

## Europeanization of the defence administration in spite of opting-out form military cooperation

Denmark and the ESDP

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**Europeanization of the defence administration in  
spite of opting-out from military cooperation:  
Denmark and the ESDP**

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## *Abstract*

*The paper looks into the administrative consequences of the Danish opt-out from the common European defence policy. It focuses on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence. It is shown that in spite of the opt-out, a considerable Europeanization has taken place of the internal organization of the Danish defence administration and of the decision-making processes related to the ESDP. The changes in the Foreign Ministry are linked to Denmark's participation in the CFSP whereas the Europeanization of the Defence Department is tied to the changes in the ESDP. To a large extent, the Europeanization of the Danish defence administration is explained by decisions and actions taken by the civil servants involved.*

**Keywords: opt-out, civil servants, ESDP, Europeanization, Denmark, CFSP.**

## Introduction

Since the early 1990s and particular since the St. Malo summit in 1998, there has been a remarkable movement towards more cooperation among the EU member states within the field of security and defence (Howorth 2007; Wong 2005:134-75; Salmon 2005; Smith 2004; Smith 2003). There seems to be only one marked exception from the trend towards increased cooperation and coordination of the member states' defence policies and that is Denmark. At the December 1992 Edinburgh summit, the Danish government was granted the possibility to opt out from the military cooperation within the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). In spite of the opt-out from the military aspects of the ESDP, Denmark has participated fully in the common foreign and security policy (CFSP) and has been seriously committed to the development of all aspects of this policy, but the narrow military ones.

In the wake of the opt-out from core elements of the ESDP, what has actually happened to the administrative level in the Danish defence policy in a situation where the other members of the Union have continued to develop common policies? Has this particular section of the Danish bureaucracy remained isolated from the European processes and therefore, has it remained unchanged in spite of the significant developments at the European level? Has Denmark, because of the opt-out, lost influence on ESDP decision-making as it has been argued by Helen Wallace would be the case for a country with an opt-out? (Wallace, 1997). Or have the effects in real world defence politics been more or less insignificant as it is indicated by recent research into the consequences of the opt-outs from the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA)? Contrary to the prediction of Helen Wallace in the case of the JHA, it appears that neither Britain

nor Denmark have lost influence on decision-making within this particular policy field (Adler-Nissen, 2009: 76).

It is the argument of the paper that contrary to the conclusions on the JHA, Denmark has lost and is loosing influence on decision-making within the ESDP and probably also within adjacent policy fields. Secondly irrespective of the opt-out from the military cooperation in the ESDP, it is argued that a transformation or an 'Europeanization' of the Danish defence administration has taken place since the mid 1990s. Thirdly, it is argued that the Europeanization of the defence polity has to be explained by actions and initiatives taken by officials involved in policy-making on the Danish defence policy.

Before embarking on the empirical analysis, the following section presents the core concepts and the theoretical tools applied in the paper. The presentation is linked to an overview of the theoretical debate with the aim to locating the object of the paper. Also, the data and the method used in the empirical analysis are described. The empirical analysis starts a brief account of the Danish opt-out from the defence cooperation in the European Union. The analysis has three interrelated foci. First, it scrutinizes the question of Danish influence on the development of the ESDP including the military aspects of the common defence policy. The analysis is based on a number interviews with officials in the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) who have been engaged in the relevant processes. Secondly, the changes of the institutional structures and the decision-making processes related to the ESDP in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence are analysed, partly based on interviews. Thirdly, the actions and initiatives of the officials involved in administering the Danish opt-out from the ESDP are discussed. The focus on the

domestic administrative structures and the decision-making procedures related to the ESDP, implies that issues related to Danish defence ‘policy’ and Danish defence ‘politics’ are only touched upon briefly.

## **Concepts and analytical framework**

There is some research on the administrative consequences of Denmark’s participation in the increasing European cooperation (Christensen, 2003; Blom-Hansen & Christensen 2004; Kallestrup, 2005, Esmark, 2008). The general conclusion to these studies is a considerable adaptation has taken place but, at the same time it is also obvious that the Danish administrative institutions show a considerable robustness towards the impulses coming from Brussels.

With its focus on the domestic impact of participation viz. non-participation in the European cooperation processes, the paper locates itself within the academic debate on Europeanization. The concept Europeanization is contested and it is often questioned if it, at all is useful for the study of European politics (Vink & Graziano 2008: 3ff). Nevertheless, the concept is increasingly popular and is being used in academic analyses in order to “understand how new European opportunities and constraints affect national politics. This new research agenda (.....) focuses on changes in national political systems that can be attributed to the development of European regional integration.....” (Vink & Graziano 2008: 3). In the paper, Europeanization of the administrative level is understood as a process of change in which Denmark adapts its administrative structures, administrative processes and decision-making processes to new policies, practices, norms, rules and procedures that emanate from the emerging

European system of governance specifically from the emerging ESDP (cf. Börzel and Risse 2003: 63).

It is possible to identify two basically different approaches to the study of Europeanization, a bottom-up and a top-down approach. Originally, studies of ‘Europeanization’ were preoccupied with analysing the impact of the integration processes at the European level, i.e. a bottom-up perspective on the creation of common institutions and policies (Irons 2003: 210; Hix 2005: 14ff; 38ff). Research on Europeanization did not systematically begin to focus on the domestic impact of EU policy until the second half of the 1990s (Knill 2001; Goetz 2000; Börzel & Risse 2003, Radaelli 2003). Robert Ladrech introduced the top-down approach to the study of Europeanization arguing that it makes sense to talk about Europeanization in situations where the convergence of national policy and adaptation of national public administration take place. Thus, adaptation is understood as an incremental process caused by participation in policy-making at the European level (Ladrech 1994: 69).

In recent years, a new theoretical approach has emerged sharing the top-down approach to Europeanization. The new trend is called ‘cross-national policy convergence’ or just ‘policy convergence’ and refers to the end result of a process of policy change regardless of the causal circumstances (Knill 2005; Jordan 2005; Lenschow et al. 2005; Holzinger and Knill 2005; Knill and Lenschow 2005). Policy convergence is defined as “any increase in the similarity between one or more characteristics of a certain policy across a given set of political jurisdictions over a given period of time” (Knill 2005: 768). Andrew Jordan emphasizes that the policy convergence approach can enrich the studies of the domestic impact of Europeanization

by stressing that Europeanization does not necessarily cause every aspect of national policy to converge (Jordan 2005: 950; also Lenschow 2005).

With its top-down approach to the administrative consequences of the opt-out, the study here falls within the debate on the Europeanization of foreign policy. In his definition of the Europeanization of foreign policy, Ben Tonra pays special attention to the officials involved in policy making and to the norms and expectations tied to their professional roles (Tonra 2000: 229). Michael E. Smith has a similar focus on the actors involved in foreign policy making stressing the significance of elite socialisation, bureaucratic reorganization and institutional change as indicators of policy adaptation and administrative adaptation within the field of foreign and security policy (Smith 2000: 617ff). Thus, both Ben Tonra and Michael Smith emphasise the crucial role of officials involved in decision-making and governance of the member states' foreign policies vis-à-vis what goes on at the European level. As the paper applies a similar actor oriented approach, it is pertinent to bring forward a crucial argument of Maarten Vink and Paolo Graziano. The two authors strongly emphasise that Europeanization as such is not a theory rather, it is a phenomenon to be explained (Vink & Graziano 2008: 12ff).

For a number of years, there has been a debate on the role of officials in the study of European politics. Andrew Moravcsik maintains that government decision-makers can be expected to be positive towards Europeanization because it tends to keep the executive capacity at the national level and because "the EC provides information to governments that is not generally available" (Moravcsik 1993: 515). Existing research seems to buttress Moravcsik's arguments (Ohrgard 1997; Smith 2000; Sjørnsen 2001: 199-200). In the literature, there is general agreement that participation in the

collaboration within the EU on foreign policy issues has a strong socialising effect on the participants (Hill & Wallace 1996; Aggestam 2004). As far as national foreign ministries are concerned, M.E. Smith points out that “there is substantial evidence to show that membership...in particular influences the way individual member states organize their pursuit of foreign policy. Political co-operation priorities become national priorities...” (Smith 2000: 619).

Even though there is this general agreement about the potential socialising effect of participating in the European cooperation on foreign policy issues, there is some disagreement on two accounts. The first concerns the strength of the socialization mechanism and the other is related to the extent to which the officials develop a European identity or they ‘only’ develop a dual identity.

Basically, socialization is about the internationalization of norms and role perceptions (Quaglia et al. 2008: 157). Quaglia et al. establish that current research confirms the existence of a process of socialization and/or the presence of a supranational outlook amongst officials interacting in EU forums (Quaglia et al. 2008: 160ff). It is confirmed by the findings of Jeffrey Lewis who stresses the significance of the different institutional environments to which the officials may belong (Lewis 2005; Lewis 2003). The research by Jan Beyers points in the same direction even though it is argued that socialization is rather weak (Beyers 2005). It is the basic conclusion of Beyers that domestic factors and domestic institutional affiliation are more important than the participation in the European processes when it comes to affecting the adoption of supranational conceptions. “International socialization depends to a large extent on an in-depth exploration of how domestic politics is organized. Domestic ties are crucial”, it is stated (Beyers 2005: 933). The significance of the domestic environment shaping

the role perceptions of officials attending council working groups is stressed even stronger by Jan Beyers and Jarle Trondal (Beyers & Trondal, 2004). The roles and the perceptions of member state representatives depend to a large extent on the specific domestic institution to which they belong. It is argued that bureaucrats from sector ministries are more likely to adopt a supranational role than are the diplomats from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Beyers & Trondal 2004: 928). Finally, Jeffrey Checkel emphasizes the importance of institutions which are described as both ‘promoters’ and ‘sites’ of socialization. However, the socializing effects of the European institutions are uneven and often surprisingly weak meaning that in no way there is a development of new post-national identity (Checkel 2005).

Summing up, there is widespread agreement that general socialization takes place of national officials participating in the working groups in the Council and in the Commission. There is some disagreement as to how strong is the socialization. The importance of the national and domestic institutions is stressed quite strongly by a number of authors. It points towards a conclusion that national officials develop a dual identity or a dual conception of their roles, but they never develop a purely ‘European identity’. Phrased differently, national decision-makers are not free floating individuals developing their norms and role perceptions in a vacuum. They are strongly influenced by the national institutions in which they are based.

In conclusion, the paper focuses on the possible changes of administrative level of the national defence policy as a consequence of the Danish non-participation in the military aspects of the ESDP. It applies an actor approach to the empirical analysis. It assumes that the national civil servants are grounded in a socio-cultural and institutional context which contribute to determine their norms, roles and role expectations which in

the end lead to the concrete actions and initiatives the officials actually take. National role conceptions are supposed to influence how Danish officials involved in EU policy-making manage, in this case, the defence opt-out. It means that the role conceptions of the civil servants in the MoD and the MFA and their concrete initiatives and actions are supposed to explain the changes of the administrative structures, administrative procedures and decision-making processes in the two ministerial departments

## **Data and method**

The information used in the analysis of the Danish institutional structures, the decision-making processes as well as the attitudes of civil servants comes from interviews carried out by the author in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in the Ministry of Defence in several rounds namely in August 2005, in January 2006 and November 2007. Given the small number of employees, it is necessary to ensure that the interviewees can not be identified neither by name nor by position. Therefore, when the text refers to information obtained in the interviews, the term 'confidential interview' is used.

Semi-structured interviews were employed in which the core questions were 1) how is the opt-out managed on a daily basis? 2) How and in which situations have Danish officials to abstain from discussions potentially leading to decisions on ESDP issues? These two questions aimed to reveal if and how the relevant administrative structures and decision-making procedures have adapted to the development of the ESDP. 3) Does Denmark lose influence because of the opt-out? And 4) how, if at all, does the opt-out affect Denmark's room for manoeuvre when general CFSP issues are discussed? The latter two questions aimed at revealing attitudes towards the ESDP among the civil servants.

The information on the administrative structures is buttressed by information obtained from a selected number of editions of 'Ministeriernes Telefonbog' (The Ministerial Directory). The information used here refers to 1996 and 2001. The information on 2009 is obtained from the homepages of the two departments ([www.um.dk](http://www.um.dk) and [www.fmn.dk](http://www.fmn.dk)). The assumption behind using the Directory in combination with the information from the homepages is that they can show how the formal institutional set-up has changed over time.

In late 2007, the Danish government was inclined to have a number of referenda on the Danish opt-outs. Therefore, it was decided to ask a government research institution, the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS) to make a White Book on the consequences of the opt-outs (DIIS 2008). The report is included in analysis when relevant.

Defence policy is an integrated element in Denmark's foreign policy which again is fully integrated into the CFSP. The integration of the different foreign policy instruments creates analytical problems in isolating the administrative consequences following from participation in the CFSP and the administrative consequences following from the non-participation in the military cooperation within the framework of the ESDP. It is not only a problem for the Danish case, it appears to be a general problem when dealing with the CFSP and the ESDP as "the EU input, supposed to generate change at the domestic level, is difficult to detect in the foreign and security policy area" (Major & Pomorska 2005: 2.) Likewise, Reuben Wong argues "compared with change in pillar I, domestic change resulting from foreign policy Europeanization is weaker, less clearly defined and more difficult to detect" (Wong 2008: 331; also Vink & Graziano 2008: 9). Irrespective of such difficulties, it is necessary for the analysis to

indicate if an Europeanization of the administrative level of Danish defence policy has taken place. Europeanization of the defence administration can either be the result of ‘direct EU pressure’ or be an indirect effect of EU developments. ‘Direct EU pressure’ is out of the question in the Danish case because of the opt-out. Therefore, it is necessary to scrutinize ‘indirect effects’ which “could introduce new mechanisms such as diffusion or learning that is more difficult to detect” (Vink & Graziano 2008: 9ff).

Recognizing that the effects from the European Union is much more difficult to detect within the fields of foreign and defence policy, Claudia Major and Claudia Pomorska suggest using counterfactual reasoning to establish the causal importance of the EU in this particular policy area (Major & Pomorska 2005: 3). The suggestion is followed here meaning that the analysis assumes that the possible changes would not have happened if Denmark did not participate in the CFSP and/or the ESDP.

## **The Danish opt-out from military cooperation within the ESDP**

Denmark was the first EU member state to hold a referendum on the Maastricht Treaty. A large majority in Parliament voted in favour of ratifying the Treaty. In spite of the clear signal from Parliament, a very small majority of 50.7 percent of the electorate on June 2, 1992 voted against the Union Treaty. The result came as a total surprise to the political establishment and to the conservative-liberal government sending chock waves through the political system. Leading politicians described the result as “the biggest crisis in Danish politics since WW 2” (Ryborg 1998: 11ff). Very soon, the government

succeeded in involving the opposition in finding a compromise on how to proceed with Denmark's membership of the European Union. During the following months, the government and the opposition parties were able to establish a delicate but fragile compromise. It soon became known as 'The National Compromise' in which an opt-out from the defence cooperation was one of the crucial components (Ryborg 1998: 125ff).

At the European Council meeting in Edinburgh in December 1992, Denmark was granted a special opt-out from the development of a common European defence policy (ESDP). The central formulation in the Edinburgh treaty reads like this: "The heads of state and heads of government take note.... [that]... Denmark cannot participate in the preparation and the implementation of decisions and actions within the Union which affect the defence field, but Denmark will not hinder that closer cooperation between the member states in this field takes place", (DUPI 2000: 230-1). Thus, the other member countries accepted that Denmark needed a legally binding arrangement in order to ratify the Maastricht Treaty. In return, Denmark had to promise not to obstruct any further developments should the other countries wish to deepen their collaboration in, for example, the field of defence policy (DUPI 2000: 230; Petersen 2004: 514ff).

On May 18 1993, a new referendum was held on the Maastricht Treaty which included the Edinburgh amendments among which were the defence opt-out. This time a majority of close to 57 percent voted in favour of joining the Union. With its ratification of the Maastricht Treaty, Denmark agreed to participate in the development of a European common foreign and security policy (CFSP). The Parliament instructed the government to participate fully in the European collaboration on the CFSP and it also instructed the government to be highly attentive to what went on within the

framework of the ESDP (Folketinget 8/12 1999; 12/10 1999; 11/5 1999; 21/1 1999; DIIS, 2008: 60). An interesting addition to the publicly stated policy of abstaining from cooperation on defence came in 2004 with the new political agreement on Danish Defence covering the years 2005-09. The agreement reads “the political parties agree that the structure and the capacity of the defence forces are to be organized in ways which ensure that Denmark, after a possible lifting of the defence opt-out, immediately will be able to supply satisfactory contributions to future European defence tasks....”(Forsvarsministeriet 2004: 2).

Summing up, the opt-outs granted in Edinburgh were a decisive precondition for maintaining a fragile political compromise on Danish membership of the European Union. In spite of the opt-out from the military aspects of the defence cooperation, the bureaucracy was instructed to follow closely the developments in the ESDP with a view to a possible lifting of the opt-out. The opt-out from the ESDP has been interpreted by successive Danish governments in a permissive way, allowing Denmark to participate in the debates in the Council of Ministers on motions for decisions and actions with implications for the defence field. In relation to the discussions on strengthening the European defence dimension, the government has referred to the argument that in principle, it is only the adoption of formal legal documents affecting the defence area which fall within the opt-out. Therefore, the government has participated in the discussions on defence issues and it has endorsed public statements within this field (DUPI 2000: 246). The officials have been instructed not to “participate in the preparation and the implementation of decision and actions within the Union which affect the defence field”. Therefore, Danish officials could participate in the general

planning of the ESDP, but they had to abstain from participating in the concrete implementation at the operational level (Petersen 2004: 538).

## **Non-adaptation of Danish defence policy and executive dissociation from the opt-out**

With the defence opt-out, it is obvious that the Danish armed forces have been prevented from participating in any military operation if the European Union has been in charge. Because of the opt-out, Denmark did not contribute soldiers when the EU launched operation 'Concordia' in Macedonia on March 31, 2003. Neither did Denmark contribute soldiers to the first EU military operation outside Europe when the EU initiated operation 'Artemis' in the Democratic Republic of Congo in July 2003. Long before, the European Union launched its biggest military operation deploying 7,000 soldiers in Bosnia in December 2004, Denmark had pulled out its soldiers under NATO command when it became known that the EU was going to take over the NATO mission in the country (Petersen 2004: 461). Because of the opt-out, Denmark did not contribute troops to the two biggest EU operations in Africa: the 2006 EUFOR Congo and the 2008/09 EUFOR Chad/CAR (DIIS, 2008: 103).

From these examples, it is obvious that no 'Europeanization' of Danish defence policy has taken place. However, it is striking that the EU's involvement in the Macedonia in March 2003 was supported strongly by the Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen. In a public speech, he stressed that it was in the interest of Denmark that the EU developed its military capacity to carry out peace-enforcement operations

and humanitarian tasks in Europe, for example in the Western Balkans (Petersen 2004: 239). On several occasions, the Minister of Defence, Søren Gade has directly stated that the opt-out means that Denmark has become isolated internationally (Folk & Forsvar, June 2004). Commenting on the increasing role of the EU in military crisis management in Africa, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Per Stig Møller, the Minister of Defence, Søren Gade and the Minister of Development, Ulla Tørnæs in 2008 published a joint feature in one of the biggest Danish newspapers. The three ministers argued “the operation (in Chad) is the second biggest EU crisis management operation until now. Unfortunately, the Danish flag will not be found in the EU force – it is prevented by the defence opt-out. The EU’s operation in the border area to the Sudan confirms once again that time has run out for the defence opt-out. ....we need a Denmark which no longer stands on the sideline when it comes to the EU’s military efforts. We owe ourselves, Europe and the third world to contribute to the EU’s important work. Totally without reservations”(Jyllands-Posten, February 27 2008). The DIIS report on the Danish opt-outs concludes “it is important to Denmark that all ESDP missions have been close to the officially stated Danish security and defence interests” (DIIS 2008: 110).

Summing up because of the opt-out, it is not possible for Denmark to participate in military operations, the country would have supported if for example the UN had had the responsibility for the implementation. At the same time, it is obvious that the government is strongly and explicitly against the defence opt-out and wants it lifted as soon as possible.

## **Danish influence on the ESDP**

It appears that the government is joined by the officials in the MFA and the MoD in its opposition to the defence opt-out. The data from the interviews in the two ministerial departments show a fairly unambiguous picture as far as the attitudes and the role perceptions of the officials are concerned. The evaluation of the opt-out is generally negative and it is clearly stressed that it is perceived as an obstacle to exerting Danish influence both on the CFSP in general and on the ESDP in particular. MFA officials state “we are not interesting to our partners we are less attractive which limits our possibilities for exerting influence” (confidential interview). “Participation in the discussions leading to decisions is extremely important. It is important for us to join the discussion at the earliest possible point in time” (confidential interview). If possible, the frustration is even stronger in the MoD: “We are obliged to be attentive towards every change and development in the ESDP. We have to participate in meetings and in committees but we are not taken seriously. Our market value vis-à-vis the other EU countries is very limited.....As a bureaucracy we are paralysed” (confidential interview).

The civil servants working with ESDP issues in the MFA feel they can not be proactive and they cannot seek influence on decision-making on defence in Brussels. Instead, they are mainly preoccupied with managing the Danish opt-out from the ESDP. The officials follow closely any new developments, changes or just plain rumours of potential initiatives to be launched within the framework of the ESDP. This type of activity is basically about information gathering. Also, a lot of time is spent finding the legal limits to the Danish involvement in the ESDP (confidential interview). Because of the restrictions on the Danish civil servants working on ESDP related issues, they have

to 'compensate' by being much more constructive and much more proactive in related fields. In particular, Denmark is active in promoting issues linked to the civilian components of the ESDP and on the development of concepts on civilian operations within the ESDP (Jacobsen 2009). The compensatory behaviour on ESDP related issues is considered as a simple necessity in order to maintain Denmark's position as a credible partner within the CFSP in general (confidential interview).

Given its current status, Denmark is not a very interesting partner for the other EU members when narrow defence and pure military issues are up for discussion therefore the MoD has to spend a considerable amount of time on information gathering. Because Denmark does not participate in the development of the EU battle groups, it has great difficulties in obtaining the relevant information. Because of the opt-out, Denmark simply lacks the contacts and the personal networks that make it 'natural' and therefore less time consuming to exchange views and evaluations with Copenhagen on policy issues where the other members know that Denmark has to abstain from participating (confidential interview).

Based on the interviews and the brief quotations above, it is obvious that the officials involved in discussions and policy formulations on ESDP related issues are strongly in favour of lifting the opt-out. The reason for being against the opt-out is clear and unambiguous. It is the perception that the opt-out prohibits Danish civil servants from exerting influence and from taking care of what they perceive as Danish national interests. From the interviews, it is fairly clear that the officials share a common understanding that Denmark's future possibilities to exert international leverage are tied to being an active partner in the European Union. "The CFSP is much more important than it was 10 years ago. Increasingly, the CFSP is the forum for common policy

formulations and decisions not only within foreign policy in general but also within security and defence issues” (confidential interview).

In summary based on the interviews and buttressed by the DIIS report published in 2008 on the Danish opt-outs (DIIS 2008: 119ff), it is safe to conclude that Denmark has very limited influence on the development of the ESDP. Such a conclusion is in agreement with the old argument of Helen Wallace (Wallace1997). It is hardly surprising as lack of influence was an acknowledged consequence of the opt-out. On the other hand, the conclusion is contrary to the observations of Adler-Nissen who states that the British and Danish opt-outs do not restrict the influence of the two countries within the field of the JHA (Adler-Nissen 2009).

## **Transformation of the administrative structures and policy-making processes in the defence administration**

This section aims at showing that a conspicuous Europeanization has taken place of the Danish national administration involved in defence policy. The section scrutinizes the organizational changes that have taken place in the two ministries involved in administering Danish defence policy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the Ministry of Defence (MoD). Governments in Denmark do not interfere in the internal organisation of public administration which is strictly a bureaucratic responsibility. It is the responsibility of the permanent secretary in each ministry to decide the specific organisation of units, sections and divisions, they find most appropriate.

In the years following 1993 and the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty, the CFSP became an integral part of Denmark’s foreign policy. The crucial position of the EU in

Denmark's general foreign policy is obvious from Denmark's active participation in the debates on European foreign policy and from the attempts to coordinate foreign policy initiatives among the member states (Larsen 2005: 201-208; Petersen 2004). Danish civil servants participate in the activities of some 30 working groups in Brussels dealing with the CFSP including all groups addressing defence issues except one, the European Defence Agency. It seems to be a guiding principle for the civil servants involved in the working groups that they endeavour to play a positive and constructive role in the debates on all issues which are on the table. The Danish civil servants make an effort to play a similar role in the preparatory phase before topics are officially tabled (confidential interviews).

In the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a reorganisation took place as of April 1, 2009. In the so-called North division which is involved in implementing Danish foreign policy towards the developed world including Russia and the Caucasus, the European Union receives a significant amount of attention in the internal organisational set-up ([www.um.da/omOs/organisation/organigram/Nordgruppen/](http://www.um.da/omOs/organisation/organigram/Nordgruppen/) accessed 07.04.09). It is worth mentioning that an ambassador holds the position as Head of 'European Affairs'. In the internal hierarchy, the position is located at the same level as the Head of 'Political affairs' and the Head of the 'Legal service'. Out of nine sections in the North division, no less than four are directly involved in European Union issues. For the discussion here it is of particular importance that a fifth section works with 'security policy' which includes European security. In the section dealing with 'security policy', a limited number of civil servants work full time with topics related to the ESDP constantly considering the reports coming from the Danish participants in the working groups in Brussels (confidential interview). Based on this information, the internal

organization of the MFA has clearly adapted to the development of the CFSP including the ESDP.

Within the realm of the Ministry of Defence, an almost identical picture can be observed as of spring 2009. Basically only one section is involved in policy-making on the EU and on the ESDP. It is the 'NATO & EU section' within the division on 'Strategy and policy' ([www.fmn.dk/Departmentet/Organisation/Pages/nyorganisation.aspx](http://www.fmn.dk/Departmentet/Organisation/Pages/nyorganisation.aspx), accessed 15.04.09). It is highly interesting to note that the MoD has allocated almost as much manpower to take care of Denmark's relationship to the ESDP as the Ministry has allocated to take care of Danish interests in relation to NATO's defence planning (confidential interview). The lack of Danish participation in concrete ESDP operations does not, however, keep the officials from the MoD from participating in the debates on these issues. As in the MFA, MoD officials deliberately keep a low profile in the different working groups because they constantly have to keep a close eye on the limitations that follow from the opt-out (confidential interview).

Based on the above, it is safe to conclude as of spring 2009, the national institutional structures and the policy-making processes within the realm of the MFA and the MoD have adapted to what goes on at the European level concerning the ESDP. However, it is necessary to trace the changes in the administrative set-up over time in order to substantiate or 'test' the argument that a Europeanization has taken place.

As far as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is concerned, the position of the European Union appears to have changed quite significantly from the mid 1990s to 2001. Back in 1996, two sections out of six were totally pre-occupied with European Union issues whereas bilateral foreign relations appear to be the predominant purpose of

the remaining sections. In that year, Denmark's relationship to the West European Union is hardly found in the organisational set-up of the MFA whereas general security issues, NATO relations as well as the UN and peacekeeping operations seem to be the big issues that required much attention in the mid 1990s. Compared with the 1996 situation, the EU takes up a very significant position both in 2001 and in 2009, irrespective of the different names of the sections in the North division. It has to be mentioned that in 2001, one sub-section was directly focussed on the CFSP and the ESDP. Also, it is interesting to note that in 2001, the number of staff dealing with EU security and defence issues was more or less equivalent to the number of staff working on NATO issues namely around four. A comparison between the administrative set-up in 1996 and 2001 reveals that the changes were quite conspicuous meaning that by the mid 1990s, the MFA had not yet adopted its organisational structure to the Danish full participation in the CFSP. However, by 2001 it was obvious from the administrative organisation of the North division of the Danish MFA that the EU was a pivotal point for Danish foreign policy.

As far as the 2001 organisational set-up of the Ministry of Defence is concerned, it is impossible to identify the European Union not to talk about the ESDP as topics that was officially given attention in the Ministry at that time. Looking at the situation in 1996, it is interesting to note that one section dealt with 'security policy and international issues – NATO' emphasizing Denmark's core security organisation. (Ministeriernes Telefonbog 1996/2).

Summing up, the institutional structures of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as the decision-making processes have adapted to what goes on at the European level concerning the ESDP. In particular, it was clearly the case in 2001. As far as the

Ministry of Defence is concerned, it appears that the 2009 institutional structure has adapted to the fact that the ESDP has developed significantly in recent years. The civil servants participate in the European policy-making processes not only on foreign and security issues, but certainly also on numerous aspects of defence policy except those related to the implementation of concrete operational plans and to the European Defence Agency. However, neither in the 2001 nor in the 1996 organisation, a similar visible position can be observed of the EU in relation to Danish defence administration.

Having concluded that organisational changes as well as changes of the decision-making procedures have taken place in both ministries, the question remains if these transformations can be explained with reference to the ESDP or they have to be explained by Denmark's active involvement in the CFSP. The significant changes that took place in the MFA between 1996 and 2001 most probably have to be explained by Denmark's full and active membership of the CFSP which followed the adoption of the Union Treaty. Probably, it only required minor changes to adapt to the significant developments of the ESDP in the wake of the 1998 St. Malo summit. The situation seems different when it comes to the MoD. Apparently, what went on within the ESDP during the 1990s and early 2000s was not considered important to the Defence department. On the other hand, it is possible to show that from the situation in 2001 until the 2009 organisational set-up, the EU has achieved a much more conspicuous position. The MoD is for obvious reasons focussed on defence issues and much less on general CFSP topics. Therefore, it seems safe to conclude that the organisation and the decision-making procedures of this particular Ministry changed during the current decade because of the developments of the ESDP.

In conclusion, it can be argued that the administrative structures and the decision-making procedures in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have been Europeanized since the mid-1990s and also that it to a very large extent due is to Denmark's full membership of the CFSP. In the Defence department, it appears that the organisational and decision-making changes have been Europeanized because of the recent significant developments of the ESDP which have taken place since the early years of this century.

## **The role of Danish officials working with ESDP related issues**

The previous section showed that in spite of the opt-out from military cooperation within the ESDP, the administrative level of the Danish defence policy has been Europeanized. It is the core argument of the paper that this change has to be explained with reference to actions and initiatives taken by officials based in the two ministries. No doubt, Danish officials are based in an administrative system which is strongly Europeanized in all policy fields and thus generally organized to facilitate Denmark's participation in the European integration processes (Blom-Hansen & Christensen, 2004; Christensen 2003). Therefore, it is hardly surprising that Rebecca Adler-Nissen can point out that "the current consensus among broad parts of the political and administrative elite in Denmark is that the opt-outs are a nuisance" (Adler-Nissen 2009: 73).

Based on thorough empirical studies, Jørgen Grønnegaard Christensen concludes that since Denmark became a member of the European Community in 1972, a significant adaptation of Danish public administration has taken place. "(The adaptation) basically shows a considerable flexibility and attentive attitude in Danish public

administration. Therefore, routines and institutional rules of game have developed generally solving the tasks following from the participation (in EU cooperation) ....In no way, it has meant passivity from the officials in the central administration” (Christensen 2003: 93). It is the argument of Grønnegaard Christensen that in general, public administrative institutions undertake new and bigger tasks without resisting a potential growth of their workload. Such a behaviour is to be explained by the strong norm of loyalty which is an integrated element of the ethics of modern bureaucracies. Also, it has to be acknowledged that the officials are interested in the greater power and prestige which follow from an increasing number of tasks and new functions which, next give them a stronger position in the internal bureaucratic struggle about resources which is so decisive for the future career of the individual official (Christensen 2003: 60ff).

The interviews and observations made by the author in the Danish MFA and in the MoD make it possible to establish that officials based in the two ministerial departments hold strongly positive attitudes towards participating and cooperating in the European Union within their specific fields. It is worth stressing that all the interviewees express the opinion that participating fully and without any restrictions in the ESDP is the best way to take care of what they perceive as Danish foreign and security interests. It is obvious to argue that the frustration and the role conflict they might experience tend to push them in favour of an organisational set-up which adapts to what goes on at the European level. Closely linked to this, it can be expected that the officials are interested in every organisational change which improve their possibilities for participating in the decision-making processes in Brussels.

In conclusion, the openly expressed interests of the officials combined with the request of the Parliament to follow closely what goes on within the ESDP can explain the changes of the organisational set-up and the decision-making procedures in the MFA and the MoD. As a consequence of the Europeanization of the Danish defence administration, Denmark is ready to join the ESDP as a full member from day one, should the opt-out be lifted. It is only narrow political considerations including political uncertainty as regards the behaviour of the voters that prevents the government to call a referendum on lifting the defence opt-out.

## **Conclusion**

Denmark is the only EU member country which does not participate fully in the development of the European Security and Defence Policy. It is the reason for the paper to ask the question what has happened to this particular policy field in a situation where the other member states have developed common policies? First, it is concluded that Denmark has very limited influence on this particular policy field. It may not be surprising even though a recent analysis of the consequences of the Danish and British opt-outs from the JHA points in a different direction.

The main focus of the paper has been on the administrative level of the Danish defence policy. The paper concludes rather unambiguously that a Europeanization has taken place of the administrative structures and of the decision-making procedures both within the MFA and the MoD. Europeanization is defined as a process in which Denmark adapts its administrative structures and decision-making processes to the new policies, practices and procedures that come from the development

of ESDP. However, there is a difference between the two ministerial departments as far as the time and the speed of the Europeanization processes are concerned. It appears that the Europeanization processes took place in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as early as during the 1990s. As far as the Ministry of Defence is concerned, the Europeanization did not manifest itself until the years following the 2001.

The changes that have taken place within the MFA are most probably to be explained by Denmark's full membership of the CFSP. On the other hand, the changes of the organisation and decision-making processes of the MoD most probably can be explained as adaptation to the significant developments of the ESDP which has been conspicuous in the current millennium.

Finally, it is concluded that the Europeanization of the Danish defence administration can only be explained by referring to the initiatives and actions of the civil servants based in the two ministries. Such a conclusion is in agreement with the literature on the Europeanization of foreign policy. The literature as well as empirical studies of the Europeanization of the Danish public administration in general point to the significance of the domestic institutions involved. There is no doubt that the Danish civil service in general is very positive towards the cooperation taking place within the European Union. Moreover, it is important that Danish public administrative institutions have shown a considerable flexibility and adaptive capability when it comes to the European cooperation.

Summing up, in spite Denmark has an opt-out from core aspects of the ESDP, the Danish administrative structures and decision-making processes have adapted to the new policies, practices and procedures which would be necessary if the country participated fully in the ESDP. The Europeanization has taken place because of

bureaucratic actions and initiatives and it has taken place even though, there is an explicit political decision that Denmark does not participate in the military cooperation within the ESDP. It appears the transformation has taken place because the officials involved felt that they, as civil servants, were without influence and therefore Denmark lost influence on the development of the ESDP and possibly also in adjacent policy fields.

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