of new threats was evident in the interviews with politicians from the beginning of the legislative reform. For example, Petteri Orpo, the Minister of the Interior during 2015-2016, the discourse of necessity with the discourse of new threats as follows:

There is now a great need to reform access to information for both the police and the military. It is a matter of responding to new threats such as terrorism and cyber espionage, and in particular, it [intelligence reform] addresses the powers to gather intelligence at an early stage. (Kauhanen, 2015b)

In addition to terrorism and cyber espionage emphasised by Orpo, stakeholders also recognised several other new threats, such as foreign fighters, that could act as legitimate causes to increase the speed of the legislative process on intelligence (Hakonen, 2016). Consequently, a wide variety of threats were utilised to illustrate the rapid change in the intelligence environment:

Those Members of Parliament and ministers in support of intelligence laws and their urgency argued that in addition to terrorism, there were several justifications for the intelligence reform that varied from the US election interference, cyber espionage, cyber-attacks and “cyber-bombs” to the changed world order since the outbreak of the war in Ukraine. (Halminen, 2018)

These threats highlighted the novelty of the threats that should be contained with novel means. In addition, the threats pronounced by the Members of the Parliament also emphasised the importance of understanding the complex nature of the networked intelligence environment that had not only one, but multiple different threats that intelligence agencies should be able to contain simultaneously.

In addition to politicians, intelligence community representatives emphasised the transformation of the networked intelligence environments by referring to multiple threats in the news content. Terrorism and cyber espionage were among the most common mentions of new threats, and the intelligence reform was centrally linked to the capabilities to prevent the escalation of these threats (Pietiläinen, 2018a). Consequently, the intelligence community maintained the discourse of rapid change and suggested that more expansive measures would prevent the security breaches altogether.

The discourse of new threats was further emphasised by the politicians and intelligence community after the terrorist attack in Turku in August 2017. The attack confirmed that the terrorist threat assessment of the FSIS published only a month before the events in Turku unfolded had been

based on correct situational awareness (Reinboth, 2017). It also strengthened the voices of the politicians that the legislative process for intelligence reform should be accelerated in the government (Liiten, 2017).

This understanding of rapid transformation was shared also in the media. Already in 2015, journalist Anna-Liina Kauhanen argued that “new threats require new laws and tools” to manage the changes in the Finnish security context (Kauhanen, 2015e). The discourses of necessity and new threats were emphasised in an editorial that discussed the intelligence reform in a framework of multiple government proposals to counter the transformation in the Finnish security environment (HS Editorial, 2016a). In this article, the intelligence reform was intertwined with hybrid threats (HS Editorial, 2016a). Thus, the need for rapid transformation was widely shared recognition among the key stakeholder groups in this discourse, i.e. intelligence community, politicians, and the media, and it was often connected to the idea of multiple networked threats.

Other journalists at *Helsingin Sanomat* also recognised the need to react to the changes in the transnational competition over the success of intelligence operations and that had an impact on the security environment in Finland. Laura Halminen, a journalist at *Helsingin Sanomat* noted that despite the potential challenges in the legislative reform, her trust in the Finnish intelligence community remained higher compared to their international counterparts:

It is better that the monitoring of domestic and cross-border traffic is conducted by our own intelligence services. If Finland does not engage in it, someone else will. I trust those others even less. (Halminen, 2017)

Thus, individual journalists did share the same framework focused on the criticism of intelligence reform with their employer, but they had possibilities to broaden the discourse of new threats to themes that compared the operations of Finnish intelligence services with their international counterparts. This indicates that there was at least a moderate level of journalistic freedom in *Helsingin Sanomat* that allowed the journalist to also review the positive possibilities of the intelligence reform instead of focusing solely on the negative effects of the expanded powers.

In addition, *Helsingin Sanomat* published actively content related to the special threat assessments conducted by FSIS and interviewed the leading spokespersons of the civilian intelligence service as an institutional source for both security evaluations and intelligence reform advocacy (Reinboth, 2017; Pietiläinen, 2017a; Pietiläinen, 2017b; Pietiläinen, 2018a; Pietiläinen & Vartiainen, 2018; Pietiläinen, 2019). In contrast, *Helsingin Sanomat* did not publish that many reports of the FDIA but included their spokespersons in several articles and interviews. This

indicates a trajectory that the civilian dimension in the intelligence reform was the focus point of the media's interest although it maintained coverage on the progress of the legislative reform.

Thus, the military intelligence reform was perceived as a largely separate sphere of the legislative process that did not require public scrutiny or large-scale analyses of the journalists. In that sense, the status of the military intelligence specialists was more solid and unquestioned than their counterparts in the civilian intelligence community. One potential explanation for this difference is the fact that military intelligence operations are often conducted within the military and towards military targets, such as other nation-states or transnational terrorist organisations, which may contain a more serious sense of warfare in the public eye. Civilians, on the other hand, are part of the realm of peace and, thus, their involvement in the intelligence operations, even indirectly, is analysed and criticised in more detail.

To conclude, the multitude of new threats mentioned in the news content illustrates the complexity of the new threats discourse. Although the novelty of the threats was a shared denominator for the key stakeholders in this discourse, i.e. the intelligence community, politicians and the media, they utilised various threat scenarios to activate the sense of danger in the public sphere. Consequently, although the sphere of consensus included strong arguments that supported the intelligence reform, the journalistic independence and specialisation provided possibilities to challenge the prevalent discourses maintained by the institutional sources.

4.2.3 Finland has fallen behind the Western standards

Another discourse prevalent in the sphere of consensus was the discourse of falling behind. In this discourse, Finnish intelligence services were represented as constricted by the lack of national legislation that could have enabled more collaborative operations with other international intelligence services. The national intelligence culture was shaped with comparisons to other European countries and their practices, and this discourse emphasised the negative outcome if the legislative reform was unsuccessful in the government.

Finland's intelligence is in danger of falling behind in development. It is no longer enough to operate on radio frequencies. Communication is constantly being transferred to [computer] networks. – Jussi Niinistö, the Finns, Minister of Defence 2015-2019 (Kauhanen, 2015b)

The security environment has changed entirely. The fact that other countries have enacted intelligence legislation shows how we have fallen behind. – Petteri Orpo, National Coalition Party, Minister of the Interior 2015-2016 (Kauhanen, 2015f)

These discourses indicate that especially the high-level politicians, which formed part of the government, were eager to support the necessity and new threats discourses with yet another justification for the expansion of intelligence powers. General country comparisons were common in this discourse, but politicians, such as Jussi Niinistö or Petteri Orpo, did not often utilise specific country examples. Instead, the politicians utilised rather ambiguous depictions of other countries that were not culturally specific:

We have been long behind other Western countries in the development of intelligence legislation. – Jussi Niinistö, the Finns, Minister of Defence 2015-2019
(Pietiläinen & Kervinen, 2018)

This emphasised the level of mystification around the intelligence reform, as it was not clear what were the country-specific standards that determined Finland's position on the intelligence legislation scale.

The comparisons to international intelligence services were especially prevalent at the beginning of the legislative reform, as the initial draft legislation aimed to expand only the intelligence powers that addressed network surveillance in international traffic. In the discourse of falling behind, the politicians in the government and intelligence community stated that Finland was no longer a sovereign able to gather intelligence independently, but instead, the Finnish intelligence services had been increasingly forced to ask for assistance from other international intelligence services. This type of aid was perceived in a negative light, as it illustrated the asymmetric power structures in international intelligence arenas.

Currently, we rely on what other countries tell us. At present Finland can only conduct intelligence operations in the case of threats that are related to the planning of criminal offences or criminal activities. Finland is the only Western country that does not have such legislation [to conduct intelligence operations in the case of threats that are not criminal offences]. – Paula Risikko, the National Coalition Party, the Minister of the Interior 2016-2018, and the Speaker of the Parliament of Finland 2018-2019 (Raeste, 2017)

We cannot rely on the support of other states, but we must obtain the information ourselves. – Paula Risikko, the National Coalition Party, the Minister of the Interior 2016-2018, and the Speaker of the Parliament of Finland 2018-2019 (Halminen, 2017)

One of the examples of this loss of sovereignty and independence in intelligence services was the case of foreign state espionage revealed at the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs in autumn 2013, which was first discovered by Finland's neighbour Sweden (Huusko, 2016). This may have been aimed to increase a sense of patriotism among the public, as the history of Finnish society has been a balancing game of independence between the great powers. Thus, the example of Swedish aid was not presented as a positive aspect of international collaboration, but as a sign of weakness for the Finnish politicians and intelligence community.

This discourse was further highlighted in interviews of politicians who urged the legislative reform to be enacted in an expedited timeframe. Especially politicians who were part of the government, such as the Prime Minister Juha Sipilä (the Centre Party), Minister of Justice Antti Häkkinen (the National Coalition Party), Minister of Defence Jussi Niinistö (the Finns), the Minister of the Interior and the Speaker of the Parliament of Finland Paula Risikko (the National Coalition Party) and the Minister of the Interior Petteri Orpo (the National Coalition Party), were the most vocal advocates of the expedition (Liiten, 2017; Halminen, 2017; Pietiläinen & Kervinen, 2018). However, they were questioned by the leaders of the opposition parties, such as the Swedish People's Party of Finland, Social Democrats, and the Green Party, who argued that the contents of the legislative reform and their effects on constitutional rights were more important than the expedited process (Junkkari, 2017). This contrast in stances created further controversies in the government as the intelligence reform progressed.

In addition to the speeches of the politicians that maintained this discourse of falling behind, media stakeholders were supportive of this discourse and promoted the discussions around the subject by publishing a country comparison with Switzerland's intelligence services (Pietiläinen, 2016b). This country comparison, however, emphasised the constitutional rights to information before the national security interests and projected the discussion to the limitations of the new intelligence reform in Finland (Pietiläinen, 2018a). Thus, the media recognised that Finland had fallen behind in the international intelligence standards, but it shifted the focus to the human security paradigm and aimed to broaden the discourse to include the considerations of constitutional rights and liberties.

In contrast, intelligence community representatives were not so eager to conduct country comparisons in the media. Instead, they deemed the attempts to compare different national intelligence legislations as "fruitless", as it was not possible to determine how each country had solved the contradictions between differing interests (Pietiläinen, 2016c). This dismissal of the media's perspective can be interpreted in multiple ways. One of the possibilities at the time could

have been that the intelligence legislation process had taken only its very first steps and the speculation over the possible means for the public to get access to the information that had been gathered would have been too preliminary. Another possibility for the dismissal might have been that the contradictions in the interests of the intelligence services and media were too deep for public debate at that point – while one side aimed to maintain national security and potentially overrule the constitutional rights, the other challenged this with the interests and rights of an individual citizen.

Years later in 2018, Ilkka Salmi, the representative of the government officials' stakeholder group, concluded that media had based their comparative analysis between Finnish and Swiss intelligence legislation on incorrect facts and stated that after the enactment of the intelligence reform in Finland, it would exceed the rights to information endowed in the Swiss intelligence legislation (Salmi, 2018). As Ilkka Salmi had been formerly part of the Finnish intelligence services, this accusation regarding the claims presented in *Helsingin Sanomat* provided an interesting reflection of how the previously dismissed themes may resurface when there is new evidence to support the preferred discourse. In this case, the discourse of falling behind transformed slowly to a discourse of pioneers where Finland was placed at the forefront of the development of intelligence legislation. This may have acted as further proof for the public that the reform was a necessary and timely response to contain the rise of new threats with independent state agencies.

4.3 Discourses in the sphere of legitimate controversy

Whereas the sphere of consensus was dominated by the discourse groups that emphasised the threats to national security, the sphere of legitimate controversy contained more concerns regarding the human security issues that emerged in the legislative process of intelligence reform. In this section, the most prevalent discourse groups, i.e. constitutional rights, transparency, and public trust, will be analysed in detail. The sphere of legitimate controversy highlighted specific security threats, such as violation of constitutional rights, mass surveillance and journalistic source protection that were all elements in the demand for greater democratisation of intelligence-gathering and operations in Finland.

4.3.1 Constitutional rights over national security

Although the necessity of the intelligence reform was recognised and the new threats emerging from different security environments were a widely shared view, not all stakeholder groups shared common perspectives on the impact of intelligence reform. In this discourse, intelligence was

perceived not mainly as an instrument for the decision-makers but as a powerful tool that could be potentially misused to promote national interests at the cost of individual citizens. It contained the dimension of power vs. technocratic nature of intelligence, which was already revealed in the analysis of threat categorisations. Consequently, this discourse formed as one of the most important discourses in the shaping of national intelligence culture.

One of the most important points of legitimate controversy in this discourse on intelligence reform was its potential threats to constitutional rights and civil liberties in Finnish society. Media actively addressed politicians about the potential dismissal of the rights and liberties, and encouraged them to openly discuss the possible impact of the expanded intelligence powers:

It is the responsibility of politicians to ensure that Finns really understand that, for example, online surveillance can also have an impact on freedom of expression, freedom of association, freedom of assembly, non-discrimination policies, freedom of movement, protection of property and the right to work. (Kauhanen, 2015b)

As the example illustrates, the sphere of legitimate controversy revolved around the rights-based discourse that emphasised the role and importance of individual citizens in Finland. Consequently, it adopted a form of a human security approach that valued an individual over the collective good of a nation and, thus, challenged the national security perspectives. Thus, it could be illustrated as the rights over national security approach, as the tendency of this discourse was to find controversies and contradictions between these two objectives in the intelligence reform.

This discourse focusing on the constitutional rights over national security was the most prevalent among the media representatives, politicians in the opposition and government officials that acted as the overseers of legality in the Finnish society. In many instances, unauthorised breaches to the secrecy of confidential communications were deemed as one of the greatest threats to constitutional rights and human security, as they indicated a transition towards the feared mass surveillance (Kauhanen, 2015b).

Helsingin Sanomat was active in embracing the role of the watchdog by referring to the intelligence reform as an initiative promoting national interests that essentially undermine the rights of citizens (Huhtanen, 2016). The news media outlet aimed to deconstruct complex legal proposals for the public with detailed articles including questions and answers (Halminen & Pietiläinen, 2017). In addition, as the intelligence reform progressed towards the finish line, the media continued to maintain its watchdog function with increasing demands to include independent

authorities in the reform to ensure the oversight of intelligence operations and prevention of possible abuses of power (HS Editorial, 2019).

Moreover, government officials, such as Tuomas Pöysti, the General Secretary of the Chancellor of Justice, placed a special emphasis on the importance of constitutional rights and human rights in the efforts to contain the threats (Hakonen, 2016). In addition, Petri Jääskeläinen, the Parliamentary Ombudsman, participated in the discussion on the definitions of national security and expansion of intelligence-gathering powers (Pietiläinen, 2017d; Pietiläinen & Vartiainen, 2019). For this reason, the government officials considered both the definitions of national security as a basis to open confidential messages as well as more practical limitations for the intelligence-gathering methods:

The Parliamentary Ombudsman considers that national security is “inaccurate as a concept”. Similarly, the conditions for the use of secret intelligence methods are “very loose” compared to the conditions under which the police may use the same secret means in a criminal investigation. (Pietiläinen, 2017d)

This highlighted their special position as the overseers of legality and rule of law in Finnish society. Thus, their public appearances revolved around the objective to uphold the fundamental values of democracy and clearly define the borders of national security to protect the citizens.

In addition to the unauthorised breaches, also the individual rights to know who holds the information and how it might be used were central questions that were related to this discourse. The limitations to the intelligence powers created controversy especially from the year 2017 onwards as several stakeholders, such as politicians in the opposition, the media, and government officials, feared that potential unauthorised breaches would lead to extensive mass surveillance if left without impartial oversight (Kauhanen, 2015b; Sutinen, 2017; Pietiläinen, 2018b; Pietiläinen & Virtanen, 2019; HS Editorial, 2019). Intelligence in this discourse was perceived as a method to acquire more power among the societal elites and, therefore, those who gather intelligence should be kept accountable to the public.

This discourse was often combined with discussions over the required amendment to the Finnish Constitution to ensure that the intelligence services had the means to access confidential communications in cases where national security was threatened. Without this constitutional amendment, the intelligence reform would have not had the possibilities to succeed as the legislation aimed to uncover threats by intercepting the confidential communications of the targets. Moreover, as it was a question of a constitutional amendment, it needed to be declared as urgent by

the current government. Without the declaration of urgency, the constitutional amendment would have been left in abeyance until the next general election and the discussion of the subsequent Parliament to ensure the protection of constitutional rights (Eduskunta, n.d.). Thus, the urgency factor provided yet another layer to the controversy.

This urgency factor rose higher on the governmental agenda after the terrorist attack in Turku in 2017. The media stakeholders condemned the way politicians connected the intelligence reform process to the act of terrorism in the southwestern city on the coast of Finland. The critique was directed especially towards Prime Minister Juha Sipilä who demanded that the constitutional amendment critical for the intelligence bill should be declared as urgent in the government to ensure that the reform would be completed by a single government. Petri Sajari, the journalist of *Helsingin Sanomat*, criticised the perception of Prime Minister Juha Sipilä and maintained a human security perspective in his analysis:

All fundamental and human rights are equally important and valuable. Therefore, the Prime Minister's view that the right to life is a fundamental right "superior" to privacy is problematic in many ways. There are also signs of political opportunism in the Prime Minister's view. (Sajari, 2017)

The accusation of opportunism highlighted the gap between the politicians as well as the media and government officials. It also pronounced the perception that these ideological differences are not only simple distinctions in nuances but in many cases completely opposite perspectives that clash in the constitutional rights over national interests discourse. In this context, the media and government officials were the most active stakeholders to question the motives of the leading politicians of the governmental parties. This spilt over to the criticism of the intelligence community, which had traditionally maintained a strong sphere of secrecy around its organisations, operations and justifications for intelligence-gathering.

4.3.2 Need for greater transparency

The need for greater transparency developed to a central discourse for the media and more specifically, the *Helsingin Sanomat* journalists specialised in the security policy and intelligence reform process. This discourse was also embraced by the editorial board of *Helsingin Sanomat* and thus, it can be perceived as one of the central undertones that guided their publishing decisions. As an illustrative example of this discourse, the editor-in-chief Antero Mukka discussed intelligence legislations in different countries and emphasised:

Finland must choose its own path, its line of openness. (Mukka, 2017)

Finland needs laws on civilian and military intelligence services that promote Finland's security and - together with other countries - the values of liberal democracy. (HS Editorial, 2018)

In this discourse, the media embraced a more active and independent role and challenged the decision-makers to promote more open and transparent policies in the intelligence environment. As an indication of active agency, *Helsingin Sanomat* published articles with headlines such as “HS analysed the contents of the [government] proposals” and “HS summarises the key issues in the intelligence reform before the parliamentary debates” (Halminen & Pietiläinen, 2017; Kervinen, 2018).

Interestingly, this discourse became one of the most prevalent discourses in the sphere of legitimate controversy even though the Finnish Parliament prepared a proposal to establish Intelligence Ombudsman and Parliamentary Intelligence Committee to oversee the legality of intelligence operations alongside the legal framework for intelligence reform (Ministry of the Interior, n.d.). The news media's strong doubts regarding the potential loopholes in the legislative proposals may have been one of the factors in this discursive development.

The draft laws had left out the absolute right of citizens to be informed about privacy breaches afterwards. If the law clearly stipulates that the targets would be informed on all intelligence-gathering activities sooner or later, confidence in the authorities could be maintained. (Pietiläinen, 2017)

Thus, one of the most important threats activated in this discourse was the threat of mass surveillance. The media was an active stakeholder in emphasising the potential effects of this threat for the Finnish society, and thus, created differing threat scenarios from the ones supported by the politicians and the intelligence community. In this discourse, the threat of mass surveillance was countered by greater transparency and oversight of the intelligence services. Thus, the media aimed to democratise intelligence operations and create a culture of openness that would involve multiple stakeholders in the central aspects of intelligence-gathering, instead of a selected few members of the intelligence community.

News media's approach to country comparisons differed as well. It did not resort to the same ambiguous remarks of the politicians and intelligence community regarding Finland's status as the less developed country among a vague group of “Western” states. Instead, the media aimed to

legitimise their stance by much more detailed country comparison with articles on Switzerland's intelligence reform and legislation (Pietiläinen, 2016b).

First: effective intelligence does not have to be mass surveillance. Secondly, citizens must be able to have access to all intelligence that has been gathered on them. The Swiss intelligence director makes the third hint: intelligence must have strong and impartial control. (Pietiläinen, 2016b)

In addition to the country comparisons, the media published several extensive analyses on the Finnish intelligence community and their stakeholders to outline the network of intelligence actors on a societal level. For example, *Helsingin Sanomat* published articles related to the public visitor lists of the parliament that revealed the frequent meetings between the intelligence community and the members of the parliament and speculated whether these visits were intended to promote solely the interests of the intelligence community (Mäkinen, 2017a). In addition to these articles, *Helsingin Sanomat* also published an article related to the Finnish peacekeeping missions that provide a platform to develop intelligence capabilities abroad (Halminen & Pietiläinen, 2017).

However, one of the most important examples in the sphere of legitimate controversy was the decision to publish classified documents of the Finnish Defence Forces as part of a larger article regarding the operations of the Finnish Intelligence Research Centre (*Viestikookeskus*). *Helsingin Sanomat* had already stated in 2016 that the FDIA's potential to broaden intelligence capabilities after the law reform was not discussed enough in the public sphere, arguing that the military intelligence bill should have been under the same public scrutiny as the civilian intelligence bill (HS Editorial, 2016). The investigative article was published in December 2017 and it contained several passages from the classified documents. The editorial decision to publish these materials was largely condemned by politicians, the intelligence community and the public.

However, the journalists and the editorial board of *Helsingin Sanomat* defended the publication of the documents. The newspaper perceived itself as a watchdog of the authorities and valued the people's right to know higher than the potential risks for the national security:

The most important task of the media is to monitor and control the activities of the authorities. HS [*Helsingin Sanomat*] is accountable to its readers, who need to be given adequate and truthful information about what is happening in society. (Mäkinen, 2017b)

This commentary highlights the importance of the need for greater transparency discourse in the media. It was supported with the statements of *Helsingin Sanomat* that regarded the publication of the classified documents as an important opportunity for the authorities to improve the transparency of their operations.

The main purpose of publishing the documents and the article was to bring The Finnish Intelligence Research Centre into the public debate. Publicity may seem awkward at first, but it usually makes the operations of the authorities better and more efficient. (Mäkinen, 2017b)

For the media, the publicity that the intelligence community and politicians had refrained from was a necessary tool to improve the work of the intelligence services. This idea of public debate follows the idea of democratisation of intelligence in which greater transparency and a larger group of stakeholders are perceived as the enablers of more efficient intelligence services. Thus, the idea is to promote the values of transparency and accountability of intelligence services and in this way connect these organisations to the ideals of liberal democratic societies. Therefore, this view holds that intelligence services cannot be external from the liberal democratic society, but it is limited by the same frameworks as other publicly funded organisations.

In this effort to bring greater transparency to the intelligence reform debate, *Helsingin Sanomat* did not only focus on individual organisations but aimed to reveal the connections between the different stakeholders and their close co-operation:

The Finnish Intelligence Research Centre also requires more people because the new intelligence laws would make the military unit a subcontractor of civilian intelligence organisation FSIS. According to the government proposals related to intelligence reform, the Finnish Intelligence Research Centre would filter and intercept internet traffic that interests FSIS. (Halminen & Pietiläinen, 2017)

With this example of investigative journalism, the journalists emphasised the public's right to know the context and background of intelligence operations. Thus, the quest for transparency should also overrule the national security interests that contained a strong element of secrecy and confidentiality. The need for greater transparency discourse was emphasised by the interviews with the representatives in other large media outlets in Finland. Jouko Jokinen, the editor-in-chief of Finnish National Broadcasting Company stated in *Helsingin Sanomat*'s interview that they do not "see any problem that intelligence community could not tell more about its operations in public"

(Kerkelä, 2017). This interview and other comments from different media outlets published in *Helsingin Sanomat* indicate that the discourse *has* been largely shared in the Finnish media field.

This quest for greater transparency by the media did not go unnoticed in the intelligence community and among the politicians. In addition to the ideals of transparency, this specific case also considered the journalistic source protection and journalistic ethics, as the publication of the article regarding the Finnish Intelligence Research Centre was followed by demands to reveal the sources that had granted access for the journalists to the classified materials. Journalistic source protection and journalistic source ethics were strongly questioned by the politicians, intelligence community and citizens. The rare publication of classified documents was perceived as a serious breach of the shared informal agreement that prevented news media outlets from publishing materials carrying potential risks for national security (Luukka, 2017).

The overall stances to publicity, however, followed the boundaries of civilian and military intelligence. During the research period, the FSIS provided public reports and risk analyses for the media (Pietiläinen, 2017a; Pietiläinen, 2017b) and consequently, supported at least partly the media's ambitions to promote greater transparency in the intelligence environment. FDIA's representatives, in turn, stated in the media that they would provide more transparency for the public if they had more economic resources to convert classified documents into public materials. However, as the former Chief Intelligence Officer of the Finnish Defence Command, General Harri Ohra-aho stated, this was not the primary objective of FDIA:

We invest in the security of Finns, not in publicity. (Teittinen, 2017)

Different stances of FSIS and FDIA regarding publicity indicated that FSIS had more to lose in the public sphere, as most of the criticism by the media and government officials included notions of the constitutional rights and human rights perspectives instead of the legal foundations that regulated the military intelligence operations.

To highlight this difference further, the politicians and intelligence community members associated with military intelligence were warier of the potential risks that greater transparency could bring for the intelligence operations. As an example of this stance, the Minister of Defence Jussi Niinistö supported the legislative proposal that would have allowed the FSIS and FDIA to conduct intelligence operations without ever informing their targets (Palojärvi & Pietiläinen, 2017). This could have meant that intelligence agencies moved further away to the shadows, away from public scrutiny and accountability.

4.3.3 Public distrust of the legislative process

The sphere of legitimate controversy included a discourse on public distrust that aimed to question the interests of the politicians and intelligence community to gather intelligence on citizens. This discourse was intertwined with the discourse regarding greater transparency in the intelligence services, but it created more system-level criticism towards the legislative drafting process in the government. This criticism brought the public trust to authorities in question and provided examples of setbacks and mistakes in the processes.

The media actively monitored the legislative process and published articles regarding the different stances of the governmental parties. These articles were often placed under the neutrality paradigm in the security categorisation, as they did not convey clear support for either national security or human security paradigms. However, they were an important part of the public discourses related to intelligence reform as they provided practical insights for the public to the different stages of the legislative processes.

Although most of the articles contained neutral descriptions focused on the process of the legislative reform, there were a few instances when the public trust in authorities was challenged by *Helsingin Sanomat*. The media highlighted that the ministers and the Members of Parliament did not understand the details of the intelligence reform and, thus, were unaware of the magnitude that the legislative changes could bring to the security environment in Finland (Pietiläinen, 2017c; Pietiläinen, 2017e).

In addition, the integrity of the legislative drafting process was questioned, as an insider had revealed that there were mistakes in the interpretations over the individual's right to know if their private communications had been intercepted by the authorities. The Ministry of Defence provided incorrect information regarding whether the targets of the intelligence operations should always be notified if their private communications had been opened by the intelligence authorities (Pietiläinen, 2018c). This however was not the case, but the authorities could open private messages if they were instantly deleted afterwards (Pietiläinen, 2018c).

As the incorrect information originated from the ministry that had prepared the legislative draft for military intelligence, *Helsingin Sanomat* as a media stakeholder questioned the responsibilities of the preparatory body of the legislative drafts and the Administration Committee (Pietiläinen, 2018c). This, according to the *Helsingin Sanomat* source, led to embarrassment in the Administrative Committee as the significant support from the Social Democrats was dependent on

the commitment to notify targets in all cases of intelligence-gathering (Pietiläinen, 2018c). Consequently, the incorrect information included potential political ramifications.

These examples included a discursive element that challenged public support for the government and questioned the integrity of the legislative process. When the media revealed the mistakes and embarrassment of the Administration Committee and the political controversies that resulted from the broken promises for the opposition party Social Democrats, it also aimed to question the public's trust in the government and intelligence authorities who were the key stakeholders in the intelligence reform. With this tactic, the media could further promote the ideals of constitutional rights over the national security and greater transparency discourses in its own arena, the news outlet.

The media's criticism was further complemented by the increasingly negative comments from academia over the course of 2018 and 2019. In autumn 2018, the Parliament voted on the declaration of urgency to amend the Constitution's section 10 within one electoral term and the declaration was supported by an overwhelming majority vote of 178 to 13 (Arola, 2018). Instead of following the rulebook of the legislative process in Finland and voting for the second time to approve the amendment by a two-thirds majority, the Parliament decided to proceed with a single vote as there were no counterproposals and the matter was considered as unanimous (Arola, 2018).

This procedure sparked criticism in academia. Juha Lavapuro, Professor of Public Law at the University of Turku described the Parliament's decision as "a gruesome procedural error" and, thus, aimed to highlight the inconsistencies in the government to uphold the norms embodied in the Finnish constitution (Arola, 2018). Thus, Lavapuro's criticism as the representative of academia added another layer to the constitutional rights over national security discourse, as the media and government officials had already highlighted the government's difficulties to find the balance between human security and national interests.

In contrast to the previous focus on the declarations of urgency to enact the constitutional amendment, academia also focused on the contents of the civilian and military intelligence bills that were potentially unconstitutional. The comments originated from the perceived inconsistencies in the legislative draft process and more specifically to the stage of consultation. This stage allows different stakeholders to comment on the draft government bill (Finlex, 2020). The members of academia had been involved in the consultation stage but stated that their comments or recommendations were not considered in the drafting of the new civilian and military intelligence bills.

Consequently, this resulted in a critical evaluation by Martin Scheinin, Professor of International Law and Human Rights at the European University Institute, who argued that “the government has set a record for Finland by proposing intelligence laws, 12 per cent of which are unconstitutional” (Pietiläinen, 2018d). With this statement, Scheinin questioned the authority of the government and the competence of the experts in the parliamentary committees that had reviewed the bills. Consequently, Scheinin continued to position academia against the institutional sources and represented a watchdog function in the legislative process, alongside the media.

This stance was further emphasised by the government officials focused on overseeing legality, such as Tuomas Pöysti, the General Secretary of the Chancellor of Justice, and Petri Jääskeläinen, the Parliamentary Ombudsman, who criticised several clauses in the draft laws, e.g. related to the extent in which intelligence agencies could intercept communications and how they should define the search terms to conduct operations (Pietiläinen & Vartiainen, 2019).

The debate of whether national security should precede constitutional rights reached a certain culmination point in early 2019, when Paula Risikko, the Speaker of the Parliament of Finland, made an extraordinary decision in the plenary session to return the draft laws back to the evaluation of the parliamentary committees (Pietiläinen & Virtanen, 2019). This decision was a result of extensive criticism that professors Scheinin and Lavapuro had continued on social media to highlight the potential issues regarding the constitutional rights in the bills.

The controversy was met with an increasingly hostile stance from the government, which culminated in rather rare insults directed towards the constitutional law professors. The same members of academia who were consulted during the legislative drafting process were depicted as non-parliamentary forces after the errors in the drafting were recognised:

“Too much power has been given to non-parliamentary forces here. I am not talking about constitutional prophets as [the Member of Parliament] Ben Zyskowicz. I am talking about constitutional Talibans,” Niinistö said. (Pietiläinen & Virtanen, 2019)

After being asked what exactly these “constitution Talibans” do, Niinistö stated that “they tweet, among other things” and, thus, the criticism was clearly pointed towards the direction of academia. Other sources in the government did not express such explicit and harsh criticism over the statements from academia, and their silence indicated a reluctance to stir more controversies that could have endangered the proceeding of the legal reform altogether. However, the government expressed its frustration after it was evident that they had consolidated the favourable outcome and the reform could continue as planned:

Intelligence bills are advancing. The debate is over. (Pietiläinen, 2019)

This short but strong statement was a clear expression that the government had hoped academia would have kept their criticism to the lower profile legislative consultation instead of the headlines of the country's largest daily newspaper. However, the discussion itself was nothing new but followed the democratic ideals of debate in the public sphere. This further illustrated the differing understandings regarding the definitions and purpose of intelligence in Finnish society, and how it transformed during the legislative reform. Greater democratisation and transparency became the norm instead of an anomaly.

4.4 Discourses in the sphere of deviance

The sphere of deviance is the third and final area in Hallin's model of discourses in the public sphere. In the case of intelligence reform, the sphere of deviance was approached by the perspectives of the stakeholders that did not have significant representation in the discourses prevalent in the spheres of consensus and legitimate controversy. With the silent stakeholders, it was possible to trace the values and objectives that were not considered important for the shaping of the Finnish national intelligence culture during the intelligence reform.

4.4.1 The silent stakeholders

The sphere of deviance reflects the discourses that were emitted from the public discussions. In the case of intelligence reform, the focus of the public debate was highly focused on the issues that varied in the spectrum of national security and human security. Essentially this also meant a debate between the powers that defined intelligence through the lens of power or as a technocratic device to promote security, supported human rights or emphasised the importance of national security interests and promoted secrecy or advocated greater transparency. However, this debate did not include all the stakeholders in society as the citizens, civil society actors and businesses had hardly any opportunities to voice their opinions.

Although citizens were a target especially for the civilian intelligence legislation, their role was small in the extensive debate in *Helsingin Sanomat*. Only occasional opinion pieces were published that seemingly aimed to balance the public's views over the intelligence reform. One of the examples of balancing was provided after the terrorist attack in Turku, Finland, which created both demands to act swiftly and to proceed with steady, well-reasoned justifications for the intelligence reform:

The civilian intelligence act Intelligence is in a hurry, as there have been 28 terrorist attacks in EU countries in two years. 322 have been killed and 1,686 injured in these attacks. The military intelligence act is in a hurry because Russia has restored military measures in its foreign policy and is in armed conflict with its other border state. (Porvali, 2017)

In the emotional turmoil caused by tragedy, it is easy to make wrong decisions. Maintaining security is a delicate balance between privacy and public safety. To support this, the best experts need to preserve cold logic and the ability to write carefully. (Koskinen, 2017)

As these examples show, the public disagreed on whether the expedited intelligence reform process was truly necessary even after the first terrorist attack in Finland. However, as the number of the opinion pieces was small, they did not provide a large representation of the sentiment of the public.

Moreover, the share of civil society organisations and activists was even smaller than the share of citizens. *Helsingin Sanomat* mentioned civil society organisations only occasionally alongside multiple other stakeholders, but the actors hardly received publicity alone. One of the few exceptions was the interview with Edward Snowden early in the process of intelligence reform where he demanded more focus on information security in organisations instead of expanded powers for the intelligence agencies.

Information security was a key theme for the businesses as well, although their presence in the intelligence reform discourses was limited only to few mentions in the news content. According to a news article by *Helsingin Sanomat*, businesses would have wanted to excel as a developer and producer of information security products rather than serve the authorities in their intelligence needs (Huhtanen, 2015). This might also have been the reason, why their presence was omitted from the intelligence reform discourses as their perspectives did not necessarily align with those of the intelligence community and politicians that supported the expansion of powers.

The exclusion of citizens, civil society actors and businesses from the intelligence reform debate in the public sphere reveals how the public debate was focused on the powerful, public sector stakeholders, i.e. politicians and the intelligence community, of the reform that were challenged by the media and, yet again, other public sector stakeholders, such as academia and government officials. Thus, although the effects of intelligence reform were considerable in all parts of Finnish society, only those who had the power to either decide the content of the legislation or had powerful platforms to criticise them were able to voice their perspectives. Inability to find large and powerful platforms for advocacy may have been the reason why the share of civilians and civil society actors was so low.

However, the lack of platforms does not explain why businesses did not take part in discussions. In their case, it is possible that they had no incentive to take part in discussions that were highly focused on the public sector actors and civilians. There were no significant profits in line that could have inspired businesses to act and engage in the discussions, and no regulations that would have significantly restricted their operations. The focus on the public dimension defined intelligence as something that is only available and utilised by public stakeholders. This, however, is not the case, since intelligence is increasingly gathered also by private corporations to advance their business interests.

4.5 Discussion of key findings

The purpose of this thesis was to analyse how Finnish national intelligence culture was shaped in the news content published by the national media outlet *Helsingin Sanomat*. News content was analysed to identify important discourses and how their interplay influenced the legitimacy of intelligence in Finnish society and, more specifically, how intelligence reform was perceived and promoted by different stakeholders. The discourses introduced in the intelligence reform constituted ideological foundations for different stakeholders to navigate in the maze of legal, societal, and political questions related to the legislative process.

In summary, this study identified the elements of national intelligence culture outlined in Makkonen's definition. These included "collective assumptions, beliefs, perceptions, attitudes, values, norms, information and expectations about intelligence, which reflect people's thoughts and actions as well as social practices" (2020, p. 49). Hallin's spheres of consensus and legitimate controversy provided the foundations that every stakeholder could agree upon but also the points of contention, which were related to the purpose of intelligence and the threats it was aimed to contain. In addition, this study also analysed the elements that were omitted from the discussions that were placed in Hallin's sphere of deviance.

The sphere of consensus featured discourses that emphasised the necessity of the reform, the novelty of the threats and the international standards of intelligence that Finland no longer fulfilled. In contrast, the sphere of legitimate controversy highlighted the primacy of constitutional rights, the need for greater transparency and the accountability of the intelligence community to the public. The sphere of deviance recognised the discourses regarding citizenship and businesses that were largely left out of the discourses represented in the spheres of consensus and controversy. All three spheres provided building blocks for the national intelligence culture and developed it further to meet the demands of new, expanded powers entailed in the intelligence reform.

As the data analysis suggested, the politicians who shared the governmental agenda were the most vocal actors in the sphere of consensus and utilised several national security threats to promote their agenda. National security threats were defined as mostly Russian-linked military and hybrid threats, cyber-attacks, terrorism, and foreign fighters initiated by the refugee crisis. Consequently, the national security intelligence paradigm emphasised in the sphere of consensus was centred on hard security instead of the protection of soft targets, such as civilians.

Politicians also received most of the media attention in the public sphere as their leadership status in the government provided signals for the public sphere as to how the intelligence reform should proceed in the legislative process. However, the intelligence community acted as a supporting stakeholder for politicians. In addition, politicians were also backed up by government officials with whom they shared a common understanding of intelligence as an instrument for the decision-makers to counter threats to national security.

In contrast, the opposition politicians did not receive the same coverage and they were often overshadowed by the other critics of the intelligence reform, mainly journalists of *Helsingin Sanomat*, who were further supported by the representatives of academia and government officials focused on constitutional and human rights perspectives of the reform. These editorial choices also highlight how the media has perceived intelligence as the source of power and aim to publicly question those who had the most power to set the course of the intelligence reform.

Thus, it could be concluded that in the sphere of consensus, the news media acted as an informer of the public and as an arena for various voices to promote their opinions in the public sphere (Christians et al., 2009, p. 116). However, in some respects, the news media also reflected the tendencies that Christians et al. (2009) defined as collaboration with the government. It did not question the necessity of the reform, the existence of the new threats or Finland's inability to act independently in the global intelligence race. Hence, it collaborated with the institutional interests to share this narrative and enabled the shaping of a national intelligence culture that was based on these foundations of necessity, new threats, and stagnant intelligence development.

The discourse of necessity constituted the foundations for the common purpose and protection of Finnish security, that was shared across the stakeholder groups. This abstract idea was further divided into differing understandings of primary threats that were realised in the national and human security perspectives. Although the purpose was common and shared, there were significant differences in how different stakeholders perceived the practical effects of these reforms. Thus, it seems that the goal of the stakeholders was to maintain the security of the nation-state and

individual citizens in varying degrees, but the stakeholders such as politicians and the media representatives placed a different emphasis on the importance of the nation-state over the individual rights and liberties. They shared an abstract idea, but the practical reality quickly shifted the delicate consensus to the sphere of legitimate controversy.

The discourse of necessity constituted the foundation for the national intelligence culture. All stakeholder groups unquestionably agreed that the intelligence reform was necessary and thus, also fundamentally accepted the existence of intelligence operations and agencies in Finnish society. The media's role as an informer and provider of the public arena further illustrated the Nordic welfare corporatist model where the consensus-seeking behaviour of both political elites and the media enables discussions that are not polarised between party political alliances.

It was evident in the discourse regarding new threats demanding new laws that there was a shared, ideal goal to maintain and promote the security of Finland. All stakeholders could agree that there were new threats and intelligence reform was a justified course of action in that regard. However, various stakeholders introduced significantly different threats and placed different emphasis on the threats that should have the status of primacy in the intelligence reform. Whereas politicians mainly in the government coalition and the intelligence community treated threats, such as terrorism and military action, as the most important areas of insecurity that the intelligence reform should aim to counter, the media representatives, academia, and government officials focused on the violations of constitutional rights and the potential of mass surveillance. Yet again, the ideals of national security and human security clashed in the interactions of different stakeholders. Thus, the abstract ideas, such as the necessity of legislation and novelty of threats, shaped the framework of national intelligence culture in Finland, but the practical implications of intelligence reform set the stakeholders apart in their values, beliefs, and proposals for action.

Thirdly, the sphere of consensus featured a discourse that recognised the stagnant development of Finnish intelligence legislation in comparison with its Western counterparts. This was an important part of the national dimension in intelligence culture. It was supported by a larger cultural understanding of Finnish independence that strives for self-sufficiency in the protection of national security. In this regard assistance from neighbouring countries and country comparisons were perceived as a negative reminder of how Finland had fallen behind in the Western intelligence development. These examples evolved to justifications for expedited intelligence reform, and the urgency established in this discourse seemed to further strengthen the necessity and new threats discourses.

As the analysed data suggests, the media, i.e. *Helsingin Sanomat*, was the most critical stakeholder in the sphere of legitimate controversy and actively challenged the ideas of politicians and the intelligence community regarding the purpose of intelligence and understandings of security. *Helsingin Sanomat* contested the national security intelligence paradigm and brought more soft targets, such as civilians, to the forefront of the public debate and questioned the power of the politicians and intelligence agencies to not inform the public about potential privacy breaches. It seems that the aim of *Helsingin Sanomat* was to shift the discussion from national security interests to the promotion of the human security intelligence paradigm and democratisation of intelligence. This shift took the form of constitutional rights as well as the transparency and accountability of politicians in government and intelligence agencies.

In the sphere of legitimate controversy, *Helsingin Sanomat* adopted a stance where it was not merely a neutral bystander witnessing a legal reform it had deemed unconstitutional, but it actively engaged in the debates with the politicians and challenged the views that emphasised the primacy of national security interests over the individual rights of Finnish citizens. Thus, instead of being a mere informer of the public or an arena for different stakeholders to voice their opinions, the news media *Helsingin Sanomat* in this discursive sphere also acted as the criticiser of newsworthy events according to the definition of Christians et al. (2009). In this sense, it also ventured beyond the traditional role reserved for the Finnish news media as a consensus-seeking platform for the powerful spokespersons to voice their opinions and inform the public of the decisions that had taken place behind closed doors, instead of in the columns of the daily newspaper.

Helsingin Sanomat aimed to connect the seemingly separate intelligence organisations, such as FSIS and FDIA, with articles that outlined the classified operations of both organisations and questioned the integrity of the legislative process in the eyes of the public. With these efforts, the media maintained its independence and challenged the traditional notions of intelligence as a secretive state function that should not be held accountable to the public. Thus, the media with the supporting stakeholders, i.e. government officials and academia, promoted increasing democratisation of intelligence in the public sphere and questioned the technocratic approach to intelligence, which had been maintained by the governmental politicians and intelligence community.

The sphere of legitimate controversy also highlighted the dimensions of publicity and secrecy, which formed a central part of the national intelligence culture in Finland. This difference also illustrated the varying approaches of the civilian intelligence community, mainly FSIS, and the

military intelligence community, mainly FDIA and Ministry of Defence. Interestingly, however, the understandings of publicity varied between the intelligence agencies. The politicians and military intelligence community would have preferred to maintain the clandestine nature of intelligence services, whereas the *Helsingin Sanomat* as a news media made a choice to publish the classified documents and justify the act with claims of the need for transparency and democratisation of intelligence in Finnish society.

However, as suggested in the analysis, FDIA and politicians associated with military intelligence were not eager to increase transparency in the military branch of Finnish intelligence operations. Also, the proposals to restrict the right to know to the intelligence authorities indicated that military intelligence authorities and politicians associated with this community did not perceive that they had reasons to seek public favour for the intelligence reform and expansion of powers. This may have resulted from their inherent distance from the civilians, as most of the military intelligence operations do not involve civilian targets.

The civilian intelligence community led by FSIS tried to seek the middle ground between these two spectrums and develop new standards of transparency to win over the public. FSIS was more actively engaged with the news media and promoted transparency and accountability of intelligence by publishing security reviews and interviews that emphasised the privacy of individual citizens. Finnish military intelligence agency, FDIA, and Ministry of Defence, however, tended to maintain a more secretive stance towards the intelligence operations and processes. This stance was supported by the public which responded negatively to the publication of classified military documents by *Helsingin Sanomat*. This contrast between the two intelligence agencies highlights the differing approaches to how national intelligence culture is shaped in Finland. Whereas the individual is increasingly placed at the forefront of discourses that focus on civilian intelligence, the discourses related to military intelligence agencies have emphasised a more traditional security understanding that places the imaginary nation-state as the primary target of potential threats.

In addition to the representatives of media in the sphere of legitimate controversy, also academia criticised especially the legislative process and possible threats to constitutional rights that were evident in the government proposals. The involvement of academia illustrated the strong rule of law tradition in Finnish society that culminated in the withdrawal of the government proposal from the Parliament's session after recognised processual flaws. This criticism may be interpreted as an outcome of the systemic inadequacy in which the important stakeholders, such as academia and especially professors of public law, felt that their concerns over the threats to rights were not addressed during the consultation phase of the legislative drafting process.

As the analysis suggested, citizens, civil society actors and businesses were largely left as spectators in the process that established the first formal framework of intelligence regulations for Finnish society. As they have been defined as significant stakeholders in intelligence research, their exclusion from the discussions reflects an important aspect of the Finnish national intelligence culture. The information collected from the interactions of citizens and civil society actors may be an important intelligence product, but it seems that they are not defined as an important source of power for Finnish intelligence culture. Thus, their constitutional rights should be protected from the intelligence product mindset, but according to this analysis, they did not have strong agency in Finnish national intelligence discourses.

Similarly, businesses can also provide significant data for intelligence agencies. However, depending on their field of operations, businesses could harness potentially significant power over the sources of intelligence. Their exclusion reflects how the Finnish intelligence culture in this case study was perceived solely from the public sector perspective. However, as the networked understanding of the human intelligence paradigm suggested, the power to protect security interests and cause potential threats has been diffused to different actors across all sectors. Thus, the omission of citizens, civil society actors and businesses reveals the analytical narrowness of the discourses that shaped Finnish national intelligence culture.

In sum, the analysis of discourses in Hallin's three spheres provided an overview of the development of ideological stances that guided the development of national intelligence culture in Finland. It revealed that although the foundations of Finnish national intelligence culture are strong, there are still evident contradictions in the values and belief systems of different stakeholders regarding the different security paradigms and democratisation of intelligence. Essentially, the shaping of national intelligence culture during the intelligence reform was a constant negotiation of the purposes of intelligence and the impact of intelligence on national security and human security intelligence paradigms. Intelligence was often perceived as a product and instrument among those stakeholders, i.e. government politicians and the intelligence community, that identified more with the values and beliefs associated with the national intelligence paradigm. In contrast, stakeholders who negotiated more transparent and democratic standards to intelligence processes, i.e. the media, the academia and to some extent government officials, often also upheld the values and belief systems that have been prevalent in the human intelligence paradigm. The two competing paradigms often clashed with each other and demanded compromises that redefined not only intelligence itself but also the purpose of intelligence agencies, which encountered more demands to become the servants of the public instead of technocratic advisors of the decision-makers.

The shaping of intelligence reform in the Finnish news media also illustrated how *Helsingin Sanomat* aimed to uphold the democratic ideals and expand them to the traditionally clandestine and secretive organisations, i.e. intelligence agencies. The news media demanded, with the support of government officials and the academia, more transparency and accountability to the intelligence operations and legal regulations to prevent potential violations of constitutional rights, journalistic source protection and possible unauthorised mass surveillance. These indicate a strong commitment to the democratisation of intelligence and to the ideas of the human intelligence paradigm beyond intelligence reform.

However, although the news media, government officials, and academia succeeded in some respects to promote transparency and accountability, their apparent failure was to promote the inclusion of citizens, civil society actors and businesses in the intelligence debates. One potential explication for this failure is that the intelligence reform was the first systematic attempt to regulate intelligence agencies and operations in a Finnish context, and the focus of the news media was primarily on the legislative loopholes and the changing nature of intelligence agencies. Thus, the promotion of pluralism in news content was treated as a secondary function of the news media.

Finally, the research findings also reflect the aspects that set Finland apart from the intelligence tradition in the Anglo-Saxon stream. The high level of journalistic freedom and professionalisation as well as value for consensus-seeking approaches in the public sphere defined the specific features of intelligence discourses in the Finnish public sphere and created the basis for further democratisation of intelligence in Finland. Also, Finland's nature as a small nation with close-knit, informal communities may have had an impact on the scale of how different stakeholder groups shared discourses and promoted their interests in the public sphere. In addition, the history and geopolitical proximity to Russia have provided threat scenarios until the recent days that have set the Finnish intelligence culture apart from the Anglo-Saxon intelligence tradition.

However, as the research suggested, *Helsingin Sanomat* as one of the nation's largest news media outlets held a significant power to define the agenda and public presence of various intelligence stakeholders. As this data suggested, the media actively opposed the views of the Finnish societal and political elites but also provided them with a platform to voice their opinions. However, if the silent stakeholders are not part of the ongoing discourses in the public sphere, this indicates that democracy and pluralism are only seemingly promoted in the media. For this reason, the inclusion of all stakeholders in the development of national intelligence culture should be treated with the utmost importance in the future if Finland wishes to further the democratisation of intelligence.

5 CONCLUSION

5.1 Significance and contributions of the study

This thesis began with an argument that public discussion in the news media has significant implications on the shaping of national intelligence culture. However, as the field of intelligence studies is a new discipline in social sciences, there were no extensive studies available on the topic before. For this reason, the study began with an extensive literature review on intelligence studies, security studies and communication sciences to create an overview of the research possibilities in intelligence reform.

Consequently, this thesis provided a multidisciplinary framework to evaluate the shaping of national intelligence culture in country-specific contexts. The theoretical framework provides one of the first steps towards more a systematic approach in intelligence studies to study national intelligence culture and derives valuable insights from the field of security studies, communications sciences, and journalism studies to establish a theoretical framework to study intelligence in liberal democratic societies. Although the utilised content analysis categories and analytical methods to study the discourses are generated based on this specific research sample, the detailed documentation of the research process provides tools to tailor the categories to other country contexts.

The key findings offer a window for intelligence scholarship in Finland and abroad to evaluate the importance of different stakeholders in the creation of discourses that shape national intelligence culture. It emphasises the significance of intelligence definitions and security paradigms in the understandings of intelligence, as they establish the imaginaries of possible threats that the intelligence agencies counter in their practical operations. Furthermore, this country-specific study on Finland provides possibilities to understand how discourses are generated in specific contexts, such as Finnish news media. More generally, it provides an overview of how intelligence and security are conceptualised and promoted in the Finnish society.

5.2 Limitations of the study

As this study is a snapshot in time, it is by no means a definitive collection of elements that constitute the Finnish national intelligence culture. As a social construct, culture evolves and eludes the definitive attempts to catch its essence. Thus, theoretical and practical contributions of this thesis come with limitations.

As noted in the theoretical framework that established the foundations for this thesis, the study of national intelligence culture is dependent on a number of other concepts that limited the possibilities to create a robust theoretical framework that could be generalised to all contexts. In addition, the concept of intelligence and security have multiple definitions depending on the perspectives of the researchers and professionals in the field. This is also reflected in the field of intelligence studies that still develops more systematic and structured approach to study intelligence related themes. As the concepts are constantly changing and the development of intelligence studies has only recently taken substantial steps to a more comprehensive academic field, the choices made in the theoretical framework may have influenced the results. Thus, a combination of other concepts and theories may have generated different results. As the field is novel, it was also challenging to find ways to refine my research methods and compare my findings, as there was hardly any previous research done on this specific theme.

Additionally, the choice of sources and methods to analyse the data sample limited some alternatives out of this study. I chose to analyse only one news source, *Helsingin Sanomat*, and created a systematic sample through keyword search and manual reading to limit the number of relevant articles to this study. I analysed the data sample with a combination of content analysis and critical discourse analysis, but different method choices, e.g. frame analysis, might have brought differing emphasis on how the information was presented by the news media. Similarly, my codification scheme only categorised stakeholders according to broad reference groups but did not divide politicians to governmental parties or opposition neither journalists in terms of their publication frequency. Different codification schemes might have explicated further the tensions in government and revealed more comprehensively the contributions of individual journalists over the course of intelligence reform.

In addition, I chose not to include data from other news sources, social media or other publicly available materials from governmental sources, as the scope of the thesis did not allow extensive comparison of multiple news content sources. Comparative research between other national news outlets, such as news discourses of state-funded Finnish National Broadcasting Company, could have provided more extensive research findings regarding the similarities and differences between state-funded and commercial media outlets in Finland. In addition, the study of social media could have broadened the research scope to include more elements that determine the intertwined relations of traditional news outlets and social media in a contemporary hybrid media system. Social media and Twitter in particular in the Finnish context are powerful tools for the decision-makers to manage their reputation and the social media platforms may also act as a source

for the news media outlets, such as *Helsingin Sanomat*. Inclusion of social media to the research scope could have better explicated how intelligence authorities aim to manage their public image by utilising their own active channels as a parallel for the news media content.

Consequently, different sources, methods and codification schemes might have resulted in different discourses and, consequently, the analysis of the shaping of the national intelligence culture might have had different elements. Hence, this thesis provides only one window to the shaping of national intelligence culture in Finland and the other public outlets, such as news sources, social media, governmental press releases and government proposals might alter the results in future research endeavours. Consequently, this thesis has not aimed to represent a generalised overview of how the national intelligence culture is shaped in Finland, but instead it provides an outlook to the intelligence reform discourses that were generated among stakeholders in one of the largest newspapers in Finland.

Lastly, as noted in the methodological section, I recognise that this thesis is a value-laden inquiry. My own interests in security politics and communications guided the choice of this research topic, but I aimed to maintain neutrality in my research process by outlining the theoretical and methodological choices in detail and by providing a set of different perspectives in my analysis.

5.3 Implications for future research

This thesis provides several potential possibilities for future researchers to analyse intelligence discourses in the public sphere. The interdisciplinary combination of intelligence and security studies, public relations and media research offer multiple opportunities for future scholars to study the evolution of intelligence culture and legislative reforms.

Moreover, the discourses have continued to evolve after June 2019, which provides further opportunities for Finnish intelligence research in the future as more content become available from the governmental sources to illustrate the effects of intelligence reform. Also, the threats continue to evolve and as technological development advances, the demands for intelligence agencies intensify. This provides great opportunities for comparative analysis between the preliminary predictions of intelligence reform and developments at later stages.

In addition, the scope of the analysis in this thesis did not include discussions on social media. Although the impact of social media is indisputable in contemporary media landscape, the delimitation in this thesis provides an opportunity to focus the research project to a specific news

media outlet and understand its implications for the formation of national intelligence culture. Inclusion of social media to future research projects would promote a better understanding of how intelligence stakeholders utilise the hybrid media systems to promote their interests in the public sphere.

Similarly, there are multiple research data sources available in governmental sources that could be utilised in future research. Consequently, this delimitation offers further research opportunities for scholars to analyse the discourses of intelligence reform represented in other publicly available sources.

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