

**FINNISH NATIONAL DEFENCE UNIVERSITY**

**“ALONE AND TOGETHER”: THE EMERGING STRATEGIC CULTURE OF THE EUROPEAN BORDER AND COAST GUARD AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR FINNISH STRATEGIC PLANNING**

Master's thesis

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Master of Military Sciences Course 11  
Finnish Border Guard training programme

March 2023

Course Master of military sciences course 11	Training programme Finnish Border Guard training programme
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Name of the thesis <b>“Alone and together”: the emerging strategic culture of the European Border and Coast Guard and its implications for Finnish strategic planning</b>	
The field, to which the thesis relates to Strategy	Place of storage Finnish National Defence University library
Time March 2023	<b>Text pages 86                      Appendix pages 48</b>
<p><b>ABSTRACT</b></p> <p>The European Border and Coast Guard (EBCG) is a new internal security community formed in 2016. Its legal framework was bolstered in 2019 via legislation that formed a common operational resource, the EBCG Standing Corps (SC) which is administratively controlled under the EBCG Agency (Frontex). In recent years, tasks of traditional border management among Member States have increased by supplementation of migration management responsibilities as a part of comprehensive European Union (EU) governance steering. These profound changes call for a closer inspection on the internal world of the EBCG. The main research question of the study was: What is the nature and character of the EBCG’s strategic culture following the adoption of Regulation (EU) 2019/1896 and how should this strategic culture be considered in Finnish strategic planning?</p> <p>The general premises of context, continuity and change of strategic culture theory were identified. These were later used for the theory-guided analysis. The concept of competing sub-cultures from fourth generation of strategic culture research and the theory of epistemic communities that focuses on stakeholder groups claiming power over knowledge were used for interpretive purposes.</p> <p>A two-stage research design was formed. The stages reflected the research question’s perspectives of Europe and Finland. Data was generated from official documentation from European and Finnish sources, expert interviews and a researcher-led workshop. The textual data were analysed by utilising theory-guided discourse analysis and thematic analysis. The workshop yielded four distinct future scenarios via a strategic foresight application. These scenarios were compared with the results of prior Finnish strategic plans in order to discuss the future and provide guidance for Finnish strategic planning.</p> <p>The results indicate that the EBCG strategic culture is an evolving concept. The premises of context, continuity and change are joined together through two central discourses: legitimacy and agency. These relate to tendencies of the EBCG as an outcome and the continuous process, European Integrated Border Management (EIBM), respectively. Identified decentralised epistemic communities in the EBCG influence the central discourses and ultimately the direction of the EBCG. With the introduction of the SC, Frontex was perceived as wielding increased status and importance within the EBCG. Finland perceived itself as a committed and active synergy-seeking member within the EBCG.</p> <p>Two recommendations were formed. The EBCG could institutionalise the process of introspection to foreseeing its developing internal environment. Finland should form situational and vision-like pictures of its profile as supporting communications for strategic planning steering. Four recommendations for further research were proposed.</p> <p><b>KEY WORDS</b></p> <p>European Border and Coast Guard, European Integrated Border Management, strategic culture, epistemic communities, strategic planning, strategic foresight</p>	

Kurssi Sotatieteiden maisterikurssi 11	Koulutusohjelma Rajavartiolaitoksen koulutusohjelma
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Opinnäytetyön nimi <b>“Yksin ja yhdessä”: Eurooppalaisen raja- ja merivartioston esiin tuleva strateginen kulttuuri ja sen seuraamukset Suomen strategiselle suunnittelulle</b>	
Oppiaine, johon työ liittyy Strategia	Säilytyspaikka Maanpuolustuskorkeakoulun kirjasto
Aika Maaliskuu 2023	<b>Tekstisivuja 86</b> <b>Liitesivuja 48</b>
<p><b>TIIVISTELMÄ</b></p> <p>Eurooppalainen raja- ja merivartiosto (EuRMV) on uusi vuonna 2016 perustettu sisäisen turvallisuuden yhteisö, mikä perustettiin 2016. Sen laillista asemaa vahvistettiin lainsäädännöllä vuonna 2019, minkä yhteydessä perustettiin EuRMV:n Pysyvä Joukko (PJ), jonka hallinnointi kuuluu EuRMV Virastolle (Frontex). Menneinä lähivuosina perinteiset Jäsenvaltioiden rajaturvallisuustehtävät ovat lisääntyneet muuttoliikkeen hallintavastuiden tulon myötä osana Euroopan Union (EU) hallinnointiohjausta. Nämä perusteelliset muutokset kutsuvat tarkastelemaan EuRMV:n sisäistä maailmaa tarkemmin. Englanninkielisen opinnäytetyön päätutkimuskysymys oli: Mikä on EuRMV:n strategisen kulttuurin luonto ja luonne Euroopan Parlamentin ja Neuvoston Asetuksen (EU) 2019/1896 tulon myötä ja miten tämä tulisi huomioida suomalaisessa strategisessa suunnittelussa?</p> <p>Strategisen kulttuurin yleiset lähtökohdat, konteksti, jatkuvuus ja muutos tunnistettiin. Näitä hyödynnettiin teoriaohjatussa analyysissä myöhemmin. Tulkitsevia tarkoituksia varten valikoitiin neljännen sukupolven strategisesta kulttuurista kumpuava kilpailevien alakulttuurien konsepti ja episteemisten yhteisöjen teoria, mikä keskittyy sidosryhmien valtaväitöksiin tiedosta.</p> <p>Kaksivaiheinen tutkimusasetelma muodostettiin. Vaiheet kuvastivat päätutkimuskysymyksen eurooppalaisia ja suomalaisia näkökulmia. Aineisto tuotettiin eurooppalaisista ja suomalaisista virallisasiakirjoista, asiantuntijahaastattelusta ja tutkijan johtamasta työpajasta. Tekstiaineisto analysoitiin teoriaohjautuvia diskurssianalyysiä ja teema-analyysiä hyödyntäen. Työpaja tuotti neljä erilaista tulevaisuusskenaariota strategisen ennakkoinnin sovelluksella. Näitä skenaarioita verrattiin aikaisempiin Suomen strategiaan suunnitelmiin, jotta voitiin keskustella tulevaisuudesta ja tarjota ohjausta suomalaiselle strategiselle suunnittelulle.</p> <p>Tulokset indikoivat, että EuRMV:n strateginen kulttuuri on kehittyvä konsepti. Kontekstin, jatkuvuuden ja muutoksen lähtökohdat ovat liittyneet yhteen kahden keskeisen diskurssin, legitimitetin ja toimijuuden, kautta. Vastaavasti, nämä liittyvät taipumuksiin EuRMV:n lopputuloksesta ja Euroopan yhdenmety rajaturvallisuuden jatkuvasta prosessista. Tunnistetut hajautuneet episteemiset yhteisöt EuRMV:ssa vaikuttavat keskeisiin diskursseihin ja, lopulta, EuRMV:n suuntaan. PJ:n tulon myötä Frontexin asema ja merkitys havaittiin kasvaneen EuRMV:ssa. Suomi havaitsi itsensä sitoutuneena ja aktiivisena synergiahakuisena jäsenenä EuRMV:ssa.</p> <p>Kaksi suositusta muodostettiin. EuRMV voisi institutionalisoida itsetutkiskelun ennakoidakseen sisäistä ympäristöään. Suomen pitäisi muodostaa sekä tilannekuva että visionkaltainen kuva profiilistaan tukevaksi viestinnäkseen strategisen suunnittelun ohjauksessa. Neljä suositusta muodostettiin jatkotutkimusta varten.</p> <p><b>AVAINSANAT</b></p> <p>Eurooppalainen raja- ja merivartiosto, Euroopan yhdenmety rajaturvallisuus, strateginen kulttuuri, episteemiset yhteisöt, strateginen suunnittelu, strateginen ennakkointi</p>	

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## DEFINITIONS

### Abbreviations

EBCG	The European Border and Coast Guard
(E)IBM	(European) Integrated Border Management. In European and national contexts
EU	European Union
FBG	Finnish Border Guard
Frontex	The European Border and Coast Guard Agency. From French: <b>frontières extérieures</b> (external borders)
MB	Frontex Management Board
MS	Member State(s)
SC	The European Border and Coast Guard Standing Corps
TO EIBM	Frontex Technical and Operational Strategy for EIBM

### Key concepts

Epistemic communities	A theoretical term indicating groups of professionals with the ability to claim power through knowledge and expertise.
Governance	A process of control that enforces and legitimises a set of rules in the context of a governing system (e.g. the EU) and its policies.
Operational concept	A method and model of operationalising an established political-strategic aim, which forms a basis for detailed tactical implementation.
Strategic culture	A theoretical term indicating a changing and context-specific strategic decision-making environment in a nation-state or a security community.
Strategic foresight	A theoretical field in the futures studies and a practical discipline that aims to provide insightful information for stakeholders.
Strategic management	The comprehensive action of steering an organisation or institution.
Strategic planning	The act of preparing and steering an organisation or institution for the future through plans.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

The European Border and Coast Guard (EBCG), a globally unique internal security community, was established in 2016<sup>1</sup> and reinforced in 2019<sup>2</sup>. It is formed around the aligned mission of European Integrated Border Management (EIBM) by its Member States (MS). With vivid memories of the then recent European migration crisis, French president Emmanuel Macron spoke about forming a common border police<sup>3</sup>. This was followed by EU Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker's introduction of a legislative proposal to form a standing corps of European border guards<sup>4</sup>. Following a brisk legislative procedure in the EU, the new legal framework reinforced the EBCG by organising a common operational resource, the European Border and Coast Guard Standing Corps (SC). The SC is administratively managed by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex), a common EU agency. Together with a common aim and joining both national and European capabilities, the EBCG is becoming an established security community that does not easily compare to any other international arrangement.

The origins of the EBCG are traceable from a relatively long history. One important early milestone was the establishment of an Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (AFSJ) in the Tampere Council Conclusions in 1999<sup>5</sup>. This led to the establishment of Frontex as a consultative agency in 2004<sup>6</sup>. Thus, formal cooperation among the MS in border management issues has a tradition of several decades. Migration management issues have been gradually introduced to the EBCG since 2016 and Frontex has even been called the EU's agency for returns<sup>7</sup>. The operational

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<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EU) 2016/1624 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 September 2016 on the European Border and Coast Guard and amending Regulation (EU) 2016/399 of the European Parliament and of the Council and repealing Regulation (EC) No 863/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Council Regulation (EC) No 2007/2004 and Council Decision 2005/267/EC, Official Journal of the European Union, L 251, Vol. 59, 16 September 2016. [<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:2016:251:-FULL&from=EN>], accessed 15.3.2023. Hereafter Regulation (EU) 2016/1624.

<sup>2</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 November 2019 on the European Border and Coast Guard and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1052/2013 and (EU) 2016/1624, Official Journal of the European Union, L 295 Vol. 62, 14 November 2019. [<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32019R1896>], accessed 15.3.2023. Hereafter Regulation (EU) 2019/1896.

<sup>3</sup> Vinocur, Nicholas: *Macron calls for new EU 'strategic culture'*, 2017, [Politico online news article 26.9.2017]. [<https://www.politico.eu/article/eu-international-diplomacy-army-macron-calls-for-strategic-culture/>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>4</sup> Juncker, Jean-Claude: *State of the Union 2018 The Hour of European Sovereignty*, authorised version of the State of the Union address 2018, 2018, [speech in the European Parliament 27.8.2018], p. 7. [[https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2018-09/soteu2018-speech\\_en\\_0.pdf](https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2018-09/soteu2018-speech_en_0.pdf)], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>5</sup> European Parliament: *Tampere European Council 15 and 16 October 1999 presidency conclusions*. [[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/tam\\_en.htm](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/tam_en.htm)], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>6</sup> Council Regulation (EC) No 2007/2004 of 26 October 2004 establishing a European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union, Official Journal of the European Union, L349, Vol. 47, 25 November 2004. [<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:2004:349:FULL&from=EN>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>7</sup> Nielsen, Nikolaj: *EU commission calls Frontex its new 'Return Agency'*, [EUobserver, online news article 28.4.2021]. [<https://euobserver.com/migration/151691>], accessed 15.3.2023.

statutory staff of Frontex entered service just two years ago<sup>8</sup> and because the EU asylum reform remains under review<sup>9</sup> it is easy to conclude that the EBCG is in the midst of fundamental changes.

## 1.1 The research puzzle

Management of the EBCG and the strategies it chooses to best achieve its goals are of great importance. EU political steering ultimately affects these choices. Furthermore, the EBCG is formed by and for its MS as a common platform of cooperation and support. The EBCG is a community as well as a system. One can view that such a system cannot exist without culture<sup>10</sup>. Individual MS and the community together form a cultural mosaic pattern incorporating both national and European elements. This fundamental pattern may have a significant impact on the strategic nature of the EBCG and affect how it is managed.

This internal environment of the EBCG stimulated numerous questions which are at the core of this study. Is there a strategic culture in the EBCG? Can it be defined and how? Where does this exist? How is this constituted? Who are the constitutors? Are national cultures aligned to a European one or are they distinctly separate?<sup>11</sup> What is the relevance of this information, for the community and for a single MS? All of this questioning was oriented by Sun Tzu's philosophy of knowing oneself as a necessary half for success<sup>12</sup>.

When approaching the phenomenon from the perspective of a single MS in the EBCG, the culture of the majority becomes an important issue to monitor. The inverse is also important; community members value a thorough analysis of a single MS as a point of comparison. Such co-assessment stimulates orientation towards the future, because the question: where are we going? is equally important for all parties. The aligned missions of the MS in the EBCG creates a dynamic that all parties progress in the same direction. Observing the strategic culture of this dynamic can be important to properly anticipate incoming changes that may impact future strategic level choices.

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<sup>8</sup> Frontex: *Next batch of standing corps officers ready to be deployed*. [<https://frontex.europa.eu/media-centre/news/news-release/next-batch-of-standing-corps-officers-ready-to-be-deployed-AGMwr8>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>9</sup> Council of the European Union: *EU asylum reform*. [<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/eu-migration-policy/eu-asylum-reform/>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>10</sup> Expert working at the Finnish Institute of International Affairs: 11.4.2022, notes held by the researcher.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Sun, Tzu: *The art of war*. Hodder and Stoughton, London 1985, p. 26. "If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself, but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle."

## 1.2 The research task

The research puzzle was operationalised into a research task. It was derived into two sections considering both the communal and Finnish perspectives. The main research question was formed as follows:

What is the nature and character of the EBCG's strategic culture following the adoption of Regulation (EU) 2019/1896 and how should this strategic culture be considered in Finnish strategic planning?

The main research question aimed for two things. First, to provide a present description of the EBCG strategic culture in the current regulatory framework and secondly, to assess implications for strategic planning on a national level.

The main research question was reinforced by five supporting research questions. These were formed from the distinctive orientations of the European and Finnish perspectives, respectively. The first three questions described an interpretation of the current strategic culture of the EBCG. They were:

1. What is the context of the EBCG' strategic culture?
2. What features portray continuity and change in the EBCG's strategic culture?
3. What is the importance of the SC to the EBCG's strategic culture?

The first two supporting research questions utilised the chosen theoretical perspective of strategic culture. There, context, continuity and change are focal areas of interest. The third supporting question focused on one significant change from the current regulatory framework, the introduction of the SC. The fourth and fifth supporting questions focused on Finland:

4. What are relevant Finnish strategic plans for the EBCG and how do they consider the EBCG's strategic culture?
5. How should the context and features of the EBCG's strategic culture be considered in Finnish strategic planning?

The fourth supporting research question aimed to highlight relevant strategic planning in the EBCG context and identified how Finland perceived itself in the EBCG. This supporting question related to the past through the most recent strategy documents. The fifth supporting research question joined the identified description of EBCG strategic culture to a perception of future foresight of the Finnish position in the EBCG. This was done in order to provide conclusions and to identify guiding input for future strategic planning in the form of a recommendation.

### 1.3 Prior research

Research specifically on the EBCG and EIBM can be temporally distinguished to older and newer in relation to the adoption of the current legal framework (December 2019). Duez identified the EBCG community in 2014 prior to its formalisation and argued that border management had become a discourse with unifying properties in the EU<sup>13</sup>. Santos Vara argued in 2015 that the European Parliament should have more oversight on Frontex's activities despite its apparent autonomy<sup>14</sup>. Ferraro and De Capitani argued that the 2016 legal framework did not create a supranational model, which they imply would overcome risks to the EU<sup>15</sup>. Horii examined the impactful role of Frontex's risk analysis for the EBCG in 2016<sup>16</sup>. Deleixhe and Duez argued that post-traditional perspectives best described MS sovereignty in the 2016 legal framework<sup>17</sup>. Iljina researched the Frontex as a European coast guard and concluded that due to its significant status, duplication of efforts in coast guard functions may occur between the MS and Frontex<sup>18</sup>. Although published in 2021, Wagner still refers to the previous legal framework in his extensive outlook on development of EIBM<sup>19</sup>.

Once the 2019 legal framework was in place, Fernandez-Rojo returned to Ferraro's and de Capitani's topic of supranationalism. He concluded that the new framework was still not supranational by nature, but it constituted a definitive step in that direction.<sup>20</sup> Santos Vara argued that differentiated integration in the EU is exemplified in the flexible outcome the European Commission's New Pact on Migration and Asylum<sup>21</sup>. Günther compared the multiannual strategic policy cycles of Europol and Frontex, which are central in their governance<sup>22</sup>. Both

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<sup>13</sup> Duez, Denis: A Community of Borders, Borders of the Community: the EU's integrated border management strategy, in Vallet, Elisabeth (ed.), *Borders, Fences and Walls State of Insecurity?*. Oxon, Routledge 2014, pp. 51-66.

<sup>14</sup> Santos Vara, Juan: The External Activities of AFSJ Agencies: The Weakness of Democratic and Judicial Controls, *European Foreign Affairs Review*. Vol. 20, No. 1, 2015, pp. 115-136.

<sup>15</sup> Ferraro, Francesca & Emilio de Capitani: The new European Border and Coast Guard: yet another "half way" EU reform?, *ERA Forum*. Vol. 17, Iss. 3, 2016, pp. 385-398.

<sup>16</sup> Horii, Satoko: The effect of Frontex's risk analysis on the European border controls, *European politics and society*. Vol. 17, No. 2, 2016, pp. 242-258.

<sup>17</sup> Deleixhe, Martin & Denis Duez: The new European border and coast guard agency: pooling sovereignty or giving it up?, *Journal of European Integration*. Vol. 41, No. 7, 2019, pp. 921-936.

<sup>18</sup> Iljina, Ilja: *Frontex as a European coast guard: a scorecard of public value generation by Frontex towards the eleven coast guard functions*. Diploma thesis, National Defence University, Helsinki 2019.

<sup>19</sup> Wagner, Johann: *Border management in transformation transnational threats and security policies of European states*. Cham, Springer 2021.

<sup>20</sup> Fernandez-Rojo, David: Regulation 2019/1896 on the European Border and Coast Guard (FRONTEX): The supranational administration of the external borders?, in Kotzur, Markus, David Moya, Ülkü S. Sözen & Andrea Romano (eds.), *The external dimension of EU migration and asylum policies: border management, human rights, development policies in the Mediterranean area*. Nomos, Baden-Baden 2020, pp. 295-324.

<sup>21</sup> Santos Vara: Flexible solidarity in the New Pact on Migration and Asylum: a new form of differentiated integration?, *European Papers*. Vol. 7, No. 3, 2022, pp. 1243-1263.

<sup>22</sup> Günther, Bernd: *The Magic Roundabout: De-Mystifying the strategic Multiannual Policy cycles of the EU JHA Agencies Europol and Frontex*. Master's thesis, Frontex, Warsaw 2021.

Højland Jensen and Larsen Kristmoen researched EU quality control mechanisms' contribution to EIBM<sup>23</sup>. Raczkowski's thesis analysed how Frontex recruited the first cohort of SC statutory staff<sup>24</sup>. Marquis explored the operationalisation of the SC in order to form a commonly acceptable operational concept for implementing the SC properly<sup>25</sup>. Finally, de Toro Mezquita analysed past internal border controls implemented by MS and perceived a fragile Schengen area under adverse conditions<sup>26</sup>.

The EU's strategic culture from a military and defence policy perspective has received considerable attention. Cornish and Edwards saw the EU forming a distinct strategic culture to serve its capability needs and interests<sup>27</sup>. Meyer analysed the compatibility of MS norms in the formation process of a common European strategic culture<sup>28</sup>. In a later study, he continued that strategic culture relates closely to the contemporary developments as a socio-political reality check on the use of military force<sup>29</sup>. Brockmeier, Kurtz and Junk concluded on diverse MS strategic cultures in the case of the humanitarian responsibility to protect principle<sup>30</sup>. Koivula accepted that the EU has a unique strategic culture, but argued that it remains incoherent<sup>31</sup>.

In relation to this study other Finnish perspectives have focused around the theme of securitisation. In his doctoral dissertation, Janzon described that European border security is an integral part of Finnish border securitisation through a process he called "Schengenization"<sup>32</sup>. Niemenkari provided a historical view of the development of IBM in the EU and past securitising has focused on illegal immigration and terrorism<sup>33</sup>. Castrén researched and concluded that most

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<sup>23</sup> Højland Jensen, Signe: *Compliant, but improvement necessary? A regional case study on the contribution of EU quality control mechanisms to European Integrated Border Management*. Master's thesis, Frontex, Warsaw 2019 and Larsen Kristmoen, Vibecke: *Vulnerability Assessment as a Part of EU Quality Control Mechanisms: Impact on Border Management for Nordic Countries*. Master's thesis, Frontex, Warsaw 2021.

<sup>24</sup> Raczkowski, Henryk: *Standing Corps in the making. An analysis of the procedures used to recruit the first cohort of Border and Coast Guard Officers, Category 1*. Master's thesis, Frontex, Warsaw 2021.

<sup>25</sup> Marquis, Timo: *A commonly accepted model of the activities of the Standing Corps Towards a new operational concept of the EBCG 2.0*. Master's thesis, Frontex, Warsaw 2021.

<sup>26</sup> de Toro Mezquita, Isaac: *The Fragility of the Schengen Agreement: Analysis of the Temporary Reintroduction of Border Control*. Master's thesis, Frontex, Warsaw 2021.

<sup>27</sup> Cornish, Paul & Geoffrey Edwards: Beyond the EU/NATO dichotomy: the beginnings of a European strategic culture, *International Affairs*. Vol. 77, No. 3, 2001, pp. 587-603.

<sup>28</sup> Meyer, Christoph O.: *The quest for a European strategic culture: changing norms on security and defence in the European Union*. Palgrave Macmillan, Hampshire 2006.

<sup>29</sup> Meyer, Christoph O.: European strategic culture taking stock and looking ahead, in Biscop, Sven & Richard G. Whitman (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of European Security*. Routledge, Oxon 2013, pp. 50-59.

<sup>30</sup> Brockmeier, Sarah, Gerrit Kurtz & Julian Junk: Emerging norm and rhetorical tool: Europe and a responsibility to protect, *Conflict, Security & Development*. Vol. 14, Iss. 44, 2014, pp. 429-460.

<sup>31</sup> Koivula, Tommi: *The European Union and the Use of Military Force*. Routledge, Oxon 2016.

<sup>32</sup> Janzon, Max: *Realizing Border Security Culture in Finland (and Europe)*. Unigrafia, Helsinki 2014.

<sup>33</sup> Niemenkari, Laura: *Turvallisuutta vai turvallistamista? Yhdennetty Rajaturvallisuus Euroopan Unionissa [Security or securitisation? Integrated Border Management in the EU]*. Master's thesis, University of Helsinki, Helsinki 2019.

of the 21 functions of Frontex are securitised in relation to perceived threats<sup>34</sup>. Korhonen researched Finnish border security in relation to Finnish comprehensive security, in which he referred to Finland's cooperative international role in this process<sup>35</sup>. Three other studies stand out as having alternative viewpoints. Hattunen concluded that the focal points land-concept Europeanises staff members' identities through the process of importation and exportation of best practices<sup>36</sup>. Simola's diploma thesis from 2013 is aged due to updates to central legislation and the contemporary inclusion of migration management, but he approached the topic from the common strategic culture viewpoint. He concluded that this strategic culture is formed by the political (Schengen), legal and operational elements.<sup>37</sup> Finally, Lahtinen concluded that the Frontex technical and operational strategy for EIBM (TO EIBM) strengthens the Europeanisation of border management. This acts as a comprehensive factor of change for MS.<sup>38</sup>

The European Defence Agency (EDA) is a parallel forum for EU cooperation in the defence policy sector, which was established also in 2004 as Frontex<sup>39</sup>. Barrinha argued that the EDA's role goes beyond mere facilitation with the identification of a discourse of unviable European alternatives<sup>40</sup>. Chappell and Petrov viewed that the absence of an underlying European strategic culture is a direct impediment to developing capabilities<sup>41</sup>. Zyla compared the EU's and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's (NATO) strategic cultures. He argued that significant overlap in strategic cultures exist, but concluded that the overall attitudes differ between collective security in the EU and collective defence in NATO.<sup>42</sup> Finally, Burns' doctoral dissertation demonstrated the sociological nature in an atypical case study on strategic culture. His

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<sup>34</sup> Castrén, Joona: *Eurooppalaisen raja- ja merivartioston rajaturvallisuustoiminnot uhkakuvien rajapinnoilla* [The EBCG's border management functions at the boundaries of perceived threats]. Master's thesis, National Defence University, Helsinki 2019.

<sup>35</sup> Korhonen, Oskari: *Rajoja turvallisuudelle vai turvallisuutta rajoille? Rajaturvallisuus osana kokonaisturvallisuutta* [Borders for security or security for borders? Border security as a part of comprehensive security]. Master's thesis, National Defence University, Helsinki 2022.

<sup>36</sup> Hattunen, Misa: *Focal Points Land-konsepti eurooppalaistamisen välineenä? [The focal points land-concept as an instrument of Europeanisation?]*. Master's thesis, National Defence University, Helsinki 2016.

<sup>37</sup> Simola, Mikko: *Euroopan unionin yhdenmetyt rajaturvallisuus strategisen kulttuurin ja tulliviranomaisyhteistyön näkökulmasta* [The integrated border management of the European Union from the perspective of strategic culture and authority cooperation]. Diploma thesis, National Defence University, Helsinki 2013.

<sup>38</sup> Lahtinen, Jouni: *Yhdenmetyt rajaturvallisuuden uudet haastavat ulottuvuudet – Euroopan yhdenmetyt rajaturvallisuuden tekninen ja operatiivinen strategia muutostekijänä* [The challenging new dimensions of Integrated Border Management – The technical and operational strategy of European Integrated Border Management as a factor of change]. Diploma thesis, National Defence University, Helsinki 2021.

<sup>39</sup> The European Defence Agency: *What we do*. [<https://eda.europa.eu/what-we-do>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>40</sup> Barrinha, André: The EDA and the discursive construction of European defence and security, in Karampekios, Nikolaos & Oikonomou, Iraklis (eds.), *The European Defence Agency arming Europe*. Routledge, Oxon 2015, pp. 27-42.

<sup>41</sup> Chappell, Laura & Petrov, Petar: The EDA and military capability development making pooling and sharing work in Karampekios, Nikolaos & Oikonomou, Iraklis (eds.), *The European Defence Agency arming Europe*. Routledge, Oxon 2015, pp. 191-206.

<sup>42</sup> Zyla, Benjamin: Overlap or Opposition? EU and NATO's strategic (sub-)culture, *Contemporary Security Policy*. Vol. 32, No. 3, 2011, pp. 667-687.

research demonstrated the particular and large-scale impact of adaptable strategic subcultures of a terrorist organisation, which rely on a strategic vision for sustaining the organisation.<sup>43</sup>

These brief outlooks revolved around central themes of this research: the EBCG and EIBM in general, Finnish perspectives on European border and migration management cooperation and strategic culture in other communal contexts. The EU's strategic culture in traditional defence policy is well-researched and was provided as a background to enable a shift from traditional external security to internal security. Based on this introduction, the research is perceived to bridge two main aspects found in these examples. First, it bridges the EBCG as a community with the EIBM activity in a broad manner. Second, it sharpens the strategic culture focus within the EU and acts as a new comparison. Thus, by bridging these issues the research attempted to stand out as a new and interesting comparison for different interest groups.

#### **1.4 Decisions on scope and critical assumptions of the research**

Three decisions on scope were made on the time frame and content. Firstly, the analysis of the research is scoped to the current Regulation (EU) 2019/1896 and its effective timeline since December 2019. The most recent available official documentation was analysed. Secondly, the national setting was simplified to consider Finland as a single MS instead of all the particular national authorities. Indeed, the Finnish Border Guard (FBG) is the leading competent authority in Finland. However, this choice accounts for the introduced EU policy steering that links border and migration management together in the EBCG, which extends to the national configuration. Finally, strategic culture is not synonymous with organisational culture<sup>44</sup>. This study will focus on strategic culture, despite potential similarities.

The research assumes three things. First, that the EBCG has indeed a discernible strategic culture. As the prior research indicated, focus remains on a nation-state level and the parallel example of EU defence policy appears to remain inconclusive of a common strategic culture in the EU. Second, that the EU and its Member States are reasonably able to function in the future. In this research, the ability to function means the necessary structures, mechanisms and funding instruments that sustain the EBCG. So, this means that the EBCG has a future ahead of it.

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<sup>43</sup> Burns, Alexander George: *The development of strategic culture in terrorist organisations*. Doctoral dissertation, Monash University, Melbourne 2020.

<sup>44</sup> Schein, Edgar H. & Peter A. Schein: *Organizational Culture and Leadership* 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Wiley, Hoboken 2016.

The introduction described a research puzzle, established the task and scoped it. This chapter focuses on the application of theory to the research. The chapter approaches theory from the fundamental to the particular, in which justifications for choices are provided throughout. Finally, an applied theoretical framework is presented in the last sub-chapter.

### 2.1 Metatheoretical foundation

Research is grounded in philosophy, as it is a perspective of the world. When researching strategy, multiple possible views are possible. These link to the means to gain knowledge from the world. These metatheoretical opportunities are known as ontology and epistemology, respectively.<sup>45</sup> This research attempts to be explicit in its philosophical choices<sup>46</sup>.

Formally, the EBCG is a legal entity, but it is also a social community. Thus, it appears to be a product of human interaction. Karl Popper describes a pluralistic philosophy with an ontology of three worlds. There, the third world relates to human products that emerges from the second world, conscious experience. In particular, language is a human product.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, Berger and Luckmann argued for a theory of sociology of knowledge that relates to this intersubjective foundation<sup>48</sup>. Furthermore, the position of the researcher is instrumental in this intersubjectivity. The research views the nature of the EBCG strategic culture from a social constructionist ontology<sup>49</sup> and utilises an interpretivist epistemology<sup>50</sup>.

Other choices are possible, but they rely on different assumptions. Any chosen ontology and epistemology should account for the EBCG community as a social entity that is based on a socially constructed legal framework. Referring to the Popper's philosophical first world<sup>51</sup>, one could assume that strategic culture has the same qualities as natural material. In this case, it

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<sup>45</sup> Sipilä, Joonas & Tommi Koivula: *Kuinka strategiaa tutkitaan 2. uudistettu painos [How to research strategy 2<sup>nd</sup> renewed print]*. National Defence University, Department of strategic and defence studies, series 2: research reports No 52, Helsinki 2014, p. 15-18.

<sup>46</sup> Jackson, Patrick Thaddeus: *The conduct of inquiry in international relations philosophy of science and its implications for the study of world politics*. Routledge, Oxon 2011, p. 190.

<sup>47</sup> Popper, Karl: *Three worlds*. [The Tanner lecture on human values delivered at the university of Michigan 7 April 1978], 1978. [[tannerlectures.utah.edu/resources/documents/a-to-z/p/popper80.pdf](https://tannerlectures.utah.edu/resources/documents/a-to-z/p/popper80.pdf)], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>48</sup> Berger, Peter L. & Thomas Luckmann: *Todellisuuden sosiaalinen rakentuminen [The social construction of reality]*. Gaudeamus, Helsinki [1966] 1994, pp. 207-212.

<sup>49</sup> Bryman, Alan: *Social Research Methods 5<sup>th</sup> ed.* Oxford University Press, Oxford 2016, p. 689. Bryman describes constructionism as: "an ontological position (often also referred to as 'constructivism') that asserts that social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors."

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. p. 692. Bryman describes interpretivism as: "an epistemological position that requires the social scientist to grasp the subjective meaning of social action."

<sup>51</sup> Popper (1978).

could be seen as external from people or measurable. In fact, attempts in this have been made<sup>52</sup>. However, without prior research support, one does not have clues on the nature and character of the EBCG strategic culture.

## 2.2 A perception of hierarchically interconnected theoretical fields

The research adopted different fields of theory based on the presented metatheoretical foundation. The field was perceived as a hierarchical configuration:

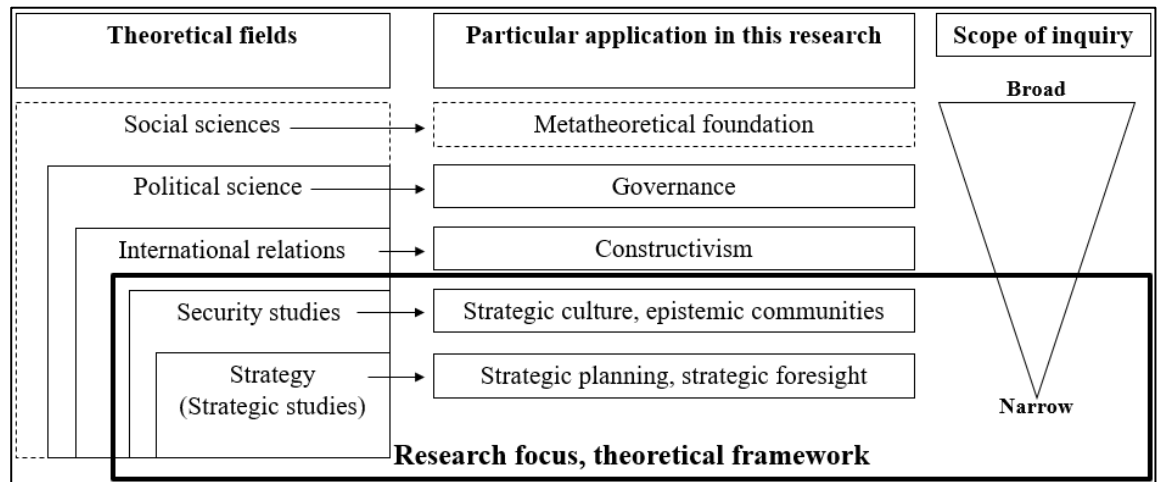


Figure 1 The perceived hierarchy of theoretical fields in the thesis. Figure adapted from Baylis, Wirtz and Gray<sup>53</sup>.

Figure 1 is a visualisation of relevant theories to frame the totality of theory for research design purposes. The scope of inquiry is the perceived outlook of the theoretical fields. All five theoretical fields are acknowledged in this research. However, focus will be on the fields of security studies and strategy. These correlate to strategic culture, epistemic communities, strategic planning and strategic foresight, respectively. They are described in detail in the next sub-chapter.

Governance differs from government. Multiple definitions of governance exist and criteria have been formed to assess how good it is, but it centrally refers to legitimising rules that are set, applied and enforced.<sup>54</sup> In the EU, the focus shifts towards horizontal networks within and beyond the nation-state<sup>55</sup>. EU governance appears to bridge international relations with public

<sup>52</sup> The third generation of strategic culture research have strived for testability of variables in strategic culture. See Johnston, Alastair I.: *Strategic Cultures Revisited: Reply to Colin Gray*, *Review of International Studies*. Vol. 25, Iss. 3, 1999, pp. 519-523.

<sup>53</sup> Baylis, John, James J. Wirtz & Colin S. Gray (eds.): *Strategy in the Contemporary World 6<sup>th</sup> ed.* Oxford University Press, Oxford 2019, p. 13 (fig. 1.1).

<sup>54</sup> Kjær, Anne Mette: *Governance*. Polity Press, Cambridge 2004, p. 3-15.

<sup>55</sup> Norheim-Martinsen, Per M.: *The European Union and Military Force: Governance and Strategy*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2013, pp. 9-12. See also Kjær (2004), p. 42.

policy and attention focuses on the different policy processes and their rules<sup>56</sup>. The EBCG is a part of EU governance and thus is closely linked with its internal security processes.

International relations' central notion is the anarchic nature of international politics and varying worldviews to justify action. These can be broadly distinguished into rational and constitutive theories.<sup>57</sup> Constructivism is attributed to the constitutive theories<sup>58</sup>. It relates closely to how identities are socially constructed as it influences policy choices<sup>59</sup>. It accepts material viewpoints like Realism and Liberalism, but the focus of inquiry shifts to understanding of the social world<sup>60</sup>. All these major international theories have been applied to research the EU<sup>61</sup>.

The comprehensive nature and roles within the international community has prompted the study of the EU's actorness, which links to external and internal security<sup>62</sup>. As a part of the EU, the EBCG appears to be an atypical setting among international relations. Realism occupies an inherently pessimistic worldview and shared power as the EU demonstrates conflicts with their assumption of nation-state primacy<sup>63</sup>. Liberalism overcomes the anarchic worldview by acknowledging cooperation through regulatory regimes, but does not recognise the social dimension<sup>64</sup>. The constitutive Post-structuralist theories approach established views with criticism, but unlike Constructivism, focus on subjective viewpoints<sup>65</sup>. Furthermore, Friedrichs views that Constructivism is able to perceive MS pooling of sovereignty<sup>66</sup>. This, and the institutional level identity makes Constructivism fit for purpose.

Contemporary theoretical debate about the perceived shallowness of strategic studies has generated attention to the more broader security studies<sup>67</sup>. The many definitions of strategy<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Kjær (2004), pp. 99-122.

<sup>57</sup> Sipilä & Koivula (2014), pp. 22-34.

<sup>58</sup> Sipilä & Koivula (2014), pp. 28-32.

<sup>59</sup> Perheentupa, Christian: Konstruktivismi [Constructivism], in Sivonen, Pekka (ed.), *Suomalaisia näkökulmia strategian tutkimukseen [Finnish viewpoints to strategy research]*. National Defence University, Department of strategic and defence studies, series 1, strategic research No 33, Helsinki 2013, pp. 94-99.

<sup>60</sup> Larivé, Maxime H. A.: *Debating European security and defense policy: understanding the complexity*. Ashgate Publishing, Farnham 2014, pp. 35-37.

<sup>61</sup> Schmitt, Olivier: Of politics and policies Thinking strategically about the EU, in Cladi, Lorenzo & Andrea Locatelli (eds.): *International Relations Theory and European Security we thought we knew 1<sup>st</sup> ed.* Routledge, Oxon 2015, pp. 123-137.

<sup>62</sup> Kaunert, Christian & Kamil Zwolski: *The EU as a Global Security Actor: A Comprehensive Analysis beyond CFSP and JHA*. Palgrave Macmillan, Hampshire 2013, pp. 31-38.

<sup>63</sup> Blombergs, Fred: Realismi ja strategian tutkimus [Realism and strategy research], in Sivonen, Pekka (ed.) (2013), pp. 5-16.

<sup>64</sup> Sipilä & Koivula (2014), pp. 26-28.

<sup>65</sup> Koivula, Tommi: Jälkistrukturalistinen turvallisuustutkimus [Post-structural security studies], in Sivonen, Pekka (ed.) (2013), pp. 105-119.

<sup>66</sup> Friedrichs, Jörg: *European approaches to international relations theory a house with many mansions*. Routledge, Oxon 2004, pp. 105-124.

<sup>67</sup> Baylis, J. & James J. Wirtz: Introduction, in Baylis et al. (2019), pp. 12-13.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid. p. 4

revolve around the notion of preparing and using armed forces for achieving security ends. In this research, these concepts applied to the EBCG

### 2.3 Strategic culture and epistemic communities

Strategic culture has its roots in Snyder's pioneer research on the then Soviet nuclear warfare capability, arguing that the Soviet leaders' cultural backgrounds influences a great deal to that nuclear doctrine<sup>69</sup>. Since that time, four distinguishable generations of academic research on strategic culture have formed<sup>70</sup>. The research has centred on what influence culture has on action, either as a causal power or if it is even inseparable from action at all<sup>71</sup>. Although research tradition has presented varying definitions of strategic culture, there appears to exist some focal themes of general agreement on strategic culture<sup>72</sup>:

- It is directly related to a nation-state's or security community's context
- It is related to strategic behaviour in this context
- It is directly related with cultural attributes (ideas, traditions, norms etc.)<sup>73</sup>
- Strategic culture can change, however it is debated on how, where and why this occurs

On the last point, Seppo frames the strategic culture change into first- and second-order change processes in his dissertation on Germany's strategic culture evolution. These relate to fundamental mechanisms, such as the experience of war and fine-tuned, such as adaptation to the broader environment and generational influence.<sup>74</sup> Thus, the context of the community, change in it and its relatively stable continuities are central premises in strategic culture research.

The first generation was represented by Gray's argument on the semi-permanent nature of strategic culture on security policy<sup>75</sup>. The second generation sought to separate individual behaviour from strategic culture, as represented by Luckham's and Klein's focus on leaders' interest

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<sup>69</sup> Snyder, Jack L.: *The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Limited Nuclear Operations*. Rand Corporation, Research report R-2154-AF, Santa Monica 1977.

<sup>70</sup> Lassenius, Oscar: *Swedish strategic culture in the post-cold war era: a case study of Swedish military strategic doctrine*. Diploma thesis, National Defence University, Helsinki 2020, p. 20.

<sup>71</sup> Høiback, Harald: *Understanding military doctrine a multidisciplinary approach*. Routledge, Oxon 2013, pp. 111-113.

<sup>72</sup> Adapted from Lassenius (2020), pp. 20-21.

<sup>73</sup> Here, the link to Constructivism appears to be straightforward. See Lantis, Jeffrey S. & Darryl Howlett: Strategic culture in Baylis et al. (2019), pp. 96.

<sup>74</sup> Seppo, Antti: *From guilt to responsibility and beyond the evolution of German strategic culture after the end of the Cold War*. Doctoral dissertation, Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, Berlin 2021, pp. 83-89.

<sup>75</sup> Gray, Colin S.: National Style in Strategy: The American Example, *International Security*. Vol. 6, Iss. 2, 1981, pp. 21-47.

choices rather than strategic culture<sup>76</sup>. Furthermore, Meyer<sup>77</sup> and Lock<sup>78</sup> link the concept to constructivism's central arguments. Johnston's positivistic approach to strategic culture as a system of separable symbols, thus attempting to construct a falsifiable theory of strategic culture marked the third generation<sup>79</sup>. The Johnston-Gray debate<sup>80</sup> demonstrated a period of inter-generational reflection. The currently identified fourth generation has slowly grown out of this debate that Bloomfield sought to connect<sup>81</sup>. Bloomfield argued on the existence of identifiable subcultures and their competition for dominance as a compromise to the debate<sup>82</sup>. Lock's perspective of ideas spread across populations<sup>83</sup> appears to be closely related to this. Libel offered a new computational social science model as an opportunity to overcome the inability to explain change to continue the research agenda<sup>84</sup>.

The identification of competing subcultures observed in the fourth generation of strategic culture research appears to relate closely to epistemic communities<sup>85</sup>, which is a parallel field in international relations. Haas describes an epistemic community as networked professionals that have recognised expertise. They have the ability to influence policy with their claims over knowledge.<sup>86</sup> Cross revisited the concept and argued that the legitimization of expert knowledge is socially constructed and underpinned by their professionalism<sup>87</sup>. Later, she examined the emergence of epistemic communities in two EU settings, the EDA and EU Intelligence Analysis Centre. She concluded that different organisational settings can either hinder or facilitate the emergence of epistemic communities.<sup>88</sup> Bicchi approached this from a perspective of communities of practice on how professionals engage and constitute the development of the practice itself<sup>89</sup>.

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<sup>76</sup> Luckham, Robert & Bradley S. Klein: Hegemony and strategic culture: American power projection and alliance defence politics, *Review of International Studies*. Vol. 14, Iss. 2, 1988, pp. 133-148.

<sup>77</sup> Meyer, Christoph O.: Convergence Towards a European Strategic Culture? A Constructivist Framework for Explaining Changing Norms, *European Journal of International Relations*. Vol. 11, Iss. 4, 2005, pp. 523-549.

<sup>78</sup> Lock, Edward: Refining strategic culture: return of the second generation, *Review of International Studies*. Vol. 36, Iss. 3, 2010, pp. 685-708.

<sup>79</sup> Johnston, Alastair I.: Thinking about Strategic Culture, *International Security*. Vol. 19, Iss. 4, 1995, pp. 32-64.

<sup>80</sup> Gray, Colin S.: Strategic Culture as Context: The First Generation of Theory Strikes Back, *Review of International Studies*. Vol. 25, Iss. 1, 1999, pp. 49-69 and Johnston (1999).

<sup>81</sup> Bloomfield, Alan: Time to Move On: Reconceptualizing the Strategic Culture Debate, *Contemporary Security Policy*. Vol. 33, Iss. 3, 2012, pp. 437-461.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid. pp. 456-457.

<sup>83</sup> Lock, Edward: Strategic culture theory: what, why, and how, *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*, 2017.

<sup>84</sup> Libel, Tamir: Rethinking strategic culture: A computational (social science) discursive-institutionalist approach, *Journal of Strategic Studies*. Vol. 43, Iss. 5, 2020, pp. 686-709.

<sup>85</sup> Haas, Peter: Introduction: Epistemic communities and international policy coordination, *International Organization*. Vol. 46, No. 1, 1992, pp. 1-35.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid. p. 3.

<sup>87</sup> Cross, Mai'a K. Davis: Rethinking epistemic communities twenty years later, *Review of International Studies*. Vol. 39, Iss. 1, 2013, pp. 137-160.

<sup>88</sup> Cross, Mai'a K. Davis: The limits of epistemic communities: EU security agencies, *Politics and Governance*. Vol. 3, Iss. 1, 2015, pp. 90-100.

<sup>89</sup> Bicchi, Federica: Communities of practice and what they can do for International Relations, *Review of International Studies*. Vol. 48, Iss. 1, 2022, pp. 24-43.

Overall, theory on epistemic communities and strategic culture appears to link closely with sociology. Furthermore, one can observe that the focus can vary greatly, from a group of individuals to the whole community. As a clarification, this research will focus on strategic culture in its terminology. One could argue that a more fitting description could be security culture. Haglund visualises this by a difficulty to distinguish between the terms<sup>90</sup>. Doing so would be out of scope, however.

## 2.4 Strategic planning and strategic foresight

The future is yet to exist and measuring it relies on a perception of the past and the present<sup>91</sup>. Niiniluoto states that one objective of future-oriented studies can be a decision to act. He argues that this is value-laden, because it rests on preference. He concludes that at its core future studies is a design science that assists in rational planning.<sup>92</sup> Gray links strategic planning to the notion of properly preparing for the future with the goal of reducing uncertainty, while being naturally limited by issues such as resources, time and knowledge<sup>93</sup>. He recommends avoiding drawing parallels between the current situation and historical ones. Instead, he identifies general guidance on the matter in a set of four principles: being prudent on policy goals, prioritisation, tolerance of error and adaptability and flexibility.<sup>94</sup> Strategic management in the field of business is the application of these same concepts to their practice<sup>95</sup>. In particular, the identifiable cultural school of strategic management draws attention to this research. The main argument of this orientation is that strategy formation is linked to the social processes of an organisation. These are ultimately rooted in culture.<sup>96</sup>

Sivonen establishes that foreseeing the future for research in strategy carries a requirement of relevance for policymakers. He concludes that simplification assists the communicative power of research to policymakers, but this is contrary to the fundamental requirements of science.<sup>97</sup> Kuosa establishes that strategic foresight has the three prioritised functions: first, it orients policy, second it provides insight and finally it produces alternatives. He argues that the discipline is inclined to visionary and proactive qualities and less on certainty. Finally, he defines it as a

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<sup>90</sup> Haglund, David G.: 'Let's Call the Whole Thing Off?' Security Culture as Strategic Culture, *Contemporary Security Policy*. Vol. 32, Iss. 3, 2011, pp. 517-534.

<sup>91</sup> Sivonen, Pekka: Tulevan ennakointi strategian tutkimuksen kohteena [Foreseeing the future as a target of strategy research], in Sivonen, Pekka (ed.) (2013), pp. 127-129.

<sup>92</sup> Niiniluoto, Ilkka: Futures studies: science or art?, *Futures*. Vol. 33, Iss. 5, 2001, pp. 371-377.

<sup>93</sup> Gray, Colin S., Strategy and Defence Planning, in Baylis et al. (2019), pp. 165-172.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., pp. 176-177.

<sup>95</sup> Mintzberg, Henry, Bruce Ahlstrand & Joseph Lampel: *Strategy Safari 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.* Pearson Education Limited, Harlow 2009.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid. p. 275-300.

<sup>97</sup> Sivonen, Pekka (2013), pp. 136-141.

systematic process that strives to both generate new, but grounded, ideas and provide a spectrum of interesting events with a level of certainty.<sup>98</sup>

## 2.5 The theoretical framework of the research

With the theoretical background fully introduced, the research is able to demonstrate how theory was applied. The theoretical framework of the research is presented in figure 2:

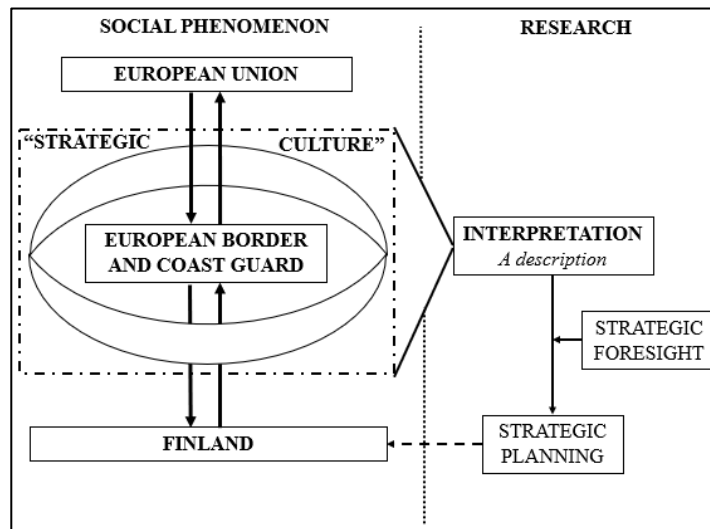


Figure 2 The theoretical framework of the research

The research studies the social phenomenon of strategic culture in the EBCG. Relevant EU governance is utilised as the framework for this social interaction. The research describes an interpretation of this bi-directional<sup>99</sup> phenomenon with guidance from strategic culture theory. This is utilised back into practice by applying strategic foresight for future strategic planning guidance. The research is oriented to constructivism theory that focuses on ideational features<sup>100</sup>. The research is founded on a social constructionist world-view, which is accessed by an interpretive approach to knowledge.

<sup>98</sup> Kuosa, Tuomo: *Towards Strategic Intelligence – Foresight, Intelligence, and Policy-Making*. Dynamic Futures, Kerava 2014, pp. 30-32.

<sup>99</sup> Lahtinen presented the social phenomenon similarly in his theoretical framework from the perspective of Europeanisation. Lahtinen (2021), p. 7.

<sup>100</sup> Wendt, Alexander: *Social Theory of international politics*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1999. pp. 1-4.

### 3 METHODOLOGY AND METHODS IN THE RESEARCH

The theory chapter positioned the research among existing theoretical disciplines, justified its theoretical choices and concluded on a theoretical framework. This chapter focuses on the research methodology. The chapter establishes a research design and describes method and application choices in a procedural order. The data generation process is elaborated, which is followed by describing abduction and constitutive reasoning. The chapter concludes on research ethics issues and a discussion of the research design itself.

#### 3.1 The research design

The research is designed in two-stages, which support the division of the main research question into two perspectives, i.e. European and national. The first stage is represented in the research report in the first, second and fourth chapters. This is shown in figure 3. Chapter four analyses and provides an interpretive description of the European perspective of the EBCG strategic culture. In chapter five, the second research stage uses this description of EBCG strategic culture as an orienting background for analysing past national strategies and foreseeing future EBCG development from a national perspective. These results are synthesised and discussed together to arrive at the conclusions and recommendations of the research in chapters six and seven, respectively. The figure below presents the research design:

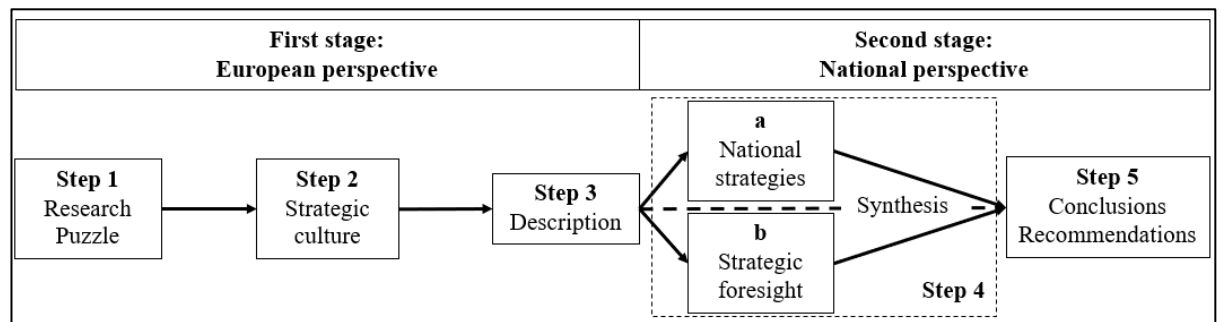


Figure 3 The research design

#### Combined methods in the research design

Mixed methods imply multiple means of generating data and multiple means of analysing it. Creswell and Plano Clark imply that this necessitates using quantitative data, which this research did not collect.<sup>101</sup> In contrast, Bryman is not strict on this requirement. He presented four different mixed methods designs, of which the embedded design appears to best describe this

<sup>101</sup> Creswell, John W. & Vicki L. Plano Clark: *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods research*. Thousand Oaks, Sage 2018, pp. 1-5.

one.<sup>102</sup> The different methods of the research are presented in a procedural manner as they occurred in the two stages of the research.

### **The first stage**

The first stage focused on the European level, which included Finnish viewpoints. It utilised the European documentation (EU and EBCG levels) and all of the interview transcripts. The analyses were guided by the general themes of context, continuity and change as found in strategic culture theory. The first stage utilised theory-guided critical discourse analysis<sup>103</sup> as a primary method. This was done to search for discourses that appear to cover different relationships about language relating to the strategic culture of the EBCG.

Language is fundamental in social constructionism<sup>104</sup>. The central notion of discourse means the use of language as social practice. In particular, a discourse means the summarised practices of meaning making that systematically transform their named objects. Furthermore, it defines what, how and with what justification phenomena can, should or must be talked about. It is therefore directly linked with authority and resistance.<sup>105</sup> Foucault views discourse as an act of speech. For him, discourse analysis as a means to describe the bundles of relationships it, as a certain space, occupies. Although he describes that analysing discursive acts are difficult to scope, one must begin somewhere, even if later analyses of those bundles of relationships delete those previous drafts.<sup>106</sup>

One key aspect of discourse analysis is genre<sup>107</sup>, which is directly linked to rules on how speech acts are formed both by the subjective speaker and the forum where it occurs<sup>108</sup>. Furthermore, this relate to context of the language, as it further scopes the language situation to different social settings<sup>109</sup>. Different genres evoke different aims, such as argumentation, narration or instruction<sup>110</sup>. The documentation shared aspects of official authority on strategy in an institutional setting. Furthermore, the Regulation (EU) 1896/2019 as binding EU law is above

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<sup>102</sup> Bryman (2016), pp. 638-640.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid. pp. 540-541.

<sup>104</sup> Berger & Luckmann (1994), pp. 45-57.

<sup>105</sup> Pietikäinen, Sari & Anne Mäntynen: *Uusi kurssi kohti diskurssia [New course towards discourse]*. Vastapaino, Tampere 2019, p. 35.

<sup>106</sup> Foucault, Michel: *Tiedon arkeologia [L'archéologie du savoir]*. Vastapaino, Tampere [1969] 2005, pp. 43-45.

<sup>107</sup> Pietikäinen & Mäntynen (2019), pp. 109-139.

<sup>108</sup> Foucault (2005), pp. 70-76.

<sup>109</sup> Pietikäinen & Mäntynen (2019), pp. 37-52.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid. pp. 135-176.

instructional and instead normative<sup>111</sup>. The articles and recitals were equally acknowledged<sup>112</sup>. This choice noted criticism of contemporary EU law<sup>113</sup>. In contrast, the individual high-level experts provided alternative views to the documentary frame. They demonstrated other lingual choices<sup>114</sup> and invigorated the discourse analysis.

The research formed a three-step inquiring technique after initial orientation to the data. This inquiring technique was oriented by distinguishing discursive choices, lingual choices and the texts' contextual choices<sup>115</sup>. An interim conclusion from the orientation was that the EBCG and EIBM are inseparably linked<sup>116</sup>. Then, two orienting questions were utilised to assist the discourse distinction: 1) does the data relate to why the EBCG exists and who it is (as an entity)? and 2) does the data relate to what function the EBCG is formed for and how it operates? The broad discourses of legitimacy and agency and other contextual information were distinguished from this. The second step focused on the identification of continuity and change within the data. The temporal scope was crucial for this step. For this, the previous Regulation (EU) 1624/2016 was acknowledged to distinguish the new framework from the old. This grouping enabled the last step of the analysis, comparison. Comparison was conducted within the two identified discourses to distinguish potential opposition, tension and contradiction. This step enabled the formation of an interpreted description of the strategic culture of the EBCG.

Theory-guided thematic analysis<sup>117</sup> in the form of categorisation was used as a supportive method in the first stage. The previous orienting questions were utilised in this process. If the data responded to both orienting questions positively or negatively, it was labelled as contextual. Common thematic categories emerged from this group of contextual data by identifying recurring issues<sup>118</sup>.

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<sup>111</sup> Ketola, Johanna: *Miten lakiteksti velvoittaa? [How does legal text oblige?]*, 2003, [Online article published in the Kielikello-magazine]. [<https://www.kielikello.fi/-/miten-lakiteksti-velvoittaa->], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>112</sup> "Recital(s): **Recitals set out the reasons for the contents of the enacting terms (i.e. the articles) of an act.** Recitals are introduced by the word 'Whereas:'. They are numbered and each sentence in each recital starts with a capital letter and ends with a full stop, except the last sentence of the concluding recital, which ends in a comma." Publications Office of the European Union: *Preamble (citations and recitals)*. [<https://publications.europa.eu/code/en/en-120200.htm>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>113</sup> "Preambles are growing and *many recitals contain normative exhortations. In addition, a substantial proportion of recitals in currently adopted acts merely paraphrases the enacting terms.*" den Heijer, Maarten, Teun van Os van den Abeelen & Antanina Maslyka: *On the Use and Misuse of Recitals in European Union Law*, *Amsterdam Law School Research Paper No. 2019-31*. Amsterdam Center for International Law, 2019. [[https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=3445372](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3445372)], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>114</sup> Pietikäinen & Mäntynen (2019), pp. 93-104.

<sup>115</sup> Pietikäinen & Mäntynen (2019), pp. 312-317.

<sup>116</sup> *Regulation (EU) 2019/1896*, Recital 13, Articles 3, 4.

<sup>117</sup> Bryman (2016), pp. 584-589.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.* p. 586.

## The second stage

The second stage was formed in three steps. First, by interpretive analysis of the national strategy documentation by the introduced discourse analysis method. This was done to gauge how Finland perceived itself as a part of the EBCG. Second, by analysing the results of the strategic foresight workshop. The third step was synthesis, which is presented in the discussion. The analysis of the strategic foresight is explained below.

Strategic foresight is utilised broadly in closely related public administration. In the EU, Frontex utilises it for its strategic risk analysis<sup>119</sup>. The European Commission utilised it to illustrate different scenarios “to provoke thinking”<sup>120</sup>. In Finland, it is both conducted on a governmental level<sup>121</sup> to support anticipatory governance<sup>122</sup>. In the Finnish Ministry of the Interior, a specific expert group has been formed on foresight that provides regular input for political dialogues, in which official recommendations are formed<sup>123</sup>. These examples relate to foreseeing the external environment, to which proper responses are planned for. However, the research focus on the internal environment within the scope of strategic culture. This atypical internal orientation was chosen to perceive on future internal development and interpret conclusions.

The researcher led one workshop for a group of high-level experts from the FBG headquarters. This form of data co-generation is a form of action research as it is an intervention to the social phenomenon<sup>124</sup>. Mäkitalo argues that it is an approach to a social phenomenon instead of a research method. He describes its four qualities: it relates to some activity, it is related to practice and is practical in itself, it aims to enable a positive change and participation of both the researcher and participants is key.<sup>125</sup> This choice was done to apply theory and preliminary results into strategic decision-making practice. The workshop aimed to trigger exploratory introspection among key experts in a structured way. The workshop yielded four exploratory

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<sup>119</sup> Frontex: *Strategic Risk Analysis 2020*, Warsaw 2020. [<https://prd.frontex.europa.eu/wp-content/uploads/strategic-risk-analysis-2020.pdf>], accessed 15.3.2023 and Frontex: *Strategic Risk Analysis 2022*, Warsaw 2022b. [<https://prd.frontex.europa.eu/wp-content/uploads/strategic-risk-analysis-2022.pdf>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>120</sup> European Commission: *White paper on the future of Europe Reflections and scenarios for the EU27 by 2025*, 2017. [<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/ba81f70e-2b10-11e7-9412-01aa75ed71a1>], accessed 15.3.2023, p. 15.

<sup>121</sup> Finnish Government: *Government Report on the Future, parts 1 and 2 Outlook on the Finland of the next generations [Abstract in English]*, 2023. [<http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-383-760-7>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>122</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development: *Anticipatory Innovation Governance Model in Finland Towards a new way of governing*, 2022. [<https://doi.org/10.1787/a31e7a9a-en>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>123</sup> Expert working at the Finnish Ministry of the Interior: 9.2.2023, notes held by the researcher.

<sup>124</sup> Mäkitalo Janne: *Toimintatutkimus ja havainnointi*, in Tähtinen, Janne (ed.), *Näin tutkin taktiikkaa tutkimusprosessi operaatiotaidon ja taktiikan näkökulmasta [This is how I research tactics the research process from the perspective of operational art and tactics]*. National Defence University, Department of Warfare, Series 2: Research Reports No. 20, Helsinki 2022, p. 118.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid. p. 117.

future scenarios by using the scenario-cross method<sup>126</sup>. This allowed comparison with prior results from the strategy documents. Furthermore, it allowed discussion about the future, which is key in assessing future strategic decision-making<sup>127</sup>. The workshop approach is described in detail alongside the results in chapter 5.2.

### 3.2 Abduction and constitutive reasoning

Prior research does not provide clear examples on how to reasonably understand the EBCG strategic culture, in fact, the study of strategic culture itself is an elusive topic. Three main approaches of logic known as deduction, induction and abduction have been utilised in research and they can be assessed in this situation.

Popper rejected inductive logic as a means of drawing conclusions from particular observations<sup>128</sup>. This problem of induction is exemplified in the analogy of swans that is commonly attributed to him<sup>129</sup>. Instead, he vouched for falsifiability as a standard to test theories or hypotheses<sup>130</sup>. Johnston followed this deductive standard to test strategic culture. This was strongly criticised by Gray in their mutual debate. In Gray's view, one cannot separate strategic culture into variables, but instead it is all context.<sup>131</sup>

Both deductive and inductive systems necessitate the availability of observations. Observations are not readily seen in our situation both because it a relatively new institution and does not appear to have gleaned significant research attention up to this point. A compromise approach appears to be abduction. Jackson describes an abductive approach as: "Abductive inference is a way of reasoning from some puzzling set of observations to a likely explanation of those observations..."<sup>132</sup>. He also argues that abduction is a creative exercise<sup>133</sup>. Niiniluoto argues that abduction relates to both discovery and justification and it has: "...an important strategic role in truth-seeking."<sup>134</sup>. Finally, he emphasises the importance of pragmatic abduction for future studies: "In this kind of instrumental reasoning, the starting point is not a surprising fact but

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<sup>126</sup> Nekkers, Jan: Developing scenarios, in van der Duin, Patrick (ed.), *Foresight in Organizations: Methods and Tools*. Routledge, Oxon 2016, pp. 11-39.

<sup>127</sup> Koskelo, Minna: *Tehtävänä tulevaisuus teollisuusmuotoilu päätöksenteossa [Future as a mission industrial design in decision-making]*. Alma Talent, Helsinki 2021, pp. 57-58, pp. 191-192.

<sup>128</sup> Popper, Karl: *The logic of scientific discovery [Logik der Forschung]*. Routledge, Oxon [1935] 2002, pp. 3-7.

<sup>129</sup> Warburton, Nigel: *A Little History of Philosophy*. Yale University Press, New Haven 2012, pp. 215-218.

<sup>130</sup> Popper (2002), pp. 57-73.

<sup>131</sup> Gray (1999) and Johnston (1999).

<sup>132</sup> Jackson (2011), p. 83.

<sup>133</sup> Jackson (2011), p. 83.

<sup>134</sup> Niiniluoto, Ilkka: *Truth-seeking by abduction*. Springer Nature, Cham 2018, p. 14.

rather a goal, and the abductive conjecture expresses means to realize this goal.”<sup>135</sup>. Jackson’s and Niiniluoto’s descriptions of abduction provide a means to proceed forward in the current study.

Causal and constitutive explanation do not rival each other, but are alternative<sup>136</sup>. Wendt relates social constitution of nation-states’ identities to individual persons<sup>137</sup>. Similarly, my interpretive research followed a system of constitutive reasoning. Schwartz-Shea and Yanow emphasise the situational and contextual meaning during the research process in an unfolding manner. Furthermore, they argue that this reasoning is iterative, where conjectures are assessed and re-assessed continuously.<sup>138</sup> Likewise, the potential meaning of EBCG strategic culture evolved constantly over the course of the research.

### 3.3 Data in the research

Data in interpretive research is usually generated through interaction, instead of simply collected<sup>139</sup>. Table 1 presents the data sources, which is followed by a description of the interactions.

Table 1 Data sources in the research

Level	Source		
	Documentation	Interviews	Workshop
EU	1. Regulation (EU) 2019/1896 2. European Commission policy document 24.5.2022	European Commission x1	<b>(Invited)</b>
EBCG	3. Frontex TO EIBM strategy	MB WG EIBM x2 <b>(3)</b>	<b>(Invited)</b>
National	4. FBG strategy 2027 5. Finnish IBM strategy 2019-2021	FIN IBM WG x3	FBG HQ members

Although the official documentation was accessed both online and through a data request, the author generated his own interpretation. Documentation focusing on the legal framework and strategic-level documents are the textual expressions of extensive institutional processes that are common for developing legislation, policymaking and public sector strategic planning. The documents are the resulting expression of a strategic culture even if they do not explicitly define

<sup>135</sup> Ibid. p. 84.

<sup>136</sup> Jackson (2011), p. 108.

<sup>137</sup> Wendt (1999), p. 245.

<sup>138</sup> Schwartz-Shea, Peregrine & Dvora Yanow: *Interpretive Research Design*. Routledge, New York 2012, pp. 51-53.

<sup>139</sup> Yanow, Dvora & Peregrine Schwartz-Shea: Introduction in Yanow, Dvora and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea (eds.): *Interpretation and Method Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.* M.E. Sharpe, New York 2014, p. xxi.

that culture. Careful analysis of these textual expressions is a common feature of theses and dissertations in strategy<sup>140</sup>. However, Bryman urges caution in the credibility of the depictions of reality what official documentation provides<sup>141</sup>.

In the interviews, the interaction was an open dialogue with a minimal amount of guidance prior to the appointment. Interviews were intentionally conducted without a script. This allowed the interviewee to elaborate on the subject as independently as possible. A third interview with an expert participating in the work of the MB High-Level Working Group on EIBM (MB WG EIBM) at the EBCG level was intended, but this could not be scheduled within the timeframe allocated for this study.

During the workshop, immersed interaction occurred between the author of this study and the participants. The international interviewees were invited to participate in the workshop, but none responded to the invitation. In sum, a multidirectional approach to the EBCG strategic culture was aimed for. The choice of incorporating different stratified levels of data sources relate directly to the overall hierarchy of governance<sup>142</sup> in EU border and migration management.

The data was presented in a dialogue manner throughout the thesis. To distinguish the actual data from researcher intervention, a unified distinguishing technique was used. This is presented in table 2 below:

Table 2 Distinguishing technique for data presentation purposes

Technique	Meaning
... three dots	1. Indicates a brief pause in the interview or 2. Indicates the presence of other irrelevant speech or text
() parentheses	Clarifying text for necessary context purposes
<b>Bolded text</b>	Highlighted text in the data for emphasis

### 3.4 Research ethics issues and discussion of the research design

The research applied Bryman's four ethical principles in social sciences: no harm to participants, informed consent, protection of participants' privacy and prohibition of deception<sup>143</sup>.

<sup>140</sup> e.g. Lassenius (2020) on Swedish armed forces doctrines, Lahtinen (2021) on Finnish national IBM strategy.

<sup>141</sup> Bryman (2016), pp. 552-553.

<sup>142</sup> See section 4.1 on governance.

<sup>143</sup> Bryman (2016), pp. 125-134.

Furthermore, an overarching principle was voluntary participation. These principles intersected into a comprehensive ethical design. The principles were oriented and presented to both the interviewees and workshop participants accordingly. The presentation was done formally by invitations and forms. This was supported with necessary detail by informal email messages. The formal documents are presented in appendices three and four. The research was processed as a public thesis at all stages. Necessary official access was gained through the research permit processes of the FBG<sup>144</sup> and one other European national authority.

This research was conducted bilingually. The author is not a professional translator, despite being fluent in both Finnish and English. Three Finns were interviewed in Finnish and one Finnish document was accessed. The translated transcripts were validated with the interviewees themselves, but the feedback related primarily to content instead of word choice. Directly translated quotes are available in the footnotes.

Schwartz-Shea introduces a set of first- and second-order evaluation criteria. The first-order criteria are: 1) trustworthiness, 2) thick description, 3) reflexivity and 4) triangulation/intertextuality. The second-order criteria are: 1) informant feedback/member checks, 2) audit/transparency and 3) negative case analysis.<sup>145</sup> These are briefly outlined below.

Trustworthiness relates to scientific credibility that is in contrast to validity and reliability in positivist research approaches. It can be seen as a comprehensive term for assessment.<sup>146</sup> The research aimed for consistency in the chosen interpretive approach. The introduced abductive logic was used to arrive at the best possible conclusions in this research.

Thick description as a criterion of evaluation is borrowed from Clifford Geertz<sup>147</sup>. The ideas of both comprehensive<sup>148</sup> or dense<sup>149</sup> description closely relate to this. It is the breadth and depth of language used to describe a phenomenon. It is opposed to thin description, which implies shallowness and lack of interpretation of meaning.<sup>150</sup> Originally, the research strove to write a

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<sup>144</sup> The Finnish Border Guard: *RVL2246575 Tutkimuslupapäätös Timo Marquis tutkimusta koskien [Research permit decision relating to Timo Marquis' research]*, ACTA-case management system, 22.8.2022.

<sup>145</sup> Schwartz-Shea, Peregrine: Judging Quality Evaluative Criteria and Epistemic Communities, in Yanow, Dvora and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea (eds.), *Interpretation and Method Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.* M.E. Sharpe, New York 2014, pp. 130-140.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid. pp. 131-132.

<sup>147</sup> Schwartz-Shea, Peregrine (2014), p. 132. Schwartz-Shea refers to Clifford Geertz. Geertz describes the term as: "...the sort of piled structures of inference and implication..." in Geertz, Clifford: *Interpretation of cultures*. Fontana Press, London 1993, p. 7

<sup>148</sup> Foucault (2005), p. 21.

<sup>149</sup> Pietikäinen & Mäntynen (2019), p. 211.

<sup>150</sup> Schwartz-Shea, Peregrine (2014), p. 132.

distinct chapter thickly describing EBCG strategic culture. However, as Geertz describes: “Cultural analysis is intrinsically incomplete. And, worse than that, the more deeply it goes the less complete it is.”<sup>151</sup>. The research incrementally arrived at this same awareness during the process. Thus, the research aimed for thick description by having a clear centre of gravity on the analysis chapters.

Reflexivity is the notion of remaining constantly aware of one’s own position as researcher<sup>152</sup>. Jackson states that researchers are linked to their research objects and that they need to be mindful of this prior to observations<sup>153</sup>. The researcher is a practitioner from the FBG since 2011 and an alum from a Frontex-coordinated study programme since 2021. Thus, the challenge of being a member of the EBCG is acknowledged. However, this position likely facilitated access to the experts. The research process increased the competence of the researcher over time. The increasing awareness over the course of the interviews allowed generation of more particular probing questions. The researcher acknowledged multiple potential roles prior to the workshop: 1) researcher, 2) chairperson, 3) expert and 4) interpreter<sup>154</sup>.

Triangulation is observing the phenomenon multidimensionally by data and methods<sup>155</sup>. Intertextuality refers to the connectedness of texts across time and societies<sup>156</sup>. The introduced data was planned to contain multiple origins and hierarchy levels across the EBCG. The data connected with each other through different levels of the EU governance framework.

Informant feedback and member checks relate to a quality control procedure of the participants in the research<sup>157</sup>. This was conducted in both the interviews and workshop. Written transcripts were approved by all the interviewees. Following the workshop event, a written summary of the workshop and feedback was requested from the group. Across all situations, content was edited slightly with the assistance of this step.

An audit and transparency relate to the simple notion of how one conducted the research<sup>158</sup>. Bryman considers this a part of dependability relating to the trustworthiness of research<sup>159</sup>. This is presented in the methodology chapter and the public record of key events during the research

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<sup>151</sup> Geertz (1993), p. 29.

<sup>152</sup> Schwartz-Shea, Peregrine (2014), pp. 132-133.

<sup>153</sup> Jackson (2011), pp. 157-158.

<sup>154</sup> See appendix four.

<sup>155</sup> Schwartz-Shea, Peregrine (2014), pp. 133-135.

<sup>156</sup> Pietikäinen & Mäntynen (2019), pp. 179-185.

<sup>157</sup> Schwartz-Shea, Peregrine (2014), pp. 135-136.

<sup>158</sup> Schwartz-Shea, Peregrine (2014), p. 136.

<sup>159</sup> Bryman (2016), pp. 384-386.

process, which acts as a trail of important steps in the research process. This is available in appendix one. However, the issue of facilitation must be stressed for transparency purposes. The content supervisor of the research facilitated the research a great deal during the process. This was evident from utilising networks of professionals that otherwise may have been inaccessible. Although the central entities in relevant EU governance had been outlined in the research, actual research access may necessitate similar facilitation in a future attempt. Furthermore, conducting the research was a bilateral steering process between the researcher and supervisors. This ultimately influenced context-specific sense-making and choice.

Negative case analysis is essentially a view of being critical to one's own analysis results<sup>160</sup>. The research did not have a hypothesis for testing or falsifying purposes. Instead, one can view that the conclusions are a hypothesis, as defined in the premise of abduction. Not all available data was analysed. These omitted data were broadly of two types. First, they were single remarks without apparent supportive intertextual reference. Second, they related to concrete implementation of strategy, which were assessed as out of scope.

The notion of rigour links with the standard of objectivity and thus evidentiary support of one's knowledge claims in positivist-oriented research. Yanow supports interpretive research by contesting these arguments. In particular, two central arguments emerge: 1) the inability to operationalise the research design fully prior to engaging with the data and 2) the philosophical critique on any position of objectivity.<sup>161</sup> This discussion appears to lead to the very metatheoretical differences<sup>162</sup>, which have been stated already. This research aimed to be systematic. The final research design was formed on two distinct stages and their respective steps as in the research plan. However, the detailed process is shrouded in a profound experience of reading and writing over and over again. Eventually, they all made sense in the form of this report. Yanow shifts the focus of the rigour of research to persuasiveness: "...interpretive research is judged within its own epistemic communities."<sup>163</sup>. Therefore, it is up to the broader EBCG community to assess this study. The choice of using English in this research was central for facilitating this process within Europe.

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<sup>160</sup> Schwartz-Shea, Peregrine (2014), pp. 139-140.

<sup>161</sup> Yanow, Dvora: Neither Rigorous nor Objective? Interrogating Criteria for Knowledge Claims in Yanow, Dvora & Peregrine Schwartz-Shea (2014a), pp. 97-119.

<sup>162</sup> Yanow, Dvora, Thinking Interpretively philosophical presuppositions and the human sciences in Yanow, Dvora & Peregrine Schwartz-Shea (2014b), pp 5-26.

<sup>163</sup> Yanow (2014a), pp. 102.

## 4 THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE EBCG STRATEGIC CULTURE

The introduction, theory and methodology established the research. The fourth chapter starts the analysis of the research. It distinguishes the relevant governance structure for the EBCG and analyses the textual data. Two identified discourses and contextual thematic groups facilitated the constitution of the final sub-chapter: a description of the EBCG strategic culture.

### 4.1 The scope of EU governance relevant for the EBCG

*“And maybe there is maybe there is above even like, political culture...How politicians communicate, how do they prepare something, how do they keep the deadlines or or, or lines at all, what they have taken. So, it is this somehow hierarchical also.”<sup>164</sup>*

The EBCG as a social system belongs subordinately to the governance of its superior political system the EU, as stated by an interviewee in the above quote. Governance covers aspects of varying scope; from European Commission membership in the MB to agreeing on legal provisions. Although not central for this research, all of this is contextual for the strategic culture of the EBCG. I present a model of relevant governance for the EBCG in figure 4 below:

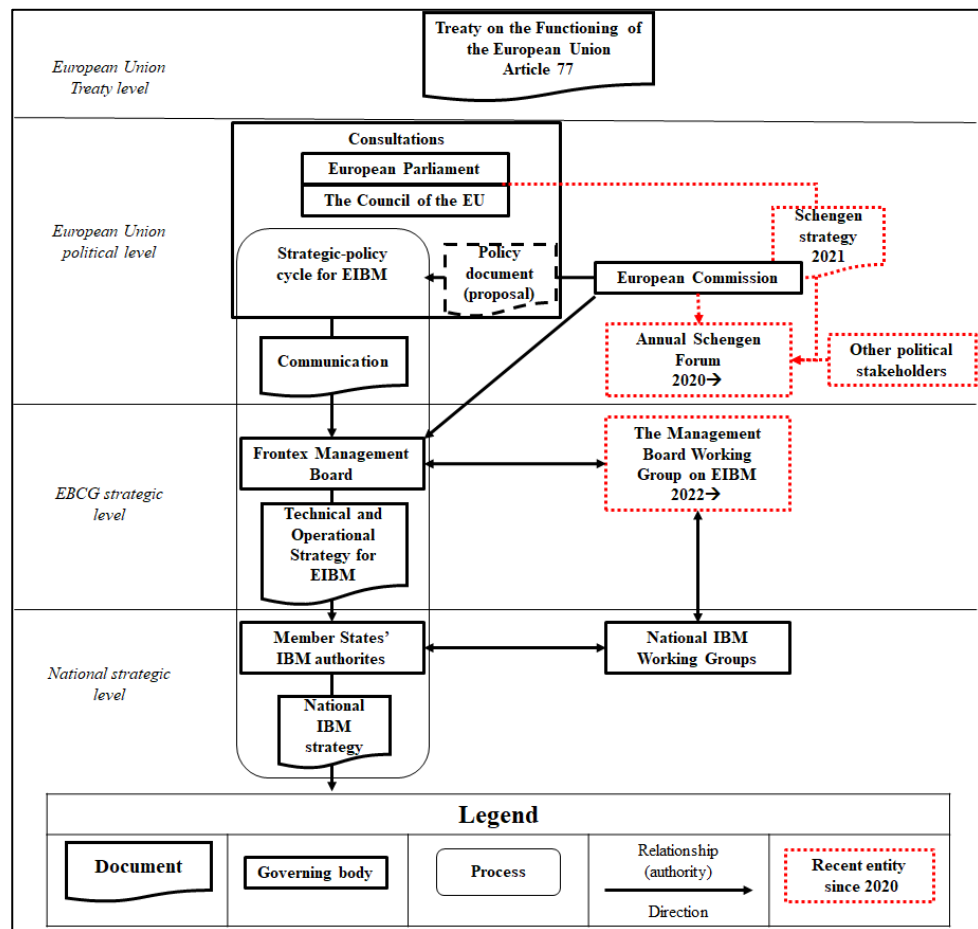


Figure 4 A model of EU governance relevant for the EBCG

<sup>164</sup> Interviewee 4: European high-level expert that participates in the work of MB WG EIBM, interview 13.10.2022, transcript held by the author.

The model's four layers can be attributed to the grand strategic, the political-strategic and the border and migration management strategic levels. This is an EU comparison to Kajanmaa's military example.<sup>165</sup> In short, EU governance is a logical path from policy to implementation. The individual hierarchical levels are presented from top to down in the paragraphs below.

### Article 77 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

The Treaty of Lisbon has been in force since 2009. It constructs the contemporary European Union by and for its Member States and establishes its functions.<sup>166</sup> Apart from establishing the AFSJ<sup>167</sup>, it establishes the Union policy central for the EBCG:

*"1. The Union shall develop a policy with a view to: ... (c) **the gradual introduction of an integrated management system for external borders.** ...  
2. For the purposes of paragraph 1, the European Parliament and the Council, acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure, shall adopt measures concerning: ... (d) **any measure necessary for the gradual establishment of an integrated management system for external borders;** ..."*<sup>168</sup>

The current provisions, strategy and practices do not recognise the wording of "an integrated management system for external borders". However, Lahtinen argues that it is unnecessary to define the matter terminologically, as the current term EIBM is already defined in the current Regulation (EU) 1896/2019<sup>169</sup>. Instead, for the purposes of presenting the current EU governance structures relevant for the EBCG, the focus should shift to the implied change and development originating from the provision. After the Treaty of Lisbon, there have been three regulatory changes since 2010 that relate to the EBCG and EIBM (2011<sup>170</sup>, 2016<sup>171</sup> and 2019<sup>172</sup>). However, one could argue that the political steering in EBCG strategy matters has accelerated with the establishment of the annual Schengen cycle and periodical strategic policy cycle for EIBM. These are introduced separately below.

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<sup>165</sup> Kajanmaa, Petteri: *Sotilasstrategia. Yksinkertainen vaikea sota [Military strategy. The simple, difficult war]*. National Defence University, Department of Warfare, Series 2: Research Reports No. 12, Helsinki 2021, pp. 7-8.

<sup>166</sup> *Consolidated versions of the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union*, Official Journal of the European Union, C 202, Vol. 59, 7 June 2016. [<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:C:2016:202:FULL>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>167</sup> *Consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union*, Article 3(2).

<sup>168</sup> *Consolidated version of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union*, Article 77(1,2).

<sup>169</sup> "Opinnäytetyössäni ei määritellä rajaturvallisuutta tai Euroopan yhdenmukaista rajaturvallisuutta terminologisesti. Tämä johtuu siitä, että nykymuodossaan termi on määritetty asetustasoisesti eikä sen tulkinnallisuudesta ole epäselvää." in Lahtinen (2021), p. 43.

<sup>170</sup> *Regulation (EU) No 1168/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 2007/2004 establishing a European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union*, Official Journal of the European Union, L 304, Vol. 54, 22 November 2011. [<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:2011:304:FULL&from=EN>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>171</sup> *Regulation (EU) 2016/1624*

<sup>172</sup> *Regulation (EU) 2019/1896*

## The annual Schengen cycles

*“The Schengen area without controls at internal borders (‘the Schengen area’) is a historic achievement of European integration. Since its foundations were laid in 1985, it has changed the daily reality of millions of people.”<sup>173</sup>*

The Schengen area requires equally strong attention to the management of the external borders<sup>174</sup> and other closely related policy fields in order for the European Union to live up to its requirement to provide an AFSJ laid out in the Treaties<sup>175</sup>. To this end, the European Commission recently introduced the Schengen cycle in the Schengen Strategy of 2021<sup>176</sup>. It comprises of an annual State of Schengen report published by the European Commission<sup>177</sup> and which is politically steered in the Schengen forum and Schengen Council<sup>178</sup>. The Schengen cycle is foreseen to be a permanent mechanism covering multiple policy fields that can provide inputs to both the intermittent multiannual strategic policy cycle and short-term governance of EIBM. It ensures a permanent kind of political steering to the strategic-operational levels of EIBM conduct. One interviewee highlighted this by perceiving it as a structured way of maintaining it on the political agenda:

*“But apart from the Management Board, it is also a good thing that this IBM policy cycle has not been embedded in the Schengen cycle. So, on a yearly basis, there will be a political follow-up there will be political steering going on and this is really a good thing in order to avoid that these processes will lose in importance.”<sup>179</sup>*

## The multiannual strategic policy cycle for EIBM

Apart from annual political steering, the European Commission is responsible for launching the multiannual strategic policy cycle for EIBM<sup>180</sup>. In official documentation, it is established as a

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<sup>173</sup> European Commission: *COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS State of Schengen Report 2022*, 2022b. [[https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-05/State%20of%20Schengen%20Report%202022\\_en.pdf](https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-05/State%20of%20Schengen%20Report%202022_en.pdf)], accessed 15.3.2023, p. 1.

<sup>174</sup> *Regulation (EU) 2019/1896*, Recital 1.

<sup>175</sup> *Consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union*, Article 3(2) and *Consolidated version of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union*, Article 67.

<sup>176</sup> European Commission: *COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL “A strategy towards a fully functioning and resilient Schengen area”*, 2021a. [<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52021DC0277&from=EN>], accessed 15.3.2023, p. 16.

<sup>177</sup> European Commission: *State of Schengen: Commission sets new priorities and new governance model*, 2022c, [press release 24.5.2022]. [[https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_22\\_3213](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_22_3213)], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>178</sup> European Commission: *Third Schengen Forum: setting the way forward*, 2022d, [press release 2.6.2022]. [[https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_22\\_3445](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_22_3445)], accessed 15.3.2023 and Council of the European Union: *Schengen borders code: Council adopts its general approach*, 2022, [press release 10.6.2022]. [<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/06/10/schengen-area-council-adopts-negotiating-mandate-reform-schengen-borders-code/>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>179</sup> Interviewee 3: European high-level expert working for the European Commission, interview 22.9.2022, transcript held by the author.

<sup>180</sup> *Regulation (EU) 2019/1896*, Article 8(4).

five-year long, recurring cycle.<sup>181 182</sup> The strategic policy cycle involves all the relevant parties hierarchically from the EU to the MS<sup>183</sup>. This procedural involvement is presented in figure 5 below:

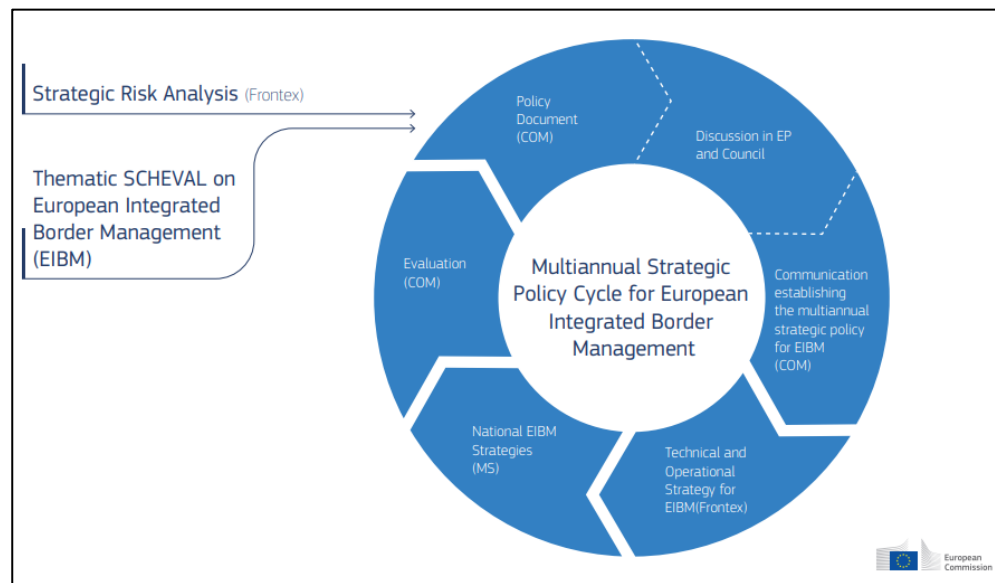


Figure 5 “The multiannual strategic policy cycle for EIBM”<sup>184</sup>

The multiannual strategic policy cycle for EIBM can be viewed as a mandatory translation process from the political level leading, ultimately, to an operational effect at the results level. This is highlighted in the legal framework:

*“The Commission and the European Border and Coast Guard shall ensure the effectiveness of European integrated border management **by means of** a multiannual strategic policy cycle...”<sup>185</sup>*

The European Commission policy document outlines the policy having a strategic objective to address how contemporary challenges are addressed in “a coherent, integrated and systematic manner”.<sup>186</sup> The ongoing multiannual strategic policy cycle is the first ever of its kind after its introduction to the current regulatory framework<sup>187</sup>. This novel governance step is not without its critics, however. One interviewee highlights the disconnect of timing in relation to the EU’s long-term budget, commonly referred as the Multiannual Financial Framework<sup>188</sup>:

*“...if you look at the revision cycle of these key... processes that are there, and the ones that are governing the whole sort of EU framework, which is actually the budget, **multiannual financial framework for the budget. That follows a seven-year cycle. And the IBM policy is a five-year cycle. But the IBM policy does not start with the start of that multiannual***

<sup>181</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Article 8(2, 7).

<sup>182</sup> European Commission: Policy document developing a multiannual strategic policy for European integrated border management in accordance with Article 8(4) of Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, 2022a. [<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52022DC0303>], accessed 15.3.2023, p. 2.

<sup>183</sup> European Commission (2022a), p. 2.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid. p. 3.

<sup>185</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Article 8(1).

<sup>186</sup> European Commission (2022a), p. 2.

<sup>187</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Article 8. The former Regulation (EU) 2016/1624 did not have this.

<sup>188</sup> European Commission: The EU’s 2021-2027 long-term budget and NextGenerationEU Facts and figures, 2021b. [<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/d3e77637-a963-11eb-9585-01aa75ed71a1>], accessed 15.3.2023.

*financial framework. It starts off when the Commission has enabled its IBM policy, or... when it has adopted the IBM policy following discussion in the Parliament and the Council.*"<sup>189</sup>

The European Commission policy document describes the evaluation and preparation for the following cycle on its own initiative in an open manner<sup>190</sup>. Furthermore, the regulatory framework refers to the multiannual financial framework directly in technical equipment<sup>191</sup> and, despite its normative stance, indirectly in only two recitals<sup>192</sup>.

### **The Frontex Management Board and its Working Group for EIBM**

Following the formalised communication provided by the European Commission, the MB is tasked with the adoption of a technical and operational strategy for EIBM<sup>193</sup> in the multiannual strategic policy cycle. The previous 2019 strategy already formed a High Level IBM Working Group hosted at Frontex.<sup>194</sup> However, following the initiation of the current policy cycle in 2022, the MB WG EIBM was established to:

*"...strengthen the strategic governance of the whole European Border and Coast Guard by supporting the Management Board **decision-making process** related to European Integrated Border Management (EIBM), in particular providing support to ensure the effectiveness of EIBM through the technical and operational **implementation of the multiannual strategic policy cycle for EIBM by the European Border and Coast Guard.**"*<sup>195</sup> (bold text in original)

The key term of strategic governance is exemplified with the wide-ranging responsibilities of the working group<sup>196</sup>. A link is observable between this new working group and the European Commission's policy document:

*"**The governance structure of the European Border and Coast Guard must guarantee that the activities of Frontex and national border and coast guard authorities are fully aligned with the EU's political objectives in border and migration management, and that they follow the policy line related to internal security.**"*<sup>197</sup>

Thus, a dedicated group of high-level experts that focuses on adjusting the EBCG's collaboration to the commonly accepted EU standard has been created.

The tasks of the MB are listed across two and a half pages in the Regulation<sup>198</sup>. Among other things, they allow the creation of an executive board<sup>199</sup>. Apparently, this has been active for a

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<sup>189</sup> Interviewee 2: European expert participating in the work of the MB WG EIBM, 21.9.2022, transcript held by the author.

<sup>190</sup> European Commission (2022a), p. 5.

<sup>191</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Article 63(2).

<sup>192</sup> Ibid. Recitals 7 and 71.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid. Article 8(5).

<sup>194</sup> Frontex: *Technical and Operational Strategy for European Integrated Border Management*. Warsaw 2019. [<https://prd.frontex.europa.eu/document/european-integrated-border-management-strategy/>], accessed 15.3.2023, p. 6, 24, 86.

<sup>195</sup> Frontex: *Management Board Decision 33/2022 of 7 June 2022 establishing the Management Board Working Group on European Integrated Border Management*, Warsaw 2022a. [[https://prd.frontex.europa.eu/wp-content/uploads/mb-decision-33\\_2022-establishing-the-european-integrated-border-management-working-group.pdf](https://prd.frontex.europa.eu/wp-content/uploads/mb-decision-33_2022-establishing-the-european-integrated-border-management-working-group.pdf)], accessed 15.3.2023, Article 2(1), p. 2.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid. Article 2(2), p. 2.

<sup>197</sup> European Commission (2022a), p. 5.

<sup>198</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Article 100.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid. Article 100(7).

few years and it works to facilitate the MB through orientation in-between meetings.<sup>200</sup> However, a question is raised on why a parallel structure had to be established. One interviewee views the issue through prioritisation and reiterates the lengthy agendas of the MB from a national viewpoint:

*“...I myself was recently in a vulnerability assessment high-level development workshop meeting, where it was just present, this about what issues need to be brought up to the Management Board about the vulnerability assessment. There during my own turn **I spoke about the issue that the vulnerability assessment unit and its head should very thoroughly think that what are really strategic issues and only bring them up to the Management Board.**”<sup>201</sup>*

Another interviewee views recent development in this issue:

*“... (the MB has) **obliged the Agency during last year to improve the quality, so to refocus and scope the background material,** it has been shortened, so the issue that requires decision-making is more concise and better available to the MB and available for the members, **without it being hidden among a hundred-paged annexes or in drafts.**”<sup>202</sup>*

The interviewees shed light on the MB's governance practices. The interviewees introduced the responsibility of the new working group:

*“...now we've converted this kind of IBM working group into a Management Board working group, which means it has a formal role. Under the Management Board, it actually reports to the Management Board and it's not really replying. And now I think **the key thing here within the EBCG, not only the Agency, is to connect all the the work being done both in Agency and Member States.**”<sup>203</sup>*

*“(describing the MB dividing its labour through working groups) ... the MB does not want to go in that direction that **the general assembly's responsibility and touch, sort of, shatters too much to the working group level. The working groups themselves cannot decide on behalf of the MB, but they can orient themselves much better on the thematic issues, to be a part of the preparatory work,** to bring the issues in a more complete manner to the decision-making of the MB. **And this, sort of, has been seen as a good configuration.**”<sup>204</sup>*

*“And looking at the way that the Management board works...if you look at their agenda, they have like 30 agenda points they have to cover in two days... and yet, with 30 agenda points you don't practically you can't really discuss that much. So, I think the **this Management Board Working Group on IBM can particularly focus on the discussion part and actually meet some sort of an alignment** before you take things to the Management Board for decision.”<sup>205</sup>*

Particularly in the framework of the TO EIBM, one interviewee perceived a link with strategic culture:

*“There is now this EIBM Working Group which reports to the Management Board of Frontex... **one of the ideas is, for instance, to reflect on... principles and on the mission, on values, actually elements** which really are or could be a subset of this developing strategic culture.”<sup>206</sup>*

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<sup>200</sup> Interviewee 6: Finnish high-level expert that participates in the work of the Finnish national IBM working group, interview 22.2.2023, transcript held by the author.

<sup>201</sup> Interviewee 5: Finnish high-level expert that participates in the work of the Finnish national IBM working group, interview 2.11.2022, transcript held by the author.

<sup>202</sup> Interviewee 6.

<sup>203</sup> Interviewee 3.

<sup>204</sup> Interviewee 6.

<sup>205</sup> Interviewee 3.

<sup>206</sup> Interviewee 2.

Thus, the role of the MB WG EIBM appears important for properly orienting and streamlining issues for facilitating governance that relates the EBCG.

### The Finnish national IBM Working Group

At Finnish national level, the FBG is provisioned as the leading authority in EIBM coordination matters<sup>207</sup>. The national IBM working group acts as a central position and connects all relevant authorities that either have national jurisdiction in border and migration management<sup>208</sup> or have internal security interests on these matters<sup>209</sup>. Furthermore, the Finnish Non-Discrimination Ombudsman participates in the duties of the working group, primarily due to its jurisdiction in monitoring returnees' treatment<sup>210</sup>. The working group assists preparatory work for the Finnish Ministry of the Interior, such as planning national operational resources to the SC<sup>211</sup>. Furthermore, it assists in drafting the Finnish national IBM strategy<sup>212</sup> as the final publication in the EBCG strategic policy cycle<sup>213</sup>.

Apart from long-term duties, the national IBM working group acts as a permanent link to its new superior governing body, the MB WG EIBM. One interviewee viewed this as an exchange process:

*“...as a vision I view that we should operate as a working pair (with the secretary of the national IBM working group) and feed, sort of, give stimuli in two ways, so from national work we could give input to the Finnish representative could bring in this EU working group, at the level of EU development and, respectively, bring inputs to the national group, where it would be processed or put into action into the Finnish circumstances, in particular those issues that require everyone's contribution as is not only an internal issue of the Finnish Border Guard.”<sup>214</sup>*

The MB WG EIBM forms its own working procedure and meeting schedule<sup>215</sup>. In this regard, the national IBM working groups likely synchronises their respective agendas and schedules to facilitate the aforementioned exchange to occur. This is visible in the MS responsibilities of the

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<sup>207</sup> Rajavartiola [Border Guard Act] 578/2005, 15b§ (2)

<sup>208</sup> Border checks duties have been arranged among the Police, Border Guard and Customs. View *Valtioneuvoston asetus rajanylityspaikoista sekä rajatarkastustehtävien jakamisesta niillä* [The Finnish Government's Regulation on border crossing points and the distribution of border check tasks at them] 652/2005.

<sup>209</sup> For example, Suojelupoliisi, the Finnish security and intelligence service. The Finnish Security and Intelligence Service (Supo): *About Supo*. [<https://supo.fi/en/about-supu>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>210</sup> Interviewee 1: Finnish high-level expert that participates in the work of the Finnish national IBM working group, interview 14.9.2022, transcript held by the author.

<sup>211</sup> Finnish Government, *HE141/2020 vp Hallituksen esitys eduskunnalle eurooppalaista raja- ja merivartiostoa koskevaksi täydentäväksi lainsäädännöksi* [HE141/2020 vp Government bill to parliament on complementary legislation relating to the European border and coast guard]. [[https://www.eduskunta.fi/FI/vaski/HallituksenEsitys/Documents/HE\\_141+2020.pdf](https://www.eduskunta.fi/FI/vaski/HallituksenEsitys/Documents/HE_141+2020.pdf)], accessed 15.3.2023, p. 28.

<sup>212</sup> Finnish Border Guard: *Suomen kansallinen yhdenmetyt rajaturvallisuuden strategia 2019–2021* [Finland's national integrated border management strategy 2019–2021]. Helsinki 2019.

<sup>213</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Article 8(6).

<sup>214</sup> Interviewee 5.

<sup>215</sup> Frontex (2022a), Article 4, p. 3.

multiannual strategic policy cycle and annually recurring planning, but also in the participation to the reflective discussion points to arrive at the identified alignment<sup>216</sup>.

## 4.2 Analysis of the international documentation and interviews

A total of nine theory-oriented thematic groups were formed as the result of the discourse analysis. This is presented in table 3:

Table 3 The nine theory-guided themes and their brief descriptions

	Discourses		Contextual thematic groups
	1. Legitimacy	2. Agency	
Continuity	<b>Enduring legitimacy</b>	<b>Historical agency</b>	Historical context
Context	<b>Contextual legitimacy</b>	<b>The EBCG as an agent of Union policy</b>	General context
Change	<b>Changing legitimacy</b>	<b>Developing agency</b>	Changing context

With respect to table 3, the nine thematic groups were formed by the assistance of two functions. First, with the chosen temporal scope, the Regulation (EU) 2019/1896. Second, with the identified approaches of the discourses that related to change, continuity or context. These six approaches are named and highlighted in bold text. The following two sub-chapters present these two identified discourses and are summarised together. Following that, the three contextual thematic groups from the data are provided.

### 4.2.1 A discourse on legitimacy

A discourse on legitimacy emerged from the data. Legitimacy in the scope of the study relates to the perceptions of the EBCG as a valid legal entity and acceptance of its existence. This is a central interest in critical discourse analysis<sup>217</sup>. Prior cooperation before the current Regulation formed the viewpoint of enduring legitimacy. Contextual legitimacy viewed the EBCG as an internal security community in general. Lastly, changing legitimacy reflected on the current and developing community that is driven by change. These viewpoints within the data were supported with three evidential main approaches, which carried approaches of persuasion, balancing and coercion, respectively. The analysis structure for a discourse on legitimacy is presented in figure 6:

<sup>216</sup> Interviewee 3.

<sup>217</sup> Pietikäinen & Mäntynen (2019), p. 35.

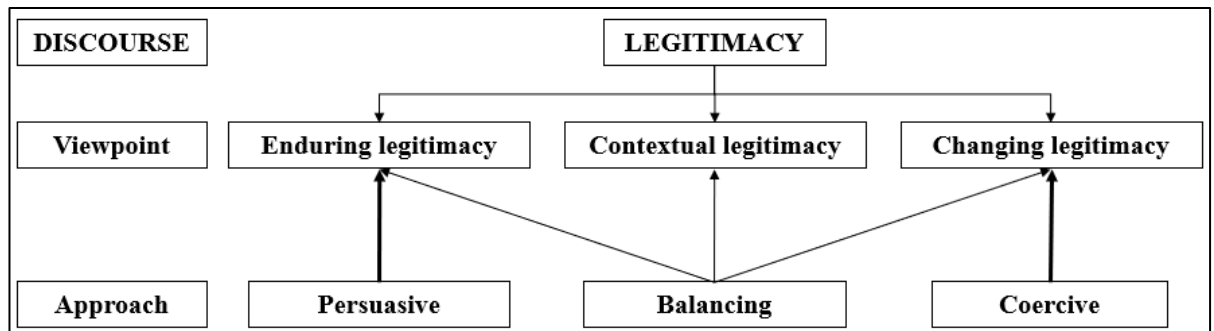


Figure 6 The theory-guided analysis structure for a discourse on legitimacy

### The persuasive approach

The Regulation persuades the MS by referring to Frontex as an added value in the EBCG:

*“...The activities of the Agency should **complement** the efforts of the Member States.”<sup>218</sup>*

The European Commission policy document connects with this this notion and views this development with a certain gratitude:

*“...Thanks to its new mandate, Frontex is now playing a central role within the European Border and Coast Guard by reinforcing, assessing and coordinating the actions of Member States and by establishing European capabilities.”<sup>219</sup>*

This issue of an added value within the EBCG refers to the central theme in a discourse in legitimacy, shared responsibility<sup>220</sup>. The documentation is communicating to the MS and national authorities in a promotional way of a supranational element’s reliability in a common cause.

The common cause the EIBM is designed for enabling the AFSJ. The TO EIBM strategy describes this in multiple parts:

*“Strengthening the European Union (EU), upholding its values and promoting them globally, relies, inter alia, on the credible provision of safety and security to European citizens. ...**the ultimate goal is to sustain a safe and secure area of freedom, security and justice.**”<sup>221</sup>*

*“At the nexus, the European Border and Coast Guard (EBCG) has been established to ensure integrated border management of the external borders **to enable a single area without border checks – the Schengen Area.**”<sup>222</sup>*

*“The effective management of the EU’s external borders is of strategic importance to the Union and, in particular, to the functioning of the Schengen area. Of key value to EU’s internal and external policies, well-functioning external borders enable the EU to prosper through trade with the wider world while protecting our safe and secure European area of free movement from existing and emerging challenging situations at the external borders. At*

<sup>218</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Recital 12.

<sup>219</sup> European Commission (2022a), p. 5.

<sup>220</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Article 7.

<sup>221</sup> Frontex: Technical and Operational Strategy for European Integrated Border Management. Warsaw 2019. [<https://prd.frontex.europa.eu/document/european-integrated-border-management-strategy/>], accessed 15.3.2023, p. 8.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid. p. 8.

*the core of EIBM there is the EBCG, ensuring the integrity of the EU's external borders surrounded by a dynamic world (Figure 3).<sup>223</sup>*

*“Given the dynamics of international security, protecting the EU against the implications of existing and emerging challenging situations at the external borders implies the need to be able to counter terrorism and crime as well as cyber, health and hybrid threats. **In this context the role of the well-organised and fully operational EBCG is crucial.** Interagency cooperation with other authorities and Agencies involved in the implementation of IBM concept and especially working at the border is **of great importance.**”<sup>224</sup>*

In these quotes, it is evident that the TO EIBM strategy is persuading the audience about the importance of the EBCG's existence. One can delineate the narrative of securitisation as the quotes refer to guarding something internally valuable. This is evident in the choice of using key verbs such as sustaining, enabling and protecting. The last quote paints an unsure global World and refers to the existence of the EBCG as “crucial” and “of great importance”, which directly relate to the prior securitisation act.

One interviewee compares EU defence policy with internal security and migration policies:

*“...International foreign policy is very much focusing very much on sovereignty, and rightfully so. **But I think what is also the beauty of with, I think in the context of European border and Coast Guard, everything sort of leading up to that with the establishment of the Schengen area, the external borders, which are common. That notion doesn't really exist in the military.**”<sup>225</sup>*

*“In CSDP there's a lot of talk about priorities and what what is common. But the bottom line is that Member States negotiate on the basis of their National National politics, their National defensive security policy whereas **here I think it's not been ever been that that precious...creating this Area of Freedom, Security and Justice, that there was no opposition to that and everyone has that has bought into this, you know, has done it because we liked the concept of free free movement and and just the fact that the internal borders of the Schengen area are free.** That I think really differentiates us from this whole defensive security concepts.”<sup>226</sup>*

In these quotes, the interviewee identifies the source for the previous securitisation act that was observed. As defence policy relates primarily to the existence of an international actor, the policy areas that the EBCG focuses on relates to maintenance of the Schengen area as a parallel utility worth upholding. In the last quote the interviewee delineates a crucial step where “precious” refers to upholding MS's sovereign interests. The resulting free movement of capital, labour and goods as a single viewpoint has obviously weighed in favour of abolishing of something that may have been “precious” prior to the adoption of the Schengen acquis.

### The balancing approach

Several parts in the data refer to the premise of “shared responsibility”:

*“European integrated border management should be implemented as **a shared responsibility** ... While **Member States retain the primary responsibility** for the management of their external*

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<sup>223</sup> Frontex (2019), pp. 16-17.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid. pp. 17-18.

<sup>225</sup> Interviewee 3.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

*borders in their interest and in the interest of all Member States and are responsible for issuing return decisions, the Agency should support the application of Union measures relating to the management of the external borders and return by reinforcing, assessing and co-ordinating the actions of the Member States which implement those measures.*"<sup>227</sup>

The first recital referring to this premise introduces a three-part definition. Firstly, the premise entails recognition of national sovereignty and interests. Secondly, it considers the coexistence of all Member States' sovereign interests simultaneously. Finally, it provides a comprehensive added value, Frontex, as supplementary to this coexistence and the particular activities of MS. These portions repeat in the following parts of the documentation:

*"Member States retain **primary responsibility for the management of their external borders** in their interest and in the interest of all Member States."*<sup>228</sup> (Bolded text in original)

*"**Member States** and Schengen Associated Countries (MS/SAC) **have the main responsibility** for the management of their sections of the external borders... **This collective effort** constitutes European Integrated Border Management (EIBM)."*<sup>229</sup>

*"**Member States should also, in their own interest and in the interest of the other Member States,** contribute relevant data necessary for the activities carried out by the Agency, including for the purposes of situational awareness, risk analysis, vulnerability assessments and integrated planning."*<sup>230</sup>

*"Since 2019, these tools have now been complemented by the possibility to support Member States more effectively through the Agency's own operational force, the EBCG standing corps. **The standing corps is deployed under the command and control of the hosting Member State...**"*<sup>231</sup>

*"According to the EBCG Regulation, **implementing EIBM is a shared responsibility of Member State authorities responsible for border management and return, and of Frontex, together forming the European Board and Coast Guard.** This is the cornerstone of the EBCG architecture and an operational translation of the shared competence of the EU and Member States for the implementation of integrated management of the EU's external borders, as provided for in the Treaty..."*<sup>232</sup>

The two following quotes identify a nuanced shift in the term:

*"**In a spirit of shared responsibility,** the role of the Agency should be to monitor regularly the management of the external borders, including the respect for fundamental rights in the border management and return activities of the Agency."*<sup>233</sup>

*"**In the spirit of shared responsibility,** the Agency should require the staff it employs... to possess the same level of training, special expertise and professionalism as staff seconded or employed by the Member States."*<sup>234</sup>

The meaning of "a spirit" and "the spirit" appear completely different. The former appears to relate to something vague or ambiguous, but the latter is definitive. In order to arrive at such a result, one questions on where and how "the spirit" was defined. This is reiterated in the European Commission policy document:

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<sup>227</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Recital 12.

<sup>228</sup> European Commission (2022a), p. 4.

<sup>229</sup> Frontex (2019), p. 8.

<sup>230</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Recital 26.

<sup>231</sup> European Commission (2022a), p. 5.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid. p. 9.

<sup>233</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Recital 42.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid. Recital 112.

*“The EBCG Regulation creates a comprehensive architecture for the European Border and Coast Guard... The Regulation also tasks the EBCG with ensuring the effective implementation of EIBM in the spirit of shared responsibility. Realising the full potential of the European Border and Coast Guard would lead to a real and necessary change on the ground. To that end, the EU and Member States should collectively make use of this new architecture and strengthen the EBCG governance structures...”*<sup>235</sup>

Although the quote does not define “the spirit”, it refers to a “full potential” immediately after the premise. Further, it describes a potential of a new system, naming it an “architecture”. These findings point the definition of “the spirit” to the direction of a means to embrace the new EBCG fully, so that it would bring apparent benefits. In particular, these benefits refer to the “real and necessary change” that the quote describes. The following quote provides a new mechanism to the premise:

*“The Agency relies on the cooperation of Member States to be able to perform its tasks effectively. In that respect, it is important for the Agency and the Member States to act in good faith and to exchange accurate information in a timely manner.”*<sup>236</sup>

Here, a fourth portion to the premise is added. Reliance can be interpreted as a dependence or continuous demand. Furthermore, this is linked with: “acting in good faith” that can be interpreted as cooperating without reservations. Below the seventh article on “shared responsibility” in the Regulation summarises these four portions of the premise:

*“1. The European Border and Coast Guard shall implement **European integrated border management as a shared responsibility**... **Member States shall retain primary responsibility** for the management of their sections of the external borders... 2. ... **Member States shall retain sole responsibility** for issuing return decisions and for adopting the measures pertaining to the detention of returnees in accordance with Directive 2008/115/EC. 3. ... in close cooperation with the Agency, **in their own interests and in the common interest of all Member States**... 5. **Member States may cooperate at an operational level with other Member States or third countries**... Member States shall report to the Agency on that operational cooperation with other Member States or third countries at the external borders and in the field of return. The executive director shall inform the management board of such matters on a regular basis and at least once a year.”*<sup>237</sup>

Here, the shared responsibility is mostly exhorted in the strictest of legal terms: “shall”. However, the linking recital referred it as “should”, thus with some conditionality<sup>238</sup>. Furthermore, the portion of national sovereignty and interests is clarified with the possibility for MS to conduct beneficial cooperation with other MS or third countries. Finally, however, the TO EIBM strategy provides some additional detail:

*“Implementing EIBM relies on the sovereign MS/SAC and on the European Border and Coast Guard Agency – Frontex, each with their own set of interoperable EBCG capabilities, working together in solidarity as the EBCG (Figure 6) ... **The resulting whole being greater than the sum of the individual parts – the spirit of shared responsibility**...”*<sup>239</sup>

The sixth figure as referred to in the document is presented below:

<sup>235</sup> European Commission (2022a), p. 5.

<sup>236</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Recital 25.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid. Article 7.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid. Recital 12.

<sup>239</sup> Frontex (2019), p. 26.

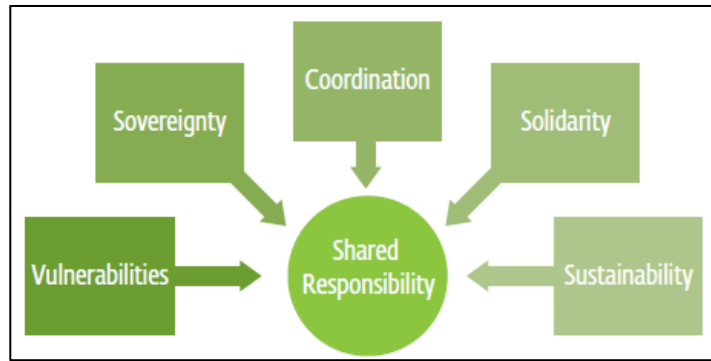


Figure 7 “The spirit of shared responsibility in the context of operationalising EIBM”<sup>240</sup>

Here the metaphor of the entity being larger when added together is prevalent. This ties together with the view of “full potential” that may construct this “architecture” as presented above. With this connection, one can interpret that the “architecture” of this metaphor relates closer to ideas, interests and identities than something materialistic.

The premise of “shared responsibility” is viewed by two interviewees:

*“...I think all of us know the shared responsibility, I think where we I think there are two aspects to where we were really comes to... it really shows on the ground... **The notion of shared responsibility has become, again has also been operationalized because it has been implying that everyone actually feels the consequences if we don't share that responsibility.**”<sup>241</sup>*

*“If we manage to prove ourselves now and **our shared responsibility can deliver results, measurable results even**, then I think that he'd be more convincing us that we that **we own the external borders together and the the blur between the division between European and Nationals will will disappear.** Another thing I think, what is very key to this is the link to the internal policies and the external policies.”<sup>242</sup>*

*“(Agreeing on the notion that the MS have been creating the EBCG to its current state) Yes. In my mind the MS have been creating this. But as I said... **each MS still in accordance with the principle of shared responsibility that they experience the similar, that they are responsible individually...** here there exists this gradual nature of how much in one's own mind **the EBCG has been developed in the direction that it perfectly supports, but without taking too much, A, resources or, B, decision-making opportunity from one's own indivisible responsibility.**”<sup>243</sup>*

Here, one interviewee discusses the practical operationalisation of the premise from two viewpoints. This is clear in two points. First, about everyone feeling the consequences of failing the premise. Second, about approaching a true community-approach in interests when succeeding in it. This description appears to bridge the premise of the “shared responsibility” from an overall aim to the importance of results on the ground. By individualism, the second interviewee focuses on the primary responsibility of the MS. One interviewee exemplifies the impact of outcomes with a description:

<sup>240</sup> Ibid. p. 27.

<sup>241</sup> Interviewee 3.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid.

<sup>243</sup> Interviewee 6.

*“...it feels like that situations are not always clear, that how... **how, in a sense, is the chain of responsibility organised.** A good example being what I just recently looked into, just from my interest, and perhaps linking to renewal of the border act, it might have been these pushback situations what have been in Greece, where Finnish border guards have been following... Greeks’ activity, which is not necessarily in accordance with all Charters of human rights, laws, statutes in all situations. So, how... what is, in these situations, for example these Finns’... and **how, sort of, sort of the... the superior position and power of command... and responsibility... that how is it shared, what is each other’s responsibility,** for example the responsibility of border guards seconded from Finland in this situation, plus also that **what are the consequences then from that and how is it processed and so on.**”<sup>244</sup>*

Although alleging on fundamental human rights violations, the overall premise extends to the level where results are achieved. This general topic is the practical challenge that likely needs to be overcome for the defined success of the premise as presented above.

The Regulation introduces and establishes the main governing body of the EBCG, the MB:

*“**The Commission and the Member States should be represented within a management board** to exercise oversight over the Agency. The management board should, where possible, consist of the operational heads of the national services responsible for border management or their representatives. **The parties represented in the management board should make efforts to limit turnover of their representatives in order to ensure continuity of the management board's work.** The management board should be entrusted with the necessary powers to establish the Agency's budget, verify its execution, adopt appropriate financial rules, establish transparent working procedures for decision-making by the Agency...”<sup>245</sup>*

*“**1. The management board shall be responsible for taking the strategic decisions of the Agency in accordance with this Regulation...**”<sup>246</sup>*

*“**1. Without prejudice to paragraph 3, the management board shall be composed of one representative of each Member State and two representatives of the Commission, each with a right to vote. To this effect, each Member State shall appoint a member of the management board as well as an alternate who will represent the member in his or her absence. The Commission shall appoint two members and two alternates. The duration of the terms of office shall be four years. The terms of office shall be extendable.**”<sup>247</sup>*

Here, the issues of continuity of management, responsibility of strategic-level decision-making and equal representation are explicit. Prior to becoming a representative in the MB, one has had to progress several decades in one’s organisation. Furthermore, with the possibility of longer office terms, the representatives themselves may influence contemporary discussions and decisions with a historical approach. Lastly, the issue of bloated meeting agendas was introduced along relevant EU governance. There, one could question if indeed all decisions are truly of a strategic nature. Two interviewees brought up the MB:

*“**Frontex... they are the agency of the EBCG community... they are a decentralized agency, which means that we as Commission do not have a very clear hierarchical link with Frontex, because I mean, the Management Board is there, the Commission is also part of the Management Board next to all Member States... the Member States really will and are constituting the strategic culture of Frontex and the EBCG community as a whole if you look at it that way...**”<sup>248</sup>*

<sup>244</sup> Interviewee 1.

<sup>245</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Recital 106.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid. Article 100.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid. Article 101.

<sup>248</sup> Interviewee 2.

*“(Discussing the experts’ preparatory work for the MS members for the meetings) This issue is conducted at the expert level. So, this is visible that **the preparatory work is in a significant role and ultimately, the depending on the MS, the member or alternative member which uses the power of speech, it is not at the expert level.**”<sup>249</sup>*

*“As we talked previously that the root level bottom bottom up, influencers influence also the strategic culture...what could be mitigating measure is also that all **the strategic level thinkers cultivate this the same culture as we talked, values, mission, vision, and if they work under the same umbrella and they jointly have agreed on that, then it is easier to give downwards signals of accepted or not accepted behaviour.**”<sup>250</sup>*

The first interviewee reflected on the relative control of what the European Commission has in the MB. At the meetings, it indeed is in the minority, with two members among thirty representatives from MS.<sup>251</sup> The second interviewee introduces the experts’ role in forming the national perspective to the issues. All of the interviewees appear to argue that this group of 30 senior executives is the source of strategic culture. The final interviewee views it as a power source prescribing acceptable behaviour into the broader community, based on cornerstones of shared values, mission and vision. The TO EIBM strategy refers to these as well as condenses the balancing approach:

*“A common vision and mission for the EBCG is essential to align the expectations of its stakeholders on the TO EIBM outcome. The MS/SAC, supported by... Frontex – ensure the smooth and lawful transit of persons including their means of transport and objects in their possession across the safe, secure and well-functioning external borders of the EU in support of a European area of freedom, security and justice. **Underpinned by strict compliance with fundamental rights, in the spirit of shared responsibility and governed by principles of transparency and accountability, this is achieved by activities undertaken at European and national level aimed at controlling the external borders in a fully integrated manner together, working across policy areas, borders and authorities. EIBM is implemented by the EBCG and its partners drawing on a culture that fosters the core values of professionalism, respect, cooperation, compliance, transparency, accountability and fundamental rights.**”<sup>252</sup>*

The paragraph describes necessary alignment for the community, which is achieved through “a common vision and mission”. However, the topic of values goes to greater length. The earlier premise of “the spirit of shared responsibility” is briefly referred to in a sentence among with fundamental human rights and “principles of transparency and accountability”. Further on, these same principles are referred to as belonging to the “core values”, which is stated to be drawn from a fostered culture. Thus, one can interpret an apparent relationship, where a certain culture precedes and “fosters” the latter broad description of values. By combining this relationship in the location of the MB, one can perceive it as a potentially influential power source for the strategic culture of the EBCG. Although the TO EIBM is authorised by the MB, the paragraph is written in passive form which does not establish a subject and, ultimately, presents these apparently important aspects in an open meaning.

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<sup>249</sup> Interviewee 6.

<sup>250</sup> Interviewee 4.

<sup>251</sup> Frontex: *The Frontex Management Board*. [<https://frontex.europa.eu/about-frontex/management-board/>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>252</sup> Frontex (2019), p. 11.

## The coercive approach

The Regulation introduces measures to avoid insecurity:

*“Where external border control is rendered ineffective to such an extent that it risks jeopardising the functioning of the Schengen area, either because a Member State does not take the necessary measures in line with a vulnerability assessment or because a Member State facing specific and disproportionate challenges at the external borders has not requested sufficient support from the Agency or is not implementing such support, **a unified, rapid and effective response should be delivered at Union level.**”*<sup>253</sup>

*“1. Where external border control is rendered ineffective to such an extent that it risks jeopardising the functioning of the Schengen area **because:***

*(a) a Member State does not implement the necessary measures in accordance with a decision of the management board referred to in Article 32(10); b) or a Member State... **is not taking the necessary steps to implement actions** under those Articles or under Article 41;*

*8. The Member State concerned shall comply with the Council decision referred to in paragraph 1. For that purpose, **it shall immediately cooperate with the Agency and take the necessary action** to facilitate the implementation of that decision and the practical execution of the measures set out in that decision and in the operational plan agreed upon with the executive director, in particular by implementing the obligations provided for in Articles 43, 82 and 83.*

*10. If the Member State concerned does not comply with the Council decision referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article within 30 days **and does not cooperate with the Agency** in accordance with to paragraph 8 of this Article, the Commission may trigger the procedure provided for in Article 29 of Regulation (EU) 2016/399.”*<sup>254</sup>

The quotes describe multiple theoretical scenarios. It is a clear rectification mechanism that is based in the securitisation act as observed in the persuasive approach. Here the implicit issue of liability is the key premise, instead of protecting a common utility. The liability is a theoretical MS, whose actions are perceived to be a risk for both the EBCG and in latter scenarios even the EU itself. In order for the Regulation to coerce the MS like this, a persuasive description of common benefit appears to be necessary. The result of this balance is the key norm that defines the EBCG. The Regulation continues:

*“3. Member States shall ensure the management of their external borders and the enforcement of return decisions... **in full compliance with Union law, including respect for fundamental rights...** 5. ... **Member States shall refrain from any activity which could jeopardise the functioning of the Agency or the attainment of its objectives.**”*<sup>255</sup>

*“(The EBCG) shall be subject to a duty to cooperate in good faith and an obligation to exchange information.”*<sup>256</sup>

*“(The EBCG) shall... share in a timely and accurate manner all necessary information.”*<sup>257</sup>

Here, the notion of compliance extends from national legislation to EU legislation. Implicitly, this refers to a high requirement of aligning to other non-binding legislation of the EU<sup>258</sup>, such

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<sup>253</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Recital 57.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid. Article 42.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid. Article 7.

<sup>256</sup> Ibid. Article 11.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid. Article 12.

<sup>258</sup> European Union: Types of legislation. [[https://european-union.europa.eu/institutions-law-budget/law/types-legislation\\_en](https://european-union.europa.eu/institutions-law-budget/law/types-legislation_en)], accessed 15.3.2023.

as the return directive<sup>259</sup>. The latter requirements are directly linked with the reliance portion of the “shared responsibility” premise<sup>260</sup>. The European Commission policy document reflects closely on this:

*“To achieve this objective, **the European Union and its Member States need to work together, especially in the framework of the European Border and Coast Guard (EBCG), towards achieving a fully effective European integrated border management (EIBM), bringing together all relevant players at both European and national levels.**”*<sup>261</sup>

*“**The governance structure of the European Border and Coast Guard must guarantee that the activities of Frontex and national border and coast guard authorities are fully aligned with the EU’s political objectives in border and migration management, and that they follow the policy line related to internal security.**”*<sup>262</sup>

*“The shared responsibility is complemented by **the underlying duty of all EBCG actors (Frontex and national authorities) to cooperate in good faith and by the overarching obligation to exchange information within the EBCG community.**”*<sup>263</sup>

Firstly, it reinforces a cooperation requirement for the community towards achieving an aim. This ties together the persuasive and coercive sides of the securitisation act. It establishes the norm with a neutral appearance with the choice of a simple demand calling for action with “need to”. The second quote interestingly refers to a “governance structure” that “must guarantee” actions and alignment. Therefore, it does not directly address the subjects of the EBCG, but instead to an inorganic portion of the community. The last quote reiterates the fourth portion of the “shared responsibility” premise. The TO EIBM strategy relates to the necessity to cooperate:

*“**A fully integrated approach is the only viable way to cope with the ever evolving complexity of managing the EU’s external borders.**”*<sup>264</sup>

Here, the official definition of EIBM<sup>265</sup> is viewed as the systematic solution, but from a coercive perspective. Thus, it implies a message of a certain destiny for the EBCG.

Apart from these views, two perspectives on fundamental human rights emerge from three interviewees:

*“(Responding to a question on the clarity of human rights in preparatory legislative work) Let’s say that, it is a certain, like more **generally in human rights charters that their binding nature, that has now come into focus...**to a large extent, it is politics and decisions related to that in the background and yes, **these... have now been challenged, that is it necessary to comply to all human rights charters, to which Finland has agreed to and all the different***

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<sup>259</sup> Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals, Official Journal of the European Union, L 348, Vol. 51, 24 December 2008. [<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:2008:348:FULL&from=EN>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>260</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Recital 25.

<sup>261</sup> European Commission (2022a), p. 1.

<sup>262</sup> Ibid. p. 5.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid. p. 9.

<sup>264</sup> Frontex (2019), p. 19.

<sup>265</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896. Article 3.

articles that... **must they always be complied with in all situations...** this has now been put into question.”<sup>266</sup>

“...we need to have these fundamental rights monitors... And this is something that might trickle down from Europe to Member States as well...**some might think, okay, this might limit our freedom or limit our room of our margin of operations. But it shouldn't be like that, because in the end, this is what Europe is about.** So, it would be a really, really good thing if this not only stays at European at the agency side of the EBCG, but trickles down to the entirety of the EBCG community ... to come to a certain harmonization of values of a certain shared culture in that regard, because in that sense, the strategic culture is already there... this really has been agreed upon. This is something that is being shared. Sometimes there are challenges of course, but it is already there, actually.”<sup>267</sup>

**“Here there often exists this dilemma** that however illegal migrants nearly always apply for asylum, so **do we receipt all the applications or do we attempt to prevent illegal border crossings**, such as Poland and Greece have demonstrated, but on the other hand **we take off on the topic from a legalistic view, similarly as Frontex** primarily does that asylum seekers are received. Then of course **if the politicians decide on something else and the legal basis allows for a different approach**, we can act in a different way, but **this dilemma influences the background politics**. I think this issue is in a pretty significant role in my mind.”<sup>268</sup>

Here, two lines of thought emerge, which can be labelled in two groups. First, as the “legalistic view” as the third interviewee demonstrates. Second, as a situational view, which is apparent from the first interviewee. The first can be observed as monitoring a narrow scope of interpretation, while the second one carries a broader scope considering other factors simultaneously, perhaps such as national security. Both the first and third interviewee observe the situation in a broad sense, where the latter interestingly presents the notion as a “dilemma”. Clearly, the second interviewee is a proponent for the “legalistic view” with the argument that “this is what Europe is about”, connecting the discussion with the EU Treaties. Regardless of the observed views however, both imply the demand to comply with fundamental human rights, which was established in the Regulation.

#### 4.2.2 A discourse on agency

A discourse on agency emerged from the data. Agency<sup>269</sup> is a viewpoint related to how power is continuously exerted through the hierarchy of governance. Primarily, this relates to EIBM with its components<sup>270</sup>. EIBM contains a sedimented structure, where newer issues are built on older provisioned issues. This, in itself defines the incrementally expanded reach of EIBM. The data was structured in the following analysis structure:

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<sup>266</sup> Interviewee 1.

<sup>267</sup> Interviewee 2.

<sup>268</sup> Interviewee 5.

<sup>269</sup> In this context, this does not refer to Frontex. Instead, in a broader meaning as “the capacity, condition, or state of acting or of exerting power” or “a person or thing through which power is exerted or an end is achieved” in Merriam-Webster online dictionary: Agency. [<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/agency>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>270</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896. Article 3.

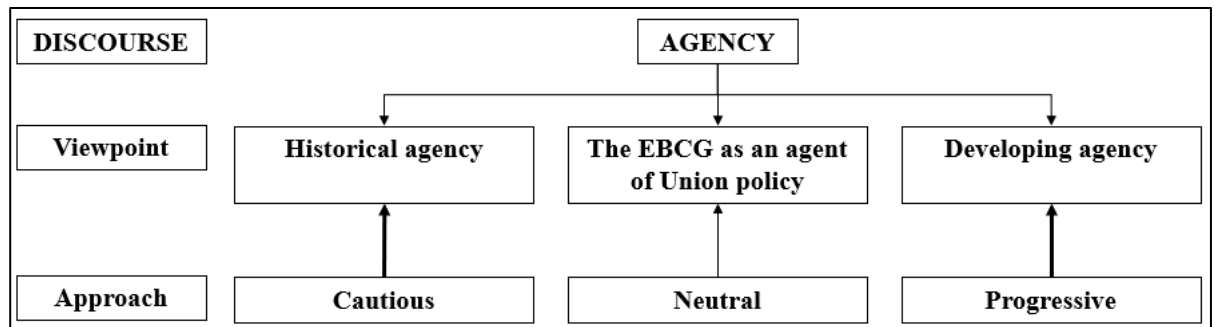


Figure 8 The theory-guided analysis structure for a discourse on agency

### The cautious approach

A set of four parts from the official documentation were found to contain the cautious approach:

***“To ensure coherent European integrated border management, the Agency shall facilitate and render more effective the application of Union measures relating to the management of the external borders, in particular Regulation (EU) 2016/399, and of Union measures relating to return.”**<sup>271</sup>*

***“The Agency shall support the application of Union measures relating to the management of the external borders and the enforcement of return decisions by reinforcing, assessing and coordinating the actions of Member States and by providing technical and operational assistance in the implementation of those measures and in return matters. The Agency shall not support any measures or be involved in any activities related to controls at internal borders. The Agency shall be fully responsible and accountable for any decision it takes and for any activity for which it is solely responsible under this Regulation.”**<sup>272</sup>*

***“Effective implementation of TO EIBM at European and national level carries the need for efficient coordination to enable the proper exchange of experiences, best practices, arising needs and new developments.”**<sup>273</sup>*

***“The Agency is expected to face challenging circumstances in the coming years as regards fulfilling exceptional needs for recruiting and retaining qualified staff from the broadest possible geographical basis.”**<sup>274</sup>*

Highlights of the Regulation pointed to the continuing function of Frontex as a facilitator and supporter, with its limitations and responsibilities. Furthermore, the TO EIBM strategy implicitly directed a demand for Frontex to succeed in these tasks. In this sense, a parallel to the original role of Frontex from 2004 is visible. Interestingly, the notion of “challenging circumstances” is a single mention of its kind in the Regulation. One can view this as a voice of realism, which relates directly to the outstanding new task of recruiting a vast amount of Frontex statutory staff for category one of the SC. The European Commission policy document did not yield findings in the cautious approach. An apparent reason is that the multiannual strategic policy cycle itself is a new mode of discourse in the EBCG.

<sup>271</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Article 5(3).

<sup>272</sup> Ibid. Article 7(4).

<sup>273</sup> Frontex (2019), p. 24.

<sup>274</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Recital 111.

Apparent criticism to the introduction was evident from one interviewee on two occasions:

*“...in the case of the **EBCG 2.0 Regulation**, the 2019 Regulation, **there was a team of four people that actually wrote it... in the B1 entity in DG HOME**. So, if you think of this, you had **four people that had some sort of a common vision of what they wanted to achieve with this Regulation**. We got for a few years now until actually Spring this year, we **had a chance to actually directly speak to the people who have written this to understand what was the... as in a sense to explain it, the spirit and the letter of the Regulation**. Now all the people, **all those four people** that were heavily involved and writing this and thinking before they started writing it. They **have all already left**...So, suddenly **the institutional memory has moved from the Commission to actually the Agency** and Agency was not there, and of course the Member States, **but we were not, none of us were there when this whole thinking of this was done**. So, I think that is a big challenge... **if you don't get a sort of grace period of actually understanding and having dialogue on what was actually meant with different Articles and how things connect, then you end up in a situation I think where we are right now, where we've gone full speed ahead.**”<sup>275</sup>*

*“So, I think, I think what happened was that and I think it's also reflected in the way we tend to look at, in the Management Board. And here speaking about, on the Agency's side, there was, not all **the whole Agency was not aligned in terms of this is what is expected of us by this and this date**. **It was down to different entities to assess what their role would be...being also, brutally honest from the previous Management there was no proper steer** to what, how and how we should tackle this and **how we should plan to do this**. So, that goes down to sort of a Management culture that probably was probably lacking in experience. At how to deal with such a big change, because ultimately it's a huge change Management project...At the Management board level, I think it manifested in a similar way...”<sup>276</sup>*

The first two quotes relate to the European Commission and Frontex, where the interviewee narrates the story of introducing the current Regulation just prior to its entering into force. The interviewee underlines the condensed scale that governance and legal preparation entails by highlighting a group of four experts. On a micro-level expert group setting it appears to be a straightforward process to frame each other's sense-making and arrive at an agreement. However, when scaling that up to an organisational level, one must account for bureaucracy where the effect of the legal provision shifts to processes, which then may need to be adjusted. Apart from mentioning the improper change management, the interviewee implies the failure of the management for facilitating the necessary sense-making step prior to implementation. The interviewee reflects this on an EBCG scale:

*“So, I think... for sure Management Board Representatives knew about it, had experienced it, but I think the Management Board as a collective had not really experienced such a big step change. So, here too, I think **a lot of focus became focus was on just meeting deadlines, meeting things that are required by the Regulation**, so to comply, **it was more focused on to comply rather than to think**. So, as a result although there were quite a few of us saying that **the first thing we need to do is actually establish an operational concept** because that's what you have Nationally and every National quality and the more aggregated National level, **you have some sort of a doctrine** that dictates how you **how you will operate and how you will deal with different types of challenges**. And the... that that discussion has not happened until now.”<sup>277</sup>*

*“...I think, the way it was manifested in the Agency, at the Management Board level was **the fact that Agency lacked experience in huge change management... and Management Board***

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<sup>275</sup> Interviewee 3.

<sup>276</sup> Ibid.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid.

*itself I think was not, as a collective, as a whole was not necessarily either. They **didn't know how to do it either, because I think no Management Board has ever managed anything like this.** So, more focus on compliance than necessarily thinking, what do we want...it then distracted us from the sort of more thinking of what what is it... What is the Standing Corps should do? That big... a simple, but very, very big question.*"<sup>278</sup>

The latter two quotes connect the challenge of preparing for the implementation of the current Regulation. The interviewee reflects on the numerous normative exhortations (shall, should, etc.) in the Regulation when speaking about the compliance issue. The interviewee extends the view of failure to the MB in change management, but mitigates it by reflecting on the extraordinary nature of the situation. The change management issue is clearer with the external findings and recommendations of the European Court of Auditors that influence not only Frontex, but the EBCG at large as well<sup>279</sup>. The interviewee viewed that compliance was prioritised over the fundamental question about the new operational concept. Another interviewee stressed an explicit demand for prioritisation:

*"(Describing the current strategic decision-making situation on operational resources) ...we strive to comply with all the aspects in the Regulation, and simultaneously to fulfil all Member States' demands, including need that are provided in the political steering. **This is one kind of a challenge, so that a certain dynamic approach should be incorporated more, a certain kind of brutal decision-making, prioritisation and choice...** At the end of the day, **no one is absolutely satisfied with the situation**, the operational and technical support that Frontex provides towards Member States, its broadness in its continuity.*"<sup>280</sup>

Here, the notion of choice may ultimately be necessary for forming the new operational concept. One interviewee stresses the MS primacy on the matter:

*"(responding to the formation of an operational concept) Well, the work is still unfinished...and **likely there are different viewpoints on what kind of tasks can the Standing Corps staff members be given, originating from our legislation what they are allowed to conduct and I argue that as long as the responsibility of border security remains on an individual Member State then it definitely limits how, in national plans, tasks are dared to be given to the Standing Corps...**And for example, if you consider the deterioration of **the situation in Poland** (in 2021), for instance, they didn't even want Frontex's Standing Corps there to assist. Of course, **they officially announced that they don't need that support, but likely the real reason was that they didn't want extra witnesses to monitor their own authorities.**"*<sup>281</sup>

One key highlight is the implicit stance of threat on how "tasks are dared to be given". The open connection to the Polish example may underline this lack of trust towards the SC for actual operational use. The insinuation at the end may indicate towards broader differences in the EBCG sphere:

*"Well, as long as there doesn't exist an operational demand in actual situations then indeed it is likely the best and probably the only way. The actual content on what is actually done there can definitely be developed. But **I bet the best method would be to utilise it (the Standing***

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<sup>278</sup> Interviewee 3.

<sup>279</sup> European Court of Auditors: *Frontex's support to external border management: not sufficiently effective to date Special report No. 08*, 2021. [<https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2865/237222>], accessed 15.3.2023, pp. 40-57, 61-75.

<sup>280</sup> Interviewee 6.

<sup>281</sup> Interviewee 5.

*Corps) in an actual operational situation, which is of course not out of the question, but it is hoped that we don't need to go there.*"<sup>282</sup>

One interviewee identifies the gradual and unchanged nature of the provisions:

*"Actually from, there were numbers and the we're, I think, the first Regulation with that it applied already the obligations was 2006 Regulation rapid border intervention teams... And there were set in the Regulation, but it was not clearly related to kind of financial incentives."*<sup>283</sup>

*"...I wanted to comment on your your previous remarks about the short term of the Regulations. I mean, the Regulations in general and in, in basic essence, have remained the same so directives as the main principle is written into them all. Starting from the very beginning."*<sup>284</sup>

The interviewee draws parallels to the origins of formalised cooperation and its continuity to the current Regulation. Currently, the majority of the SC personnel are formed by MS quotas and this has remained. An interviewee describes the slow and progressive nature over time:

*"This sort of reflects on, if you look at the slowness of development, if you look at, if you compare 2005 and 2023, now, so how much or how little has evolutionary development actually happened. But progression of course has happened significantly, so in that sense. And the direction where it has developed, my view is that there exists this common will. But this will is continuously progressed with cautious steps. Because, after all it is a matter of national security and and at the national level, it is a matter of handling national law in an appropriate manner."*<sup>285</sup>

This can be described as paradigmatic in the sense that "national security" interests remain at the core of the modern EBCG. One interviewee continues on a preference of gradual development over drastic measures:

*"...for example, if we know that in the Regulation the, our goal is set that, that by 2027, the European Border and Coast Guard Standing Corps is 10,000 strong. And if for example, we now start telling that the Frontex own staff, for example, category one officers, the number is considerably lower, or the system should be created in other way. Let's get rid of short-term experts. Let's maintain only long-term experts and so on. So, in this sense, in this sense, it will create a lot of misunderstandings and also doesn't help in creating or developing further this joint culture. Either on operational level or also on strategic level..."*<sup>286</sup>

The interviewee's scenario draws parallels to a situation where an employee is laid off at a private company is evident. One conclusion of this scene is the premise that culture is a shared phenomenon and that a certain operational culture may coexist with strategic culture and draws caution to further review outcomes. The final quote points toward different communities within the EBCG.

*"...at least what we could do in Finland, I don't think there is any other mean except, what has likely been accounted for already, is to be focus attention on making the issue of applying to the Frontex or Standing Corps positions as attractive as possible for the staff, to motivate them towards that and to the furthest extent possible introduce this issue at all levels' of basic and supplementary training the fact that aside from being the Finnish Border Guard that all of our staff members are also staff members of the European Border and Coast Guard, to somehow introduce this dualism... And then also in cooperation issues... not only related*

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<sup>282</sup> Interviewee 5.

<sup>283</sup> Interviewee 4.

<sup>284</sup> Ibid.

<sup>285</sup> Interviewee 6.

<sup>286</sup> Interviewee 4.

*to the Standing Corps and also in bilateral frameworks in cooperation with other collegial authorities are also a part of this, that we would **reinforce this idea that after all that we are all part of the same entity.***<sup>287</sup>

The interviewee makes a clear distinction between the EBCG and national authority by promoting the keyword “dualism” in training settings. However, this notion is contradicted by the final comment on similarity and by also promoting European career opportunities in the beginning.

### The neutral approach

The Regulation reasons the objective and achieving it:

***“The objective of Union policy in the field of external border management is to develop and implement European integrated border management at national and Union level, which is a necessary corollary to the free movement of persons within the Union and is a fundamental component of an area of freedom, security and justice.”***<sup>288</sup>

***“To ensure the effective implementation of European integrated border management and increase the efficiency of Union return policy, a European Border and Coast Guard should be established. It should be provided with the requisite financial and human resources and equipment.”***<sup>289</sup>

The premise of two Union policies, EIBM and the AFSJ, being inextricably linked is clear. However, it places the former first in order to allow the latter to occur. To enable this, the EBCG that was already established in 2016 should be established (again). This second EBCG is the agent of this packaged deal. The policy document discusses this agency:

***“The development of a European integrated border management strategy is a responsibility of the Union institutions. Consequently, it is essential that there is effective cooperation between the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council in establishing a political framework to direct European integrated border management.”***<sup>290</sup>

In a literal sense, no EIBM strategy document exists. Instead, it is a collection of common EBCG and national strategies, which are strictly directed from the European Commission in the multiannual strategic policy cycle. This process of collection is indeed initiated by the European Commission’s communication, formed after trilogy negotiations. However, one may view that the responsibility of the process lies with the apolitical managers and experts at European and national levels, not with the Union institutions. Therefore, this message appears to be internal, oriented to the EU trilogy for continuous governance purposes.

The TO EIBM strategy underlines the stated aim of EIBM agency:

***“As such the EBCG shall ensure national and international coordination and cooperation among all relevant authorities and agencies involved in border management and trade facilitation to establish effective, efficient and integrated border management at the external EU border, in order to reach the objective of open, but well controlled and secure borders.”***<sup>291</sup>

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<sup>287</sup> Interviewee 5.

<sup>288</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Recital 1.

<sup>289</sup> Ibid. Recital 13.

<sup>290</sup> European Commission (2022a), p. 3.

<sup>291</sup> Frontex (2019), p. 20.

*“The European Commission in its Communication of May 2018 states that **EIBM serves both migration and security policies of the Union.**”*<sup>292</sup>

This purpose of EIBM is stated for two aims, which is a reiteration of the connectedness found in the Regulation. The former normative exhortation style is a clear requirement for succeeding in these EIBM aims, which does not leave room for failure.

Three interviewees reflected on the need for distinguishing politics from decision-making and implementation:

*(Responding to a question on political culture input) “I think with, for example, with the matters related to Fundamental Rights and Fundamental Rights monitoring, in Frontex activities, I think from that angle, it came into the discussions more and more and these discussions are definitely definitely influenced by politicians...But, on the other hand, **what is still important is that the Agency being operational Agency is not so politicized** and I think that this is **the balance, balance needs to be somehow in the middle, set in the middle somehow and, and in that sense, there is a lot to do not only in the Agency, and the Agency’s leadership, but but also in the Member States, how much we as organizations and participants in the in the strategic decision-making let in this, let’s say political culture into into the discussions.**”*<sup>293</sup>

*(Responding to the importance of the political dimension) “...they are important, because **they need to provide the mandate, the justifications and legal basis** to where we found our activities, but similarly the roles need to be clear that both nationally and EU-wide the authority that has **the operational responsibility should have the freedom of action to handle the operational issues without the interference of a micromanagement kind from the political level, what unfortunately occurs both nationally and at the EU level.**”*<sup>294</sup>

*“(Responding to the condition of and adequacy of current political steering in the EBCG) ...my personal view is that it is sufficient and well-functioning level, **because too much the political steering and splitting decision-making, the risk is that the focus breaks down...**”*<sup>295</sup>

The issue of politics may reflect to the former premise that EIBM carries profound potential impact for the broad security and migration policies. The interviewees clearly view that limiting the influence of politics from the EBCG, even when they agree on a necessary compromise on the issue.

## The progressive approach

The Regulation states the progressive approach clearly in two recitals:

*“**It is necessary** to monitor the crossing of the external borders efficiently, to address migratory challenges and potential future threats at the external borders, **to ensure a high level of internal security within the Union, to safeguard the functioning of the Schengen area and to respect the overarching principle of solidarity.** Those actions and objectives should be accompanied by the proactive management of migration, including the necessary measures in third countries. **To that end, it is necessary to consolidate the European Border and Coast Guard and to further expand the mandate of the Agency.**”*<sup>296</sup>

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<sup>292</sup> Ibid. p. 20.

<sup>293</sup> Interviewee 4.

<sup>294</sup> Interviewee 5.

<sup>295</sup> Interviewee 6.

<sup>296</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Recital 9.

***“European integrated border management requires integrated planning between the Member States and the Agency for border and return operations in order to prepare responses to challenges at the external borders, for contingency planning and for coordinating the long-term development of capabilities both in terms of recruitment and training and in terms of the acquisition and development of equipment.”***<sup>297</sup>

The key orientations of a necessity and a requirement contain strong implications. Furthermore, these link to the issue of consolidation of the legal entity and expansion of Frontex’s mandate, which extends to the topic of integrated planning. Progressiveness is evident with the implicit message of no other viable alternative. The topic of requirement extends to the mention of European culture in the Regulation:

***“The Agency and the Member States, in particular their training academies, should cooperate closely with respect to the training of the standing corps, while ensuring that training programmes are harmonised and foster the common values enshrined in the Treaties. The Agency should be able, after obtaining the approval of the management board, to set up an Agency training centre to facilitate further the inclusion of a common European culture in the training provided.”***<sup>298</sup>

Harmonisation and inclusion refer directly to aligning the training curricula to EU standards. This links with common values and fundamental human rights originating from the EU Treaties. Again, as a requirement this all is a goal and where the MB has authority. The final reference to “a common European culture” is insinuated to extend to the whole EBCG through “fostering common values”. The Regulation points to this as a process and it is broad enough to allow for further details of how the dissemination of this “European culture” will be done.

The official documentation reflected the new multiannual strategic policy cycle in detail:

***“The effective implementation of European integrated border management by the European Border and Coast Guard should be ensured by means of a multiannual strategic policy cycle. The multiannual cycle should set out an integrated, unified and continuous process for providing strategic guidelines to all the relevant actors at Union level and at national level in the area of border management and return so that those actors are able to implement European integrated border management in a coherent manner.”***<sup>299</sup>

***“1. The Commission and the European Border and Coast Guard shall ensure the effectiveness of European integrated border management by means of a multiannual strategic policy cycle that is adopted in accordance with the procedure laid down in paragraph 4.  
2. The multiannual strategic policy for the European integrated border management shall set out how the challenges in the area of border management and return are to be addressed in a coherent, integrated and systematic manner. It shall set out the policy priorities and provide strategic guidelines for a period of five years in relation to the components set out in Article 3.”***<sup>300</sup>

***“The Multiannual Strategic Policy cycle will guide how the European Border and Coast Guard should effectively operate as a structure over the next five years and implement the European integrated border management.”***<sup>301</sup>

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<sup>297</sup> Ibid. Recital 17.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid. Recital 77.

<sup>299</sup> Ibid. Recital 16.

<sup>300</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Article 8(1,2).

<sup>301</sup> European Commission (2022a), p. 1.

*“In addition, it (the European Commission) will seek the views of the institutions on how to set out an integrated, unified and continuous process for providing strategic guidelines to all the relevant EBCG and other European and national actors to ensure a coherent EIBM implementation.”<sup>302</sup>*

*“The EIBM policy cycle has as a strategic objective to determine how the European Border and Coast Guard should address the challenges in the area of border management and return in a coherent, integrated and systematic manner.”<sup>303</sup>*

*“Frontex is tasked with establishing a technical and operational strategy for European integrated border management, by decision of its Management Board and based on a proposal from the Frontex executive director. That strategy is to be prepared in close cooperation with Member States and the Commission. The strategy must be in line with Article 3 of the EBCG Regulation .... It should build on the Commission’s Communication on a multiannual strategic policy on EIBM.”<sup>304</sup>*

Several key themes emerge from these texts. These relate to expressing the character and function of the multiannual strategic policy cycle. Firstly, the multiannual strategic policy cycle is itself viewed as the agent to “ensure” the coherence of EIBM. Secondly, it views the EBCG as “a structure” and draw parallels to an “architecture”<sup>305</sup>. Thirdly, the TO EIBM constitutes itself on top of the European Commission’s foundation. Finally, the keywords of integration, unification and continuation point to a singular system approach on the matter. All of this appears as a process- and mechanistic-orientated macro-level description. One can draw parallels to industrial engineering management and a technocratic worldview<sup>306</sup>. Against this backdrop, adhering to “the main principles and concepts of EIBM” appears prescriptive:

*“The multiannual strategic policy needs to be guided by the main principles and concepts of European integrated border management which stem directly from the EBCG Regulation and have as an objective to allow the European Border and Coast Guard to operate effectively and in full compliance with the legal framework.”<sup>307</sup>*

The TO EIBM strategy weighs in on its purpose in this process:

*“The purpose of the TO EIBM is to operationalise EIBM in a comprehensive manner at EU and national levels... the TO EIBM is designed to ensure a long term efficiency of the EBCG as a multilevel entity”<sup>308</sup>*

*“Thus, the TO EIBM, based on the legal and policy frameworks of the EU, consequently:*

- Establishes common vision, mission and values of EBCG;*
- Summarises the strategic context for the operationalisation of the EIBM at the internal-external nexus;*
- Describes how the implementation of the TO EIBM should be governed at European level;*
- Operationalises the level of ambition for EIBM, set by the Commission and Council, through strategic objectives and specific objectives, which are to be implemented at European and national level<sup>3</sup>;*

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<sup>302</sup> Ibid. p. 1.

<sup>303</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>304</sup> Ibid. p. 3.

<sup>305</sup> Ibid. pp. 5, 9.

<sup>306</sup> Technocracy is specifically “management of society by technical experts” in Merriam-Webster online dictionary: *Technocracy*. [<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/technocracy>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>307</sup> European Commission (2022a), p. 9.

<sup>308</sup> Frontex (2019), p. 9.

- *Proposes, on the basis of those objectives, a series of technical and operational actions and activities along with their respective expected added value, guiding the implementation of EIBM at European or national level.*<sup>309</sup>

*“The common goal shall be a comprehensive, coherent, updated and dynamic EIBM concept, to be regularly reviewed on the basis of achieved results, where all partners involved jointly analyse, pool their knowledge and cooperate to the highest extent aiming at facilitating orderly border traffic and successfully combating all forms of cross-border crime, thus preserving and protecting the common area of freedom, security and justice.”*<sup>310</sup>

The texts describe operationalisation through a goal named as the “comprehensive, coherent, updated and dynamic EIBM concept” that supports the EBCG. The list of four outcomes emerging from the TO EIBM strategy act with several functions. The issues on an organisational vision, mission, values and strategic context are descriptive communications to members and stakeholders of the EBCG. Secondly, the issue of governance acts as a communication back towards the EU institutions, which is reflected in the operationalisation of the European ambition in concrete terms. Finally, the proposal of particular actions communicates to national levels around Europe. Thus, it communicates a translation of the European Commission’s communication in multiple directions.

The interviewees provided input to the progressive approach. The first relates to the adoption of an operational concept:

*“...if I’m not mistaken, I mean, Frontex has not has not yet adopted an operational concept even... there are so many things that are still under development... I think the exercise has now begun on on the reflecting on what constitutes or what should constitute the operational concept within within terms of of the Standing Corps of Frontex operations... this operational concept... should also have an important aspect of defining what... Frontex operations are all about...indeed Member States constitute the EBCG, sure, but there should be also something at Frontex level, because it does exist.”*<sup>311</sup>

*(Responding to the existence of a voluntary tendency to operate similarly) “Well. I believe it should, but this this really touches upon the very essence of of the developing process as we speak... for instance, when we speak of, well in operational terms, okay, we do have the Standing Corps, and it’s a nice term, yeah, but in the end, those are people on the field and they carry their own luggage from... their own Member State with their own culture, with their own approach, of course. So, really acting in a European architecture will take some time.”*<sup>312</sup>

Although the interviewee acknowledges the strong ongoing development drive carrying its implications, the interviewee views the potential in this situation. Particularly, the last sentence about recognising the existence of a “Frontex level” in this legal entity points to the SC and how it is managed. Especially the first category of Frontex statutory staff. However, the interviewee acknowledges the need to develop this gradually over time. Another interviewee links this opportunity to mend the ongoing development:

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<sup>309</sup> Ibid. pp. 9-10.

<sup>310</sup> Ibid. p. 26.

<sup>311</sup> Interviewee 2.

<sup>312</sup> Interviewee 2.

*“..., I think in a nutshell **I think we're all struggling to deal with clarity of how these things should connect** in different instruments that we have in the the Regulations, how different instruments and different policy areas should connect. And I think with the last point, **the Regulation is now up for evaluation. And if we can straighten some of these things out in the Regulation, with the help of Commission**, then I think... then maybe we will stand a better chance of proving the effectiveness...”<sup>313</sup> (cut off by third-party intervention)*

Thus, despite the adversity that this rapid change has brought, the review process in 2023<sup>314</sup> is seen as an opportune moment. Although the issue of proving something was cut off, the same interviewee continues:

*“...we have an opportunity to demonstrate that policymakers in Brussels set these goals first to deal with, migratory pressure, cross border crime, returns et cetera. And this will be how we translated that into performance indicators and this is what we actually delivered. And then we can demonstrate and now also analyse why things went better or worse. But **that is a big opportunity to actually show, where all this Brussels machinery** with all these fancy words that get translated through the Agency and Member States. Again, **with lots of fancy words and not necessarily been that specific to something that is actually specific**. And that actually relates to the the letter exactly comes down to the daily work of every person in all the EBCG.”<sup>315</sup>*

*“So, connecting, that also then to the long-term planning and also **in terms of looking at another opportunities, proper opportunity**, and very much forward looking **it's linked to re-search. Is that the agency has, in particular two agreements with the Commission we have an opportunity to influence** the programming of secure **Border Management related re-search**. And we also have the opportunity to evaluate concrete project proposals against our needs... So, **in steering those investments and suddenly steering investment sources for Member States acquisition** of equipment and investment in logistics or infrastructure et cetera. **That's another opportunity to actually consolidate and further integrate**. So, I think there are lots and lots of opportunities. **I just think that we now have a small window to actually demonstrate that we can actually meet those opportunities.**”<sup>316</sup>*

The interviewee describes the topic as a comprehensive issue of contemporary opportunity. These are portrayed through an eagerness that reflect on broad and particular examples. The same interviewee points to the role of the MB working group on EIBM in this opportunity:

*“...now we've converted this kind of IBM working group into a Management Board working group, which means it has a formal role. Under the Management Board, it actually reports to the Management Board and it's not really replying. And **now I think the key thing here within the EBCG, not only the Agency, is to connect all the the work being done both in Agency and Member States... But we need to connect them to the bigger picture.**”<sup>317</sup>*

The emphasis is on the importance of linking these developing issues. The interviewee relates the opportunity into a systems approach that the previous “EIBM concept” appears to describe.

Finally, one interviewee viewed a possibility for parallel progression:

*(Responding to the presence of regionalism as a type of supplementary cooperation in development) “**I think it is there, but it needs to be even further developed**, because as we all know this, the latest Regulation and the implementation of the most recent changes in the Standing Corps, especially...but **we still need to work on further on those matters which concern especially in current security environment. Of how to be of support to each other very quickly. So, if something develops in one, let's say closest country, the other is available for providing***

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<sup>313</sup> Interviewee 3.

<sup>314</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Article 121.

<sup>315</sup> Interviewee 3.

<sup>316</sup> Ibid.

<sup>317</sup> Interviewee 3.

*immediate support while waiting, then additional support by, organized by Frontex. I think this is the main main idea for for us, I mean, working in the region and I think that **we still need to keep this regional approach** close to, **about ourselves**, because we are similar we we have similar neighbor, neighbors, and I think this is still still very relevant.*"<sup>318</sup>

The viewpoint of cooperation with neighbouring MS's by fact of proximity is referred to as regionalism. It lays on a potentially longstanding foundation of bilateral cooperation and it falls into the sphere of EIBM<sup>319</sup> as well. This appears to contradict the previously introduced centralised approach what the majority of the documentation appears to promote.

#### 4.2.3 Summaries on the discourses of legitimacy and agency

##### A discourse on legitimacy

The persuading approach implied optimism towards the EBCG. It focused its introduction in the EBCG as an important added value for maintaining the Schengen area. Furthermore, Frontex was viewed as a positive supplementary element for the benefit of the MS. This was communicated to the alleged audience, who support the Schengen acquis in its current state. The securitisation act was perceived in a positive protective perspective.

The balancing approach can be viewed ambivalently in relation to the issues of continuity and change. It recognised the EBCG consisting of its primary parts: the wilful sovereign MS. It acknowledged the MS stances and considered them, but also justified support for the existence of the EBCG as well. It focused on the description on the shared responsibility premise that appeared to contain four distinct portions. The MB was identified as a central governing body in the EBCG. The MB appeared to be central in the creation of common vision, mission and values.

The coercive approach viewed the EBCG from a stance of authority. The official documentation was observed to be strictly normative. One main argument was the recognition of the common approach as the only viable alternative. This was conducted as a part of the securitisation act. It established that risk scenarios ought to be controlled through isolating the liable MS. Compliance with fundamental human rights was clearly presented from the official documentation, but practical counter-arguments are still implied.

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<sup>318</sup> Interviewee 4.

<sup>319</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Article 3(1 d).

## A discourse on agency

The cautious approach viewed EIBM as a continuous process. In official documentation, this was observed in locations where activities or implementation practices appeared to continue unchanged. The issue of the continuing facilitating function of Frontex was established in the documentation. Caution was clearly observable from the interviewees from a historical outlook implying scepticism on two issues. Firstly, the quick introduction of the current Regulation and the role of the MB in this change. Secondly, the provision where MS continue to retain main responsibility, which appears to depict a paradigmatic setting since 2004.

Apart from the process-oriented cautious and progressive approaches, the neutral approach viewed EIBM as an overall and persisting aim. Passive observation of an overall EIBM strategy and a need to be successful were found. Finally, the interviewees appeared to agree on maintaining EBCG decision-making and activities apolitical.

The progressive approach was found in the data where EIBM carried tones of enthusiasm and haste, which emphasised opportunity or new potential. It embraced change and viewed EIBM as a process as in the cautious approach. At times it rested on assumptions of success and was silent on alternatives.

Interestingly, one interviewee presented the notion of a “basic direction” that accounts the procedural aspects of a discourse on agency in a general way:

*“So, I feel that it is completely natural that these steps are being taken, I view that any sorts of steps back have not been taken in a significant sense, **it is just a matter of how short and in what direction, but the direction has been quite similar**, so that it goes in its **basic direction**. The question about if the development is **correct or incorrect or otherwise** is a viewpoint of the Member States, but I see in this sense that generally there exists the statement that the direction is correct, **someone can argue** that the steps are **too slow** or they are **just correct** or someone can argue that we are developing **too quickly** in some direction, **but... the journey continues, so to say.**”<sup>320</sup>*

### 4.2.4 Contextual thematic groups

#### Historical context

Two issues emerged on historical context. They are the influence of the origins of Frontex and the influence of history on the contemporary. These are presented in consecutive paragraphs below.

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<sup>320</sup> Interviewee 6.

One interviewee emphasises that Frontex has been an official forum for experts in the border management field:

*“I think big part of it is, is with the establishment of Frontex in 2004 Regulation...But I think that somewhere starting from 2006, it gradually developed and then if you meet colleagues, meeting by meeting, you get familiar with their concerns. Sometimes you form, let’s say, a group of people who are like-minded on certain topics. With that it grew all, I consider, it’s evidently from that, these moments.”<sup>321</sup>*

This idea has continued for nearly twenty years now and has evolved since. This extends to sharing best practices, such as in the field of travel document examination through competitions<sup>322</sup> and through a common European high-level education scheme, as in the EJMSBM programme<sup>323</sup>. Apart from the evolution, one interviewee sees commonalities with the past, on the decision-making level and through personal influence:

*“...if you look at... Frontex itself has only existed for the last, more than ten, well, fifteen years, actually, but... during that time it has experienced very big changes, generally always through these regulatory changes and the organisation is very different now than what it was in during its first years. But I think that the base for the strategic culture has already been built already then in the early times and, it is likely been formed from this general that has been EU organisations’ culture, which includes staff from multiple countries, from many governance cultures and also there is this premise that especially in strategic decision-making, for example if we speak about the management board level, we strive for consensus.”<sup>324</sup>*

*“On the other hand, probably Ilkka Laitinen as the first executive director that has probably with his personal touch brought this kind of Finnish Border Guard-like strategic culture, which is evident in the Warsaw units that I have been in contact with in the early times as well as in the recent years.”<sup>325</sup>*

The influence of history is reflected in one interviewer’s views on recognition, which may link with the necessary “sustainability” feature of constructing a strategic culture:

*“...the work has started already within this (MB) working group (on EIBM) and one of the main topics was especially at that what is the border guard culture. But one important thing, I think, also in the culture is that how do we remember how do we recognize the history of the organization? I didn’t mention it before, but it is also about how to, how do we remember the history of the organization? And how do we inform about that history and how do we celebrate it as well?”<sup>326</sup>*

*“(Responding to a statement on necessary longevity for developing strategic culture) Yeah, it is sustainability. I mean, sustainability of the organization and and the system as such, is important influencer of the strategic culture as well.”<sup>327</sup>*

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<sup>321</sup> Interviewee 4.

<sup>322</sup> Frontex: *Frontex Document Olympics 2019*. [<https://frontex.europa.eu/media-centre/news/focus/frontex-document-olympics-WlxewT>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>323</sup> Juknyte-Petreikiene, Inga, Anemona Peres & Viktorija Pokule: European Joint Master’s in Strategic Border Management: Educational Hub for International Cooperation and Networking in EU Border Management, in Jacobs, Gabriele, Ilona Suojanen, Kate E. Horton & Petra Saskia Bayerl (eds.), *International Security Management New Solutions to Complexity*. Springer, Cham 2021, pp. 531–544.

<sup>324</sup> Interviewee 5.

<sup>325</sup> Interviewee 5.

<sup>326</sup> Interviewee 4.

<sup>327</sup> Ibid.

One historical example of this aspect of “sustainability” of strategic culture may be the European border and coast guard day<sup>328</sup>, which so far has been organised for a decade (2010-2019). Overall, these issues highlight the simple importance of the compounding influence of prior decisions, choices and examples on current developments.

The workshop<sup>329</sup> yielded two example that related to continuity. Firstly, Finland does not have a long-standing tradition of utilising physical barrier fence at its eastern border<sup>330</sup>. However, Eastern MS that formerly were part of the Soviet Union in some sense appear to do<sup>331</sup>. Secondly, Separation of power is reflected similarly as in the EU at large, which manifests as issue- and geography-linked blocs. These may originate from historical cooperation settings.

### General context

Two issues were found to be contextual in a general manner without apparent temporal links. They are views on fundamental human rights and parallel MS strategic culture. These are presented in following paragraphs below.

Fundamental human rights are always topical. They are also a critical lens to observe the activities of the EBCG. It is a persistent issue for non-government organisations<sup>332</sup>. Interviewees provided evidence of a situational view on the matter, even though the Regulation is clearly “legalistic”:

*“This Regulation respects the fundamental rights and observes the principles recognised by Articles 2 and 6 TEU and by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (‘the Charter’) ...”*<sup>333</sup>

The Regulation mandates a pool of monitors<sup>334</sup> to be sustained for this cause, but the actual impartiality of this action can be viewed with criticism:

*(Responding to the topic of broadening security and migration policy areas of the EBCG)  
“Yes. Yes. And from this new Regulation came also these fundamental rights’ monitors, I recall 45 monitors, which were not present before... the pool, to which I belong as well, is the reserve pool of forced return monitors and then Frontex has now these... like as a newer issue, a sort of safety mechanism of fundamental rights, these fundamental rights monitors 45 in total and... and these monitors, in my view, monitor all of the operations conducted by Frontex.”*<sup>335</sup>

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<sup>328</sup> Frontex: European border and coast guard day. [<https://ebcgday.eu/>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>329</sup> The results of the workshop are fully presented in appendix 6.

<sup>330</sup> Finnish Border Guard: The eastern border barrier fence. [<https://raja.fi/en/the-eastern-border-barrier-fence>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>331</sup> Niblett, Robin & Gitika Bhardwaj: *Why We Build Walls: 30 Years After the Fall of the Berlin Wall*, [Chatham House online article 8.11.2019]. [<https://www.chathamhouse.org/2019/11/why-we-build-walls-30-years-after-fall-berlin-wall>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>332</sup> Kilpatrick, Jane: *Frontex: more power, no responsibility? Mega-agency lacks real accountability structure*, 2022, [Statewatch online article 19.4.2022]. [<https://www.statewatch.org/analyses/2022/frontex-more-power-no-responsibility-mega-agency-lacks-real-accountability-structure/>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>333</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Recital 103.

<sup>334</sup> Ibid. Article 110.

<sup>335</sup> Interviewee 1.

*“Yes, and that’s a good point that you brought up **safeguarding fundamental human rights**, because in that area **there has been created its own**, sort of, within the EBCG, **partially independent cell** that is handled by the fundamental rights officer and so... **a significant responsible party**, conducting its task 24/7/365 to assess the conduct of the Agency’s operational activities that safeguarding the maintenance of fundamental human rights. So, **in my view it is one of those success stories sort of that it is... it has already shown its effectiveness, when now it has been made capable, the monitoring cell.**”<sup>336</sup>*

*“I heard critique from different settings that, that how... or **it was deemed problematic that the monitor pool and these fundamental rights monitors are, in a sense, a part of Frontex’s organisation... that is it impartial enough?**”<sup>337</sup>*

This is critically perceived in a similar manner in the public, extending also to the sphere of political accountability<sup>338</sup>.

According to the EU’s agency for fundamental rights (FRA)<sup>339</sup>, the Regulation itself is conflicting<sup>340</sup>, as it contains discrepancies by interchangeably using the preferred term “irregular” as well as the apparently undesirable term “illegal”:

*“(Responding to FRA’s reported terminology discrepancy) **I fully agree with FRA that irregular would be the more correct term.**”<sup>341</sup>*

Related to this, the Regulation provides a self-correcting mechanism to suspend, terminate or not launch activities<sup>342</sup>, which is also known as the “due diligence policy”<sup>343</sup>. However, this policy and the overall issue of the fundamental human rights was not the focus of this research. Finally, and a possible parallel viewpoint to understand why the debate on the issue appears to be topical may be related to the term what Helsinki University professor of World politics, Teivo Teivainen, has recently coined<sup>344</sup>. In the context of Danish-Swedish activist Mr. Paludan’s Quran-burning in Stockholm that relates to Finland’s and Sweden’s accession process to NATO, it can be understood as democratic flexibility influenced by security policy interests. He stated that it: “...bends our views on civil liberties, perhaps in an arbitrary way, but it has a security policy argument...”<sup>345</sup>. In a sense, it is a clash of viewpoints in traditional liberal democracies in this contemporary, realistic security environment we currently perceive that influences opinion on fundamental human rights.

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<sup>336</sup> Interviewee 6.

<sup>337</sup> Interviewee 1.

<sup>338</sup> Kilpatrick (2022).

<sup>339</sup> European Union Agency for fundamental rights: *The revised European Border and Coast Guard Regulation and its fundamental rights implications Opinion of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights*, 2018. [<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/22b3cce9-fc85-11ea-b44f-01aa75ed71a1>], accessed 15.3.2023, p. 9.

<sup>340</sup> e.g. *Regulation (EU) 2019/1896*, Recitals 5, 8 and 48 and Articles 2(14), 3(1g, h) and 9(5).

<sup>341</sup> Interviewee 1.

<sup>342</sup> *Regulation (EU) 2019/1896*, Article 46.

<sup>343</sup> Marquis (2021), p. 33.

<sup>344</sup> *Onko Koraanin polttaminen sananvapautta? [Is burning a Quran freedom of speech?]*, Ruben Stiller, YLE podcast, 27.1.2023. [<https://www.areena.yle.fi/podcastit/1-64593631>], accessed 15.3.2023. “Turvallisuuspoliittinen demokratiajousto”.

<sup>345</sup> Ibid.: “...venyttää meidän näkemyksiä kansalaisvapauksista, ehkä vähän epämääräisellä tavalla, mutta sillä on turvallisuuspoliittinen perustelu...”.

The issue of existing parallel MS strategic cultures was demonstrated among the interviewees. This demonstrates the interweaved character of an internal security community formed by MS. One interviewee reflected on a descriptive statement of “alone and together”:

*“Yes, exactly so, exactly so. **Alone and together is good and it observes the ideology that together is supplementary, alone is the skeleton behind there.** Sort of, the marching order, if something must be cut then it is, in my mind at the moment a defining portion of strategic culture that. The marching order is that secure it alone, the opportunity to act and together we gain more effect to that, more effect to that, but the priorities are clear.”<sup>346</sup>*

This notion is central to the parallel nature of national strategic cultures. It relates to the previously introduced, long-standing paradigm that MS join together for synergy benefits on top of an indivisible, primary responsibility. This is highlighted in one interviewee’s comment:

*“(Responding to a notion of “alone and together” that may describe shared responsibility) Yes, exactly so, exactly so. **Alone and together is good and it observes the ideology that together is supplementary, alone is the skeleton behind there.** Sort of, the marching order, if something must be cut then it is, in my mind at the moment a defining portion of strategic culture that. The marching order is that secure it alone, the opportunity to act and together we gain more effect to that, more effect to that, but the priorities are clear.”<sup>347</sup>*

An interviewee adds the relevance of the Council and the European Parliament in this:

*“...institutions also have a very important role to play **Council...** certain working parties over there, like **the working party on frontiers**, which is going over, over the policy document... having discussions, providing comments, input... **they are also elaborating on on more principles...** the justice and home affairs council ... **from home affairs ministers...** have an important role for for the EBCG community in shaping the culture, because this is actually the exact question that is being asked of ministers at that level... the European Parliament... principles play a much, much more important role there... the elements that will be coming from those institutions tend to be a little bit more political, but also more, **more welcoming in creating in this strategic culture perhaps.**”<sup>348</sup>*

With these two quotes, the interviewee describes the nature of the European Union as simultaneously being common and individual. Common EU law provisioning conduct of operations forms a basis for a certain minimum requirement:

*“Of course, we have the Schengen borders code...but still, again, we have... we are **we are not a monolith country**, like if you look at the scale of the United States of America or other countries, **we do have in the end, yeah, a lot of different approaches to do these things.**”<sup>349</sup>*

These “different approaches” link to the influence of the migration phenomenon itself, which may be a source for different cultures:

*“...you have other countries who are dealing mostly with secondary movements. You have the very striking situation at the eastern border of course. And in this regard, I might, I might again, raise a point of, of different existing cultures of Member States.”<sup>350</sup>*

This view of varying approaches to the migration phenomenon may also originate from the varying nature and area of focus of all the MS national authorities involved. This is highlighted by two different interviewees:

*“...I think the strategic culture, may to an extent exist in different National authorities.... for example, **French navy** does the coast guarding functions in France and they're also, I'm*

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<sup>346</sup> Interviewee 6.

<sup>347</sup> Interviewee 6.

<sup>348</sup> Interviewee 2.

<sup>349</sup> Ibid.

<sup>350</sup> Ibid.

*convinced that they have strategic culture that the French police probably don't. So, I think in different National authorities, there's a degree of strategic culture. Plus, we have a link to the longevity of these authorities and the reasons for why they were established and the pride in by, in these services...*<sup>351</sup>

*"... I wouldn't even speak about 30 different Member States in this sense, because within some Member States there are multiple authorities involved...some Member States, such as Spain, where the Police and the Guardia Civil has a clear confrontation, which reflects upon Frontex. So, it should primarily be defined that how many authorities are involved and then count the diversity, it would likely tell a more realistic point than the Member States, but it does reflect in everything and especially in... that if you would expect that naively as a Finn that everyone thinks about the best of this community in a unified manner, it would likely not come true, but instead there exists different agendas..."*<sup>352</sup>

These two views focus on the intra-national level, where the tasks of EIBM are arranged according to several competent authorities that have jurisdiction. In these cases, no clear primary authority has emerged. The view of "different agendas" may be reflected on the level of national authorities' cooperation exposure towards the EBCG in the first place. If the common activities do not form a majority of the national authorities' legal responsibilities, then the potential lower priority to engage in common issues is understandable. Thus, in order to grasp the EBCG's strategic culture, one needs to comprehend the loosely-knit community itself. It is provisioned as the following:

*"The national authorities of Member States responsible for border management, including coast guards to the extent that they carry out border control tasks, the national authorities responsible for return and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency ('the Agency') shall constitute the European Border and Coast Guard."*<sup>353</sup>

In practice, this means a quantity of many more organisations than simply the listed 30 MS. From this position of broad diversity among the actual members of the EBCG, it is apparently straightforward to perceive the emergence of a common strategic culture:

*"So, at the European level still at its infancy. And I think the fact that these, many many Regulations that were taken to where we are, have in a way propelled us now into a space where we can actually speak about strategic culture, common strategic culture. It's still early days, and I think we will gradually see it. And we will speak more about what is common European, and probably less on about... each National... European dimension will for sure feature more if we manage to get it right now. It will definitely feature more."*<sup>354</sup>

Two additional examples on context emerged from the workshop. Firstly, the EBCG appears to be a decentralised community revolving primarily on synergies originating from the Schengen acquis. Secondly, the context of national authorities differs across the community. This is highlighted by different legal jurisdictions, such as on crime investigation<sup>355</sup>.

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<sup>351</sup> Interviewee 3.

<sup>352</sup> Interviewee 5.

<sup>353</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Article 4.

<sup>354</sup> Interviewee 3.

<sup>355</sup> Crime investigation tasks are tasked to the Finnish Border Guard. See *Laki Rajavartiolaitoksen rikostorjunnasta [Act on the Finnish Border Guard's crime investigation] 108/2018*.

## Changing context

Three issues were found to connect in theme of a changing context. They were: a new level of European ambition, integrated planning that points to an integrated approach and finally the operational concept for the Standing Corps. These are presented in order from broad to particular below.

A new level of European ambition, as observed in the progressive approach as a part of the agency discourse, is visible in other parts as well. Firstly, one interviewee points to the forward-looking people drafting the Regulation proposal:

*“... we focus a lot on what is what has been challenging and what could have been done better. And again, in defence of those who actually wrote the Regulation, they had a vision and Europe has not seen a Regulation like this ever. That it is so progressive. So, to go and criticize a very hard, I think, isn't like getting the standard done. In that context, I would like to balance that out also by saying that we would not be where we are without that Regulation without those people thinking, very forward looking and thinking in terms of now is the opportunity to do something like this, because this has been talked about for a long time, but the opportunity was out there to create this massive toolbox, which in fact, the Regulation is.”*<sup>356</sup>

The last comment of the creation of a “massive toolbox” relates to the next interviewee’s point about the scope of activities widening:

*“(Responding to a question on any impact between the regulatory change of 2019 comparing to 2016) I think it simply widens the scope. Not that, not that this behavior or working together is somehow different. It's simply the amplitude of the areas on what you're working together is bigger... with these Regulations... the growth of it is written in the Schengen acquis already... you need to work closely with the neighbouring states. And with the closest ones, it is somehow more evident that you are closely tied to... But definitely Frontex has evolved and gave the layer, additional layer to that kind of cooperation as well as to the bilateral one.”*<sup>357</sup>

Here, the interviewee refers, in particular, to the widening role of Frontex as the custodian of the SC<sup>358</sup> among other issues, although it does not have a territorial responsibility as the MS.

The final part of this issue links with a European level of ambition:

*(Responding to a statement of an ongoing learning process that is ongoing since the regulatory change) “Yeah, for sure. That's a good summary... in an ideal world we would we would learn and those lessons learned would be done taken on board or the revision or redrafting of the Regulation, but that doesn't really, that hasn't really happened. So, it is learning, but it's also learning the hard way.”*<sup>359</sup>

Here, and although the same interviewee commended on the forward-looking people for drafting the Regulation, to absorb this change as an organisation and community is a totally different scale of task. This issue was reflected in the cautious approach in the agency discourse, but the point of necessary learning is new. In order to put this European ambition into practice, the interviewee implies the need for the EBCG to facilitate learning as well.

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<sup>356</sup> Interviewee 3.

<sup>357</sup> Interviewee 4.

<sup>358</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Article 54.

<sup>359</sup> Interviewee 3.

For the first time, the term “integrated planning” has been introduced in the Regulation. It consolidates three planning processes: common and national capability development planning, operational planning between Frontex and the MS and contingency planning conducted in each MS separately.<sup>360</sup> This issue was touched upon with the interviewees as an overview and as some focus on common capability development. The first quote provides a practical summary of what the overall aim of integrated planning is:

*“...And I think it is also relevant in with regard to, to strategic culture...this thing of **integrated planning in the Regulation**...that is very obvious in in military terms and capability development... **integrated planning is in the end, having the right means or the sufficient means to, to conduct border control, and other activities within the EBCG community in its whole.**”<sup>361</sup>*

The interviewee continues on reasoning the aim in practical terms and pointing to Frontex’s coordinating role:

*“...the ideal situation is really that we have this really integrated approach...not only between the Member States, but also **integrating all these different processes... the biggest challenge**, to avoid that these processes that they end up somewhere in a shelf, but no, **that they really are being taken in, into account in building a much more resilient and strong EBCG.** So that is a real challenge actually. So, there is a big role for for the Management Board there.”<sup>362</sup>*

*“Frontex... providing an overview at European level, which would actually allow to, to see where certain gaps exist and where that should be mitigated, for instance. And basically, taking that information with the overview and coming to a capability roadmap... **not only at Member State or national level, but really EBCG wide, and which really should result in... to really have some major steps towards having a very capable EBCG community towards 2027... each and every time these processes also reflect at national level... this really helps to create this this strategic culture of capability development as well actually.**”<sup>363</sup>*

Integrated planning appears to follow the multiannual strategic policy cycle. It focuses on the conduct of those practical activities laid out in the different strategies generated in the cycle. The interviewee points to the challenge of linking and connecting this vast scope of implementation, but argues that with a situational picture of the community on capability development would be a strong factor in constructing a common strategic culture. With this methodology, the interviewee appears to support a new integrated approach that may link with the premise of “shared responsibility”:

*“(Responding to statement that the integrated processes and work together constitutes a part of the spirit of “shared responsibility”) **Well, exactly, exactly...** it's just an open thought from my part, but **all these elements, all these processes, I think they will really play a very important role. In the process of constituting the strategic culture.** It is a bit of a legalistic approach. But still, I mean, this is also part of a culture and quite often the way how we do things at European level of course.”<sup>364</sup>*

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<sup>360</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Article 9.

<sup>361</sup> Interviewee 2.

<sup>362</sup> Interviewee 2.

<sup>363</sup> Ibid.

<sup>364</sup> Ibid.

The final issue is the future operational concept that appears to be in preparation. It is introduced by providing an overview of prior research. Following that, a few interviewees touched upon this changing context from a cultural perspective. By combining these portions, one is likely to get a broader understanding of the matter.

The central notion of an operational concept is the lack of a view on how the SC will be operationalised. This was the research problem in a prior study.<sup>365</sup> The converging discussion identified a hierarchy of dimensions that likely relate to a future operational concept. An “EU policy dimension” and “a shared EBCG responsibility dimension” were identified.<sup>366</sup> In particular, these relate to the premise of shared responsibility in this research. Four conclusions were provided: 1) the new EBCG was in a new situation, 2) work on developing a commonly accepted operational concept was foreseen to continue, 3) demand for a new type of operational art for common border and migration management was apparent and 4) the overall general situation called for a “renewed collaborative approach in the EBCG”<sup>367</sup>. These topics resonate as contemporary with this research into strategic culture and form a segment of the changing context from an operational perspective. Two current interviewees commented on the formation of a truly European force:

*(Responding to the importance of Frontex’s statutory staff, category one of the SC) “...I think it’s too early to assess, maybe, but... it is, **if you think of it, the first concrete operational actor of Frontex**, because since the beginning it was mainly office staff and seconded staff from Member States to these operations, but now **it has concretely (become) Frontex’s own “military unit”** if you could use this term in quotation marks and **for the strategic culture it may have an impact on founding the core of a broader, unified culture**. Difficult to say.”*<sup>368</sup>

*“But one of the reasons is, of course, you mentioned **the Standing Corps which is, again, a completely unique thing in European history**. There’s a lot of talk about a European army and Brexit even happened to some extent because the UK did not want a European army. And **when it’s spoken about in the military context, you know, people are fearing it. With here it’s been welcomed.**”*<sup>369</sup>

Furthermore, one interviewee presented the ongoing preparatory work on the aforementioned operational concept. Interestingly, the interviewee pointed on a necessary collective conceptual discussion, which appears to relate to the identified fundamental dimensions presented earlier:

*“...we had the Member States asking the Agency what can you do for us, **instead of having a collective discussion on, so where do you want the Agency to click in to your National operations to your National activities? How do you see the added value of Agency?**... and still that... when you ask that question, and I also realize sometimes that **not all Member States were prepared to have that discussion, because they’ve also been very busy**... So, then moving from that was a very, very hands on to sort of conceptual discussion on what where do you*

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<sup>365</sup> Marquis (2021), pp. 3-4.

<sup>366</sup> Ibid. p. 71.

<sup>367</sup> Ibid. p. 76-77.

<sup>368</sup> Interviewee 5.

<sup>369</sup> Interviewee 3.

*expect the Agency to add value? I think that has been a huge challenge to to have, and we have we've not yet had that.*”<sup>370</sup>

Finally, is an interviewee’s view that common operational activity will steadily trickle back to the MS in relation to the second and third categories<sup>371</sup> of the Standing Corps:

*“...these pools are pretty significant when you think about the investment in terms of human resources that is allocated and there you have officials with executive powers within Frontex and eventually when one returns back to one’s own national authority that I see through there a common strategic or organisational culture will form to the authorities that second staff to the European Border and Coast Guard or to these different categories.”*<sup>372</sup>

The workshop participants highlighted two mechanisms of change. Firstly, the European ambition in policy steering is symbolised by the varying approaches by the president of the European Commission. The comparison is notable between former Jean-Claude Juncker and current Ursula von der Leyen. Secondly, the external shocks observed during recent years (2021-2022) have already affected discourse, planning and practice. This may shift a further supplementation from external security into the EBCG.

#### **4.3 A description of the EBCG strategic culture**

The EBCG was founded as a legal entity in 2016 as a result of a political-legal process at the time<sup>373</sup>. One can argue if this development was originally proposed by the practitioners’ community, because it appears as being imposed from above. The legitimising act can be seen to have been initiated then, which is followed by a necessary continuous process to justify the existence of the EBCG. One can view that a certain threshold of trust is necessary for the EBCG to be perceived as legitimate. However, as an explicit theme it is remarkably absent from the textual data. Thus, legitimacy can be perceived as a condition and trust its internal mechanism. However, trust is a highly inter-subjective affair and the three approaches in a discourse on legitimacy does not detail a necessary minimum threshold of trust in the EBCG. Furthermore, this minimum threshold of trust as a prerequisite may be very different on an external political level compared to internally among the MB. Thus, it is vital to distinguish between internal and external views of legitimacy, although the exact mechanisms remain unclear. An outcome of legitimacy can be perceived as a continuous scale, as below:

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<sup>370</sup> Interviewee 3.

<sup>371</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Articles 56, 57 and Annexes II and III.

<sup>372</sup> Interviewee 5.

<sup>373</sup> Regulation (EU) 2016/1624, Recital 5 and Article 3.

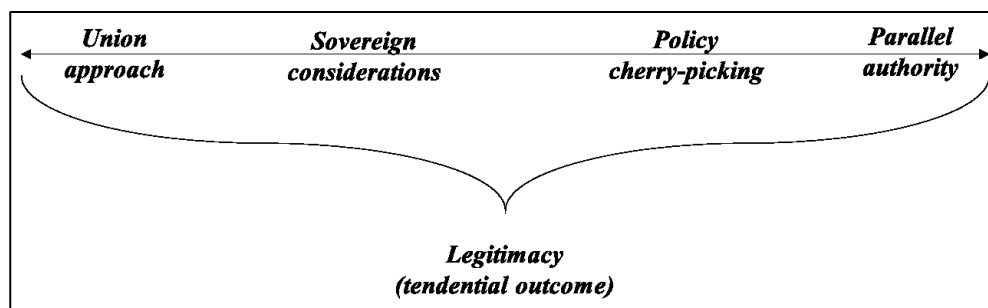


Figure 9 Legitimacy discursive tendency outcomes depicted on a continuous scale

With respect to figure 9, the scale represents the EBCG having a tendency on being fully legitimate on the left and fully illegitimate on the right. These named outcomes depict possibilities in the sense that the legitimacy of the EBCG is socially constructed by different approaches of a discourse over time. This process either builds towards a tendency of a legitimate EBCG (i.e. Union approach) or away from it (i.e. parallel authority). The observed discourse on agency links with this.

The EBCG is tasked with the continuous duty to implement EIBM in an effective manner<sup>374</sup>. The perception of how this broad task is conducted is the core of a discourse on agency. Thus, the EIBM is perceivable as a process. In contrast from legitimacy occupying potential external and internal dimensions, agency resides in the core of the praxis and appears to exclude politics. Agency is related with views on success and failure when reflecting results, which are simply relative. They are possibilities to support the respective viewpoints of the progressive or cautious approaches and they both relate to further development. In a sense, development is an inevitability with the passing of time, but the difference between these approaches is development either in baby-steps or in leaps. This too can be viewed as a figure:

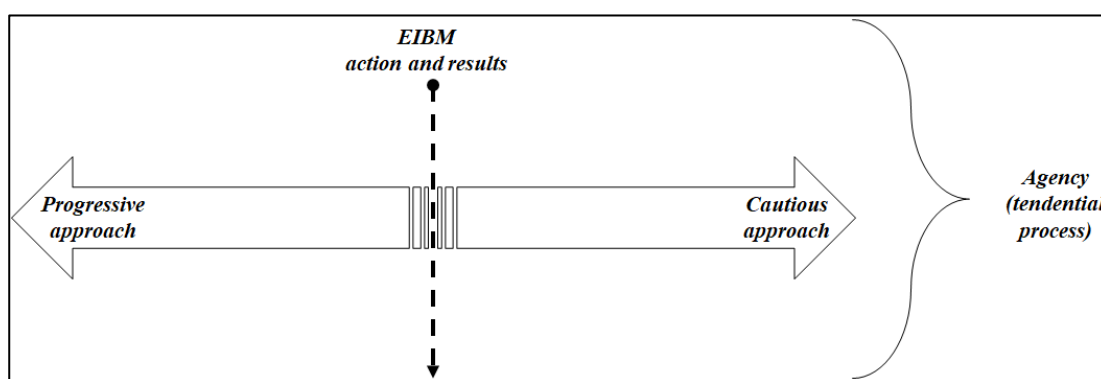


Figure 10 The tendential agency process depicted as discursive tension

With respect to figure 10, a discourse on agency is a tendential process. The active interpretation of EIBM yields the diverging progressive and cautious approach. These appear locked in a tug-of-war, where the progressive approach aims for an ambitious outcome and the cautious

<sup>374</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Recital 13 and Article 3.

approach aims for something closer to the status quo. The discourses on agency and on legitimacy can be visualised together. This completes a conceptual pendulum model, as below:

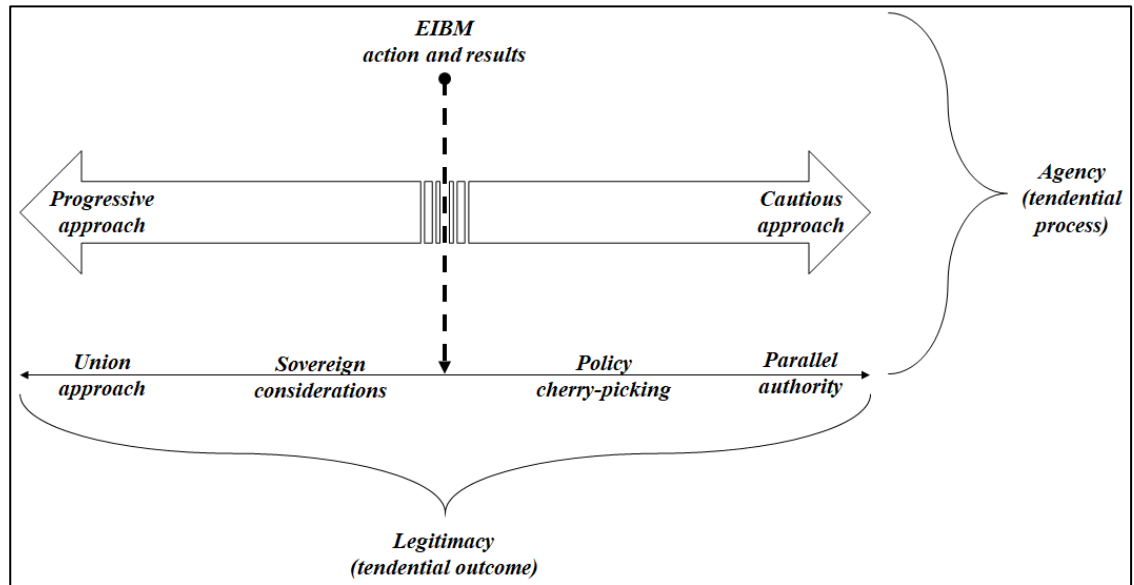


Figure 11 The conceptual pendulum model combining agency and legitimacy discourses

With respect to figure 11, the presented conceptual pendulum model depicts the varying tensions observed in the texts in a joined manner. It highlights the intertwined nature of the observed discourses. This nature of intertwinement is closely related to the simultaneity of EIBM and the EBCG<sup>375</sup>; when one describes either of them, one must consider the other. However, due to the broad scope of EIBM<sup>376</sup>, it is worth noting that there may exist multiple tendential outcomes at the same time. However, this depends on what exactly in focus. A clear difference appears to be the comparison of border management with migration management. The former has established a certain common status over the decades among the national authorities of the MS. The latter however is much younger. Recently, the European Commission is actively steering migration management<sup>377 378</sup> to historical border management to form a more comprehensive EIBM. Thus, one can describe this intertwinement from multiple directions. This description relates to a perception of different interest groups within the EBCG, which occupy varying or similar perspectives on common border and migration management matters.

<sup>375</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Recital 13.

<sup>376</sup> Ibid. Article 3.

<sup>377</sup> “**Frontex must play a leading role in the common EU system for returns, making returns work well in practice. It should be a priority for Frontex to become the operational arm of EU return policy...**” European Commission: COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS on a New Pact on Migration and Asylum, 2020. [[https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:85ff8b4f-ff13-11ea-b44f-01aa75ed71a1.0002.02/DOC\\_3&format=PDF](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:85ff8b4f-ff13-11ea-b44f-01aa75ed71a1.0002.02/DOC_3&format=PDF)], accessed 15.3.2023, p. 8.

<sup>378</sup> European Commission: COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS on the Report on Migration and Asylum, 2022e. [[https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:a2d634d0-4554-11ed-92ed-01aa75ed71a1.0001.02/DOC\\_1&format=PDF](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:a2d634d0-4554-11ed-92ed-01aa75ed71a1.0001.02/DOC_1&format=PDF)], accessed 15.3.2023, pp. 13-15.

Structurally, the 30 different MS and the two European Commission members at the MB represent the EBCG's strategic decision-making level. Alternatively, this can be interpreted in a broader view, based on epistemic communities<sup>379</sup>. However, two notions apply. Firstly, epistemic communities can overlap by acknowledging and agreeing on some common issues. Secondly, membership in an epistemic community may be fluid according to situational criteria. The interviewees demonstrated multiple views on the EBCG strategic culture, which exemplifies these notions. The actual MB members are facilitated by relevant experts across the MS, instead of operating alone:

*“Well, maybe I would not use the word network, but in my view this is an acceptable mode of handling the situation... **that not one member or alternative member, according to my observations, and I believe and I hope does not conduct the work solely based on a single opinion and, sort of, form opinions on decisions on this, only, but it represents the respective authority's and when in some cases the issue reflects on many authorities, then a common opinion of the nation based on all the national authorities, view and need.**”*<sup>380</sup>

Apart from the representative members in the MB, the MB WG EIBM and national IBM working groups appear to form varying kinds of networks across Europe. Ultimately, they shape discourse in different fora across Europe. This is the notion of decentralised expertise on EIBM, which appears central for the EBCG.

In summary of this chapter a description of the strategic culture of the EBCG can be formed. Although the MB holds consensual strategic decision-making authority in the EBCG, it merely represents strategic culture as a concept. Epistemic communities across networks within and in proximity to the MB influence the ultimate outcome. Across these epistemic communities, different perspectives on EIBM agency and EBCG legitimacy influence tendencies to shape the process of EIBM and the outcome of the EBCG, respectively. These perspectives are socially constructed and formed through discourse among the participants of the epistemic communities. Hence, although the EBCG strategic culture is ultimately represented through the MB interaction, it appears to be formed in a decentralised manner.

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<sup>379</sup> Haas (1992).

<sup>380</sup> Interviewee 6.

The fourth chapter concluded on a description of the EBCG strategic culture. The fifth chapter recognises this when the focus shifts to Finnish strategic plans and strategic foresight of the future. First, old Finnish strategic are analysed. Then, the strategic foresight application and its resulting scenarios are presented. Finally, the scenarios are analysed that is followed by summaries of the chapter.

## 5.1 Analysis of the Finnish strategic plans

### The FBG strategy 2027

The activities of the FBG contain the majority of border and migration management in Finland, but it also covers parts of other jurisdictions, such as crime investigation and national defence<sup>381</sup>. Thus, these are relevant for the EBCG context.

The FBG strategy 2027 that considers all these tasks does not operate in a vacuum, but is an integral part of the joint strategy for the Ministry of the Interior's administrative branch<sup>382</sup> and fully bound by national governance. The FBG strategy 2027 is concise, introducing the general goals of its activities and cornerstones of operation first, before describing five key policies for a 10-year outlook (2017-2027). One policy relates fully to current EBCG affairs, while portions of other policies have some relation. The policies are presented in detail in Finnish and Swedish.<sup>383</sup>

The first issue relates to the acknowledgment of the position of the FBG in the security field and it being a part of the European system:

*“The Finnish Border Guard strengthens the security of Finland, and prevents security threats directed at Finland and Europe at the external borders.”*<sup>384</sup>

*“Vision: The Finnish Border Guard is a capable European border security organisation and an efficient provider of safety for Finland.”*

*“Values: Reliability, Competence and Cooperation.”*<sup>385</sup>

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<sup>381</sup> Finnish Border Guard: *Strategy 2027*. Helsinki 2017. [[https://raja.fi/documents/44957406/64377821/Strategia\\_2027\\_web.pdf/ce452834-763e-cda9-c0a4-88061f0cf98a/Strategia\\_2027\\_web.pdf?t=1615290261280](https://raja.fi/documents/44957406/64377821/Strategia_2027_web.pdf/ce452834-763e-cda9-c0a4-88061f0cf98a/Strategia_2027_web.pdf?t=1615290261280)], accessed 15.3.2023. See also the *Border Guard Act 578/2005*.

<sup>382</sup> Finnish Ministry of the Interior: *Joint strategy for the Ministry of the Interior's Administrative Branch*, 2022. [[https://intermin.fi/documents/1410869/15717330/SM\\_konsernistrategia\\_2022\\_en.pdf/3ba3c072-a0bd-2471-b7b8-324f0435d218/SM\\_konsernistrategia\\_2022\\_en.pdf?t=1645021127505](https://intermin.fi/documents/1410869/15717330/SM_konsernistrategia_2022_en.pdf/3ba3c072-a0bd-2471-b7b8-324f0435d218/SM_konsernistrategia_2022_en.pdf?t=1645021127505)], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>383</sup> Finnish Border Guard (2017).

<sup>384</sup> Ibid. p. 24.

<sup>385</sup> Ibid. p. 24.

*“The Finnish Border Guard operates in the areas of internal and external security, and is part of the European border and coast guard system.”<sup>386</sup>*

The first part relates directly to the Schengen acquis and to how border management has been provisioned nationally. The second and fourth quote relate to the acknowledgment of coexisting roles, national and European, at the same time. Participation in the EBCG is acknowledged and the EBCG is referred to as a “system”, as in the Treaty<sup>387</sup>. In these, the keyword “capable” draws attention to as how this is demonstrated. Furthermore, when reflecting on “a capable European border security organisation”, this can be interpreted as being capable among peers in the EBCG, as well. Finally, one value of the FBG is “cooperation”. However, a deeper Finnish word implying “cooperability”<sup>388</sup> that is used to indicate the condition and capability of cooperation.

One key policy relates directly to participation and cooperation in the context of EBCG. This is the fourth policy “Promote the border security and maritime safety of the European Union”. Furthermore, elements of the first and fifth policy relate to this in part.<sup>389</sup> First, the fourth policy is presented, which will be followed by a separate presentation of portions of the first and fifth policies.

The fourth policy is clarified in the following way:

*“Contribute to the development of coherent and effective border control at the external borders within the EU. Promote the development and rapid deployment of joint operating models and technology. Participate in cooperation coordinated by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (FRONTEX) with both personnel and equipment. Ensure, as the authority with responsibility, the execution of the EU’s integrated border management in Finland. Take part in projects enforcing the EU’s maritime policy and in the development of cooperation between maritime authorities.”<sup>390</sup>*

The policy is described in the present tense, which also outline a continuous process. The policies are presented as central measures<sup>391</sup> in the document. The fourth policy is detailed in the Finnish portion of the document in the following translated way:

*“Promote the expedited introduction of common activity models and technological development.”*

*“Participate in the development of the European border and coast guard and secure the capacity to participate in the European border and coast guard agency’s (Frontex) operations.”*

*“Ensure that the Schengen-system, its evaluation mechanism and vulnerability assessment remain effective and appropriate.”*

*“Increase coast guard cooperation with neighbouring countries and ensure the effective development of EU cooperation.”*

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<sup>386</sup> Finnish Border Guard (2017), p. 25.

<sup>387</sup> Consolidated version of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union, Article 77(1,2).

<sup>388</sup> Finnish Border Guard (2017), p. 4. Compare “yhteistyökyky” with “yhteistyö”. These can be translated as “cooperability” and “cooperation”, respectively.

<sup>389</sup> Ibid. p. 27.

<sup>390</sup> Ibid. p. 27.

<sup>391</sup> Ibid. pp. 9-11, “Keskeiset toimenpiteet”.

*“Act as chair of the Arctic coast guard forum and participate in the work of other coast guard fora.”<sup>392</sup>*

The use of present tense and its passive form is evident, but it is also a deliberate choice to describe continuous activities over a 10-year period. However, the choice of verbs can be interpreted further. Over the course of the policy and its key measures, the position of active development becomes evident. The key verbs as contribution, promotion and participation all point to an aimed active role in the EBCG. Furthermore, “the expedited introduction of” technical and non-technical means in development orients the audience to expect the FBG to be at the cutting-edge of this progress. The notion of ensuring the Schengen evaluation and vulnerability assessments as “effective and appropriate” points to a position of custodianship of a previously developed part in this system. This is similarly evident in the coast guard cooperation issue. The notion of acting in a responsible position in the “Arctic coast guard forum”<sup>393</sup> points to the premise of broader tasks the FBG is responsible for, but also the overlap of these with EU-centred cooperation. The impression of active development is perhaps most visible in the alternative choice of verb in the Finnish name of the policy:

*“Influence the EU’s border security and maritime safety.”<sup>394</sup>*

Here, though, a discrepancy exists in the document<sup>395</sup>. The choice between promotion or influencing may simply be nuanced and possibly a humane production error. However, the latter can be interpreted to incur a more active participative role, instead of the marketing-oriented promotion.

The relevant part from the first policy is:

*“Prevent security threats, in accordance with the European model on access to the country, at the external borders. With an orientation at cooperation, develop measures that enhance a stable situation at the borders.”<sup>396</sup>*

The first sentence appears to refer to the four-tier access model of EIBM<sup>397</sup>. Prior to the policies, I identified the difference in the translation of the value “cooperation”. This becomes visible now, when comparing the latter sentence to its equivalent of the Finnish version:

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<sup>392</sup> Finnish Border Guard (2017), p. 11. “Edistetään yhteisten toimintamallien ja tekniikan kehittämistä ja nopeaa käyttöönottoa.” “Osallistutaan Eurooppalaisen raja- ja merivartioston kehittämiseen ja turvataan kyky osallistua Euroopan raja- ja merivartiostoviraston (Frontex) operaatioihin.” “Varmistetaan Schengen-järjestelmän, sen arviointimenettelyn ja haavoittuvuusarvioinnin pitäminen tehokkaana ja tarkoituksenmukaisena.” “Lisätään rannikkovartiostoyhteistyötä naapurimaiden kanssa ja varmistetaan EU-yhteistyön tehokas kehittyminen.” “Toimitaan Arktisen rannikkovartiostofoorumin puheenjohtajana ja osallistutaan muiden rannikkovartiostofoorumien työhön.”

<sup>393</sup> The Arctic Coast Guard Forum: *About the ACGF*. [<https://www.arcticcoastguardforum.com/about-acgf>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>394</sup> Finnish Border Guard (2017), p. 11. “Vaikutetaan EU:n rajaturvallisuuteen ja merelliseen turvallisuuteen

<sup>395</sup> Ibid. p. 11. “**Vaikutetaan EU:n rajaturvallisuuteen ja merelliseen turvallisuuteen.**”, compare with Ibid. p. 9: “**Edistetään EU:n rajaturvallisuutta ja merellistä turvallisuutta.**”

<sup>396</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>397</sup> Regulation (EU) 2019/1896, Recital 11.

*“Develop measures **in a cooperative manner** that promote a stable border situation.”*<sup>398</sup>  
Here, the notion of sort of “manner” is linked with cooperation, implying to my interpretation of a deeper meaning of a cooperability as a value. This is relevant now, when reflecting back on the action of the fourth policy. Cooperability implies a certain attitude towards cooperation, which in this case is the EBCG framework. Although the first policy links closely to an internal development issue, the notion of national borders being simultaneously external borders ties this issue to a European context.

Two relevant parts emerge from the fifth policy. The first one is presented as:

*“**The Finnish Border Guard maintains its competence in border security and maritime search and rescue at a high standard in international terms.**”*

The first quote refers to the FBG value of “competence”, viewed also from an external dimension. Likely, it links with the issues of the Schengen evaluation mechanism and vulnerability assessment as introduced earlier. With this link, the quote implies a strict compliance to these international standards. However, the “international terms” are unspecified and potentially varied. It can be interpreted in a broader manner than these two quality control mechanisms. The second part is presented as:

*“**The Finnish Border Guard will utilise information submitted by its partners and produce, with its own activities, significant benefits for its cooperation parties.**”*<sup>399</sup>

Here, the notion of the value “cooperation” is yet again implied. The issue explicitly implies the utility of information, apparently for situational awareness and other aims. However, the latter portion of providing “significant benefits” for others is again written in a strict manner for the FBG itself. This appears to relate, again, to the broader notion of a cooperability in an internal sense as a certain service attitude the organisation has towards stakeholders.

### **The Finnish IBM strategy 2019-2021**

The second relevant document relating to FBG strategic planning is the Finnish IBM strategy that is the outcome of the new multiannual strategic policy cycle. So far, one such document has been published in the framework of the now former Regulation (EU) 2016/1624<sup>400</sup>. The Finnish IBM strategy for 2019-2021<sup>401</sup> is fully in Finnish. It goes into particular detail, which is not the scope of this research. Instead, my interest relates to how Finland interprets EIBM and configures itself in the EBCG from a national perspective.

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<sup>398</sup> Finnish Border Guard (2017), p. 6. *“Kehitetään yhteistyöhakuisesti toimenpiteitä, joilla edistetään vakaata rajatilannetta.”*

<sup>399</sup> Ibid. p. 27.

<sup>400</sup> Regulation (EU) 2016/1624, Article 3(2, 3).

<sup>401</sup> Finnish Border Guard: *Suomen kansallinen yhdenmetyt rajaturvallisuuden strategia 2019–2021 [Finland’s national integrated border management strategy 2019-2021]*. Helsinki 2019.

The first chapter of the document is the abstract, which provides an overview of the full strategy. As the abstract is separated in three paragraphs, three main issues can be highlighted. The first part outlines the objective of the strategy itself:

***“The purpose of this national integrated border management strategy (IBM-strategy) is to provide a clear perception on the implementation of integrated border management and on its further development in Finland in accordance with European Union standards.”***<sup>402</sup>

This implies to a function of maintaining situational awareness among the national authorities. Further, the statement on future development is clear. The second part views the operational situation and the adaptability of the Finnish IBM-concept:

***“The prevalent situation at the external borders of Finland is relatively stable. However, the opportunity for sudden changes in illegal immigration remains high... Finland’s national IBM-concept must also act reliably and tolerate disturbances in all circumstances.”***<sup>403</sup> (bold in original)

This points to an act of securitising. The key message is that everything can change on a moment’s notice. This then extends to how the national system should cope and thus prepare and remain adaptable. The third part shifts to actual activities. The environment is described as having a negative character, in which the ability to prognosticate international illegal immigration has deteriorated and simultaneous austere economic conditions in public administration are occurring. Thus, in order to maintain a highly capable national border management system in this difficult environment, five implementation measures that need to be conducted to achieve this goal.<sup>404</sup>

The abstract is followed with the stated values, vision and mission. The values<sup>405</sup> are identical to those of the prior FBG strategy. The strategy describes a vision and mission:

***“Vision: Finland’s external borders are Europe’s securest and best operating. Finland is co-operative and an internationally recognised actor in the field of integrated border management and efficiently promotes the security of the European Union. Reliable and competent***

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<sup>402</sup> Finnish Border Guard (2019), p. 3. *“Tämän kansallisen yhdenmetyt rajaturvallisuuden strategian (IBM-strategia) tarkoituksena on antaa selkeä käsitys yhdenmetyt rajaturvallisuuden täytäntöönpanosta ja edelleen kehittämistä Suomessa Euroopan unionin standardien mukaisesti.”*

<sup>403</sup> Ibid. p. 3. *“Suomen ulkorajoilla vallitseva tilanne on suhteellisen vakaa. Laittoman maahanmuuton ja tilanteen äkillisten muutosten mahdollisuus on kuitenkin edelleen suuri... Suomen kansallisen IBM-konseptin on myös toimitettava erityisen luotettavasti ja häiriönsietokykyisesti kaikissa olosuhteissa.”*

<sup>404</sup> Ibid. p. 3. *“(1) uskottavan rajavartioston turvaaminen itärajalla, 2) turvallisen ja sujuvan rajaliikenteen edistäminen tärkeimmillä rajanylityspaikoilla, kuten Helsinki-Vantaan lentoasemalla, samalla kun torjutaan laitonta maahanmuuttoa ja ehkäistään tehokkaasti rajat ylittävää rikollisuutta, 3) palautusprosessin tehostaminen, 4) toimintavalmiuden ylläpitäminen laajamittaisen monialaisten valvontatehtävien suorittamiseksi Itämerellä ja 5) valmius panna täytäntöön nopeasti kehittyvää, rajavalvontaan liittyvää uutta EU-lainsäädäntöä...”* in English: *“(1) securing credible border guarding at the eastern border, 2) facilitating secure and fluent border traffic at the most important border crossing points, such as at Helsinki-Vantaa airport, simultaneously preventing illegal immigration and effectively preventing cross-border crime, 3) increasing the effectiveness of the return process, 4) maintaining action readiness for large scale multidisciplinary surveillance tasks at the Baltic sea and 5) readiness to implement rapidly developing EU-legislation related to border control...”*

<sup>405</sup> Ibid. p. 4. *“Luotettavuus, ammattitaito ja yhteistyökyky”*. Compare with: Finnish Border Guard (2017), p. 4, 24. *“Luotettavuus, ammattitaito ja yhteistyökyky”* and *“Reliability, competence and cooperation”*.

*personnel, effective organisations and effective division of tasks and state-of-the-art technology guarantee high performance.*”<sup>406</sup>

*“Mission: **Finland’s IBM-concept is reliable, and it is further developed.** Finland’s border control- and return system supports internal security and effectively prevents cross-border crime. **Finland promotes European integrated border management** and develops European best practices together with other member states and as a reliable and compatible part of the **European border and coast guard.** The aim is to further develop a cost-efficient and capable, uniform **national IBM-system, which fully adheres to the standards of the European Union.**”*<sup>407</sup>

The current vision appears to have clear elements of the FBG’s vision<sup>408</sup> primarily on the aspect of being “a European border security organisation”. Here, though, the same idea appears to be transformed to fully encompass Finland. The mission borrows mechanistic elements from the EU official documentation in the sense that it views the national IBM-concept through a lens of a “compatible part of the EBCG”. A clear progressive development orientation is also present that also includes the notion of compliance. This is also visible in the keyword reliability, which can evoke trust into the community.

The background chapter states compliance<sup>409</sup> towards the three strategic objectives stated in the Frontex TO EIBM strategy<sup>410</sup>. This extends onto the national level:

***The IBM-strategy is in harmony with other national strategies that relate to internal security strategy. This strategy gives, in the scope of integrated border management, justification for stakeholder authorities to draft their own strategies. The strategies are implemented in annual and multiannual plans and with the assistance of other documents.***”<sup>411</sup>

The introduction chapter describes the impact of the current challenging environment:

***“In this sort of an environment, Finland emphasises its national special features and develops the readiness of border security authorities in order to prevent internal and external threats both independently and as part of the European Union.”***<sup>412</sup>

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<sup>406</sup> Finnish Border Guard (2019), pp. 3-4. “Suomen ulkorajat ovat Euroopan turvallisimmat ja parhaiten toimivat. **Suomi on yhteistyökykyinen ja kansainvälisesti tunnustettu toimija yhdenmukaisen rajaturvallisuuden alalla ja edistää tehokkaasti Euroopan unionin turvallisuutta.** Luotettava ja ammattitaitoinen henkilöstö, tehokkaat organisaatiot ja tehokas tehtävien jakaminen sekä huipputeknologia takaavat korkean suorituskyvyn.”

<sup>407</sup> Ibid. p. 4. “**Suomen IBM-konsepti on luotettava, ja sitä kehitetään edelleen.** Suomen rajavalvonta- ja palautusjärjestelmä tukee sisäistä turvallisuutta ja torjuu tehokkaasti rajat ylittävää rikollisuutta. **Suomi edistää Euroopan yhdenmukaisesti rajaturvallisuutta** ja kehittää eurooppalaisia parhaita käytäntöjä yhdessä muiden jäsenvaltioiden kanssa ja **luotettavana ja yhteensopivana osana eurooppalaista raja- ja merivartiostoa.** Tavoitteena on **kehittää edelleen kustannustehokasta ja suorituskykyistä yhdenmukaistettua kansallista IBM-järjestelmää, joka vastaa täysin Euroopan unionin standardeja.**”

<sup>408</sup> Finnish Border Guard (2017), p. 24.

<sup>409</sup> Finnish Border Guard (2019), p. 5. “**Suomen kansallinen IBM-strategia on linjassa Euroopan yhdenmukaisen rajaturvallisuuden teknisessä ja operatiivisessa strategiassa määriteltyjen kolmen strategisen tavoitteen kanssa...**” in English: “**Finland’s national IBM-strategy is in line with the three strategic objectives defined in the European integrated border management technical and operational strategy...**”

<sup>410</sup> Frontex (2019), pp. 30, 44 and 60.

<sup>411</sup> Finnish Border Guard (2019), p. 5. “**IBM-strategia on sopusoinnussa sisäisen turvallisuuden strategian kaltaisten muiden kansallisten strategioiden kanssa.** Tämä strategia antaa yhdenmukaisen rajaturvallisuuden osalta perusteet asianomaisille viranomaisille omien strategioidensa laadinnassa. Strategiat pannaan täytäntöön vuotuis-ten ja monivuotisten suunnitelmien ja muiden asiakirjojen avulla.”

<sup>412</sup> Ibid. p. 6. “**Suomi korostaa tällaisessa ympäristössä kansallisia erityispiirteitään ja kehittää rajaturvallisuusviranomaisten valmiuksia, jotta se voi torjua sisäisiä ja ulkoisia uhkia sekä itsenäisesti että osana Euroopan unionia.**”

Here, the specific dual nature of Finland becomes clear through independence as a member in the EU. In these two locations, the “national specific features” can be viewed as assets that assists both itself and the broader community by exchanging this idea internally and externally.

The final parts relate to a chapter on activities coordinated between Finland and Frontex. First, the strategy states the objective of this participation:

***“The objective of active participation to Frontex-coordinated joint and operational tasks is to develop the European integrated border management system’s high quality and cost-efficiency that supports Finland’s national border security, Finland is fully committed to fulfil its duties as part of the European border and coast guard.”***<sup>413</sup>

In other words, two-way added value, in particular for Finland, is possible through fully committing to the EBCG. Then, the main national structural elements and roles are established:

***“Finland participates actively and broadly in Frontex-coordinated cooperation. Finland is represented by the Finnish Border Guard in the Management Board, which is responsible for the practical cooperation with Frontex and responsible for fulfilling the national cooperation requirement with Frontex. The national headquarters of the Finnish Border Guard is the national Frontex point of contact. The Finnish Border Guard is responsible in participating in Frontex’s high-level working group as well as other working groups, apart from working groups on return, in which the Police is the representative. The non-discrimination ombudsman participates in the monitoring of all return related tasks and meetings. The national headquarters of the Finnish Border Guard coordinates the conducted cooperation with the Frontex contact person and provides the necessary work spaces.”***<sup>414</sup>

Finally, the previously stated national aim of active participation in order to achieve two-way added value is used as an argument for closer national cooperation:

***“The development of the European border and coast guard necessitates stronger national coordination structures in the scope of cooperation conducted with Frontex. This includes the development of national resources and contingency planning together with the principles that have been confirmed by Frontex.”***<sup>415</sup>

Thus, this chapter established the responsible entities for cooperation, which is founded on the original view of securitisation in the environment. The motivational mechanism to this establishment is the perceived two-way added value, which leads to a cyclical situation of feeding cooperation nationally and internationally.

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<sup>413</sup> Finnish Border Guard (2019), p. 14. “Aktiivisen Frontexin koordinoimiin yhteistoiminnallisiin ja operatiivisiin tehtäviin osallistumisen päämääränä on kehittää Suomen kansallista rajaturvallisuutta tukevan Euroopan yhdenmukaisen rajaturvallisuusjärjestelmän korkeaa laatua ja kustannustehokkuutta. Suomi on täysin sitoutunut täyttämään velvoitteensa osana eurooppalaista raja- ja merivartiostoa.”

<sup>414</sup> Ibid. p. 14. “Suomi osallistuu Frontexin koordinoimaan yhteistyöhön aktiivisesti ja laajasti. Suomea edustaa Frontexin hallintoneuvostossa Rajavartiolaitos, joka on vastuussa käytännön yhteistyöstä Frontexin kanssa ja vastuussa Frontexin kanssa tehtävän kansallisen yhteistyönvelvoitteen täyttämisestä. Rajavartiolaitoksen esikunta on Frontexin kansallinen yhteyspiste. Rajavartiolaitos on vastuussa osallistumisesta Frontexin korkean tason IBM-työryhmään, samoin kuin muihin työryhmiin, lukuun ottamatta palautuksiin liittyviä työryhmiä, joissa edustajana toimii poliisi. Yhdenvertaisuusvaltuutettu osallistuu kaikkiin palautusten valvontaan liittyviin tehtäviin ja kokouksiin. Rajavartiolaitoksen esikunta koordinoi Frontexin yhteyshenkilön kanssa tehtävää yhteistyötä Suomessa ja tarjoaa tehtävissä tarvittavat työtilat.”

<sup>415</sup> Ibid. p. 14. “Eurooppalaisen raja- ja merivartioston kehittyminen edellyttää vahvempia kansallisia koordinoitavuuksia Frontexin kanssa tehtävän yhteistyön osalta. Tähän kuuluu myös kansallisten voimavarojen ja valmiussuunnittelun järjestelmien kehittäminen yhdessä Frontexin kanssa vahvistettujen periaatteiden mukaisesti.”

## 5.2 The workshop – a collaborative scenario formation process

The scenario-cross method<sup>416</sup> was applied in this research in order to produce and discuss alternative futures for the EBCG. Finnish high-level experts' input was key in this process. The preparatory material utilised for the workshop are presented in appendices four and five. The full results of the workshop are available in appendix six. The method covered four parts: 1) introduction and orientation, 2) elaboration on key future trends, 3) the formation of scenarios and 4) assessment and feedback. These are presented in order in the below paragraphs.

The topic of strategic culture was introduced and linked with preliminary ideas of the strategic culture of the EBCG. Discussion related to the introduction was accounted for as personal notes, prepared and validated as part of the latter feedback. The input of the discussion was presented as part of the context of the strategic culture of the EBCG in the fourth chapter. Then, the actual collaborative portion began with the orienting scenario question<sup>417</sup>: what will the EBCG be like in 2035?. A horizon of 12 years was chosen subjectively as a mid-point in that decade. Furthermore, it was slightly beyond the ordinary 10-year horizon in FBG strategic planning<sup>418</sup> and the strategic risk analysis published biannually by Frontex<sup>419 420</sup>. For example, the Finnish Ministry of Defence and the European commission utilised perspectives of 23 years (2007-2030)<sup>421</sup> and eight (2017-2025)<sup>422</sup>, respectively.

A total of six different trends were assessed individually by their impact and uncertainty, which were then plotted in a matrix<sup>423</sup>. Future operational functions and the level of EU integration were deemed to be both highly impactful and highly uncertain. This meant that they had the greatest potential to influence the future of the EBCG to varying outcomes. The level of EU integration refers primarily to the political level, whereas the operational functions refer to primarily strategic-operational levels, which points to four distinct scenarios<sup>424</sup>.

Finally, the scenarios were placed perpendicularly to each other in order to form a total of four possible future scenarios for the EBCG. This is presented in figure 12 below:

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<sup>416</sup> Nekkers (2016), pp. 23-27.

<sup>417</sup> Ibid. p. 16.

<sup>418</sup> The Finnish Border Guard Strategy 2027 was published in 2017.

<sup>419</sup> Frontex (2020), p. 8.

<sup>420</sup> Frontex (2022b), p. 8.

<sup>421</sup> Finnish Ministry of Defence: *Foreseeing the international system's actors up to the year 2030*, 2007. [[https://www.defmin.fi/files/1184/predictions2030\\_eng.pdf](https://www.defmin.fi/files/1184/predictions2030_eng.pdf)], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>422</sup> European Commission (2017).

<sup>423</sup> Nekkers (2016), pp. 18, 25-27.

<sup>424</sup> Ibid. p. 24.

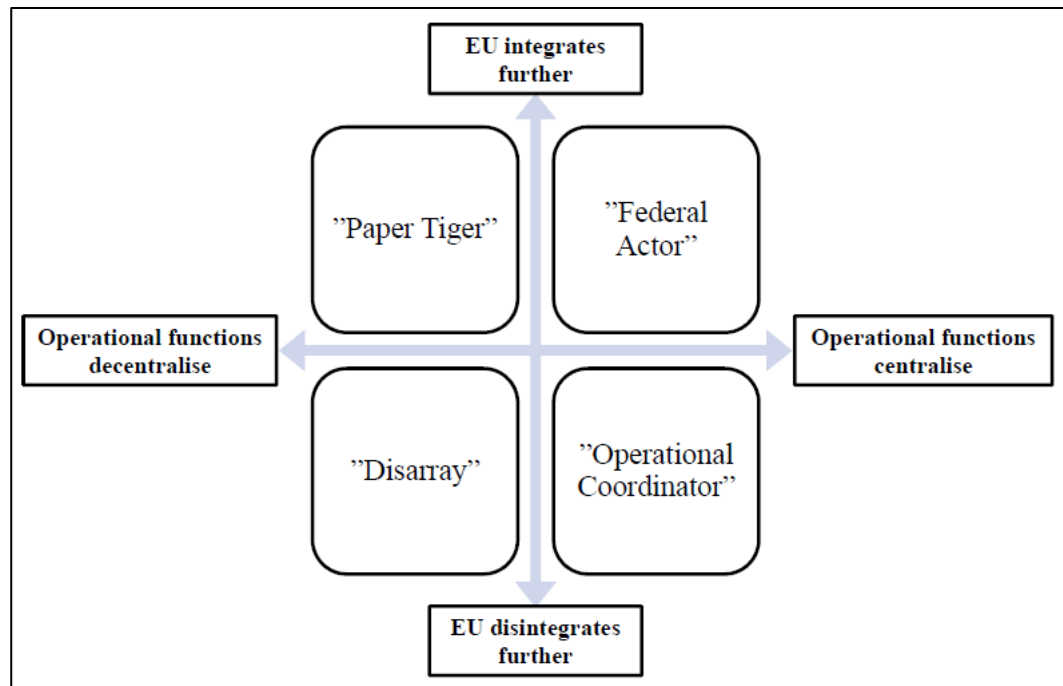


Figure 12 The formed and named scenarios for the EBCG in the target year 2035

Then, the scenarios were named. Following that, collaboration continued on backcasting them from the target year back to the present.<sup>425</sup> The backcasting of the “Federal Actor”-scenario was conducted together, which was then followed by a brief individual work session. After this, the individuals presented the scenarios to the group.

The assessment criteria of plausibility, relevance and providing new insights<sup>426</sup> was utilised as part of a final discussion. However, during the workshop the criterion of relevance was found problematic. The scenarios were not directly oriented towards challenges, because they viewed the EBCG from an internal perspective. The discussion is briefly presented among the individual scenarios. Following the workshop, all of the material was edited to a presentable summary form for feedback. A few comments were provided that elaborated and clarified the workshop issues. The final comments are presented and analysed in the following section.

### 5.3 Analysis of the scenarios

#### The “Paper Tiger”-scenario

In the “Paper Tiger”-scenario, the EBCG has essentially diverged into two. The EU has integrated in relative terms, but interest towards border and migration management has waned. In the EBCG, Frontex has swollen to a large agency with plenty of resources, which allows it to

<sup>425</sup> Nekkers (2016), p. 31.

<sup>426</sup> Ibid. pp. 11-12.

maintain even inefficient tasks. However, the MS prioritise their own cooperation mechanisms between themselves. This may have occurred as a result of perceived insufficiency of Frontex.

The EBCG has viewed a common European approach as illegitimate, for whatever cumulative or instantaneous reasons. This can be indicated by a perception of operational performance outcomes in the course of several years, where a common and a MS's own approach are compared in parallel. In this case, Frontex's activities may likely shift from a focus of direct support to MS into operations primarily in Third Countries. This can happen in accordance with the geographical reach of the four-tier access model<sup>427</sup> and on the basis of status agreements<sup>428</sup>. For example, the EU has already signed status agreements with Albania in 2019<sup>429</sup> and Serbia in 2020<sup>430</sup> for these purposes. This may be the only real means of justifying a large Frontex in the scenario's situation. Furthermore, due to the critical perception of Frontex's activities<sup>431</sup> in MS, which omit the outcome of common activity in the shared responsibility premise, this externalisation shift may be perceived with more legitimacy among the public in general and fundamental human rights' non-governmental organisations in particular.

### **The “Federal Actor”-scenario**

In the “Federal Actor”-scenario, the EBCG is unified as one supranational authority. The EBCG demonstrates the EU's integration at a policy implementation level and one ambition for European centralisation has been accomplished. The MS have volunteered to relinquish relevant national sovereignty in the fields of border and migration management in order to form an envisioned “EBCG 4.0”-organisation.

Although the EU is perceivable from a view of differentiated integration<sup>432</sup>, broader EU integration may need to succeed first. This may be accomplished with a new Treaty base. This precedent may then act as a driver for a next-level EBCG to be established. However, a Treaty

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<sup>427</sup> *Recital (EU) 2019/1896*, Recital 11.

<sup>428</sup> *Ibid.* Article 73.

<sup>429</sup> *Council Decision (EU) 2019/267 of 12 February 2019 on the conclusion of the Status Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Albania on actions carried out by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency in the Republic of Albania*, Official Journal of the European Union, L46, Vol. 62, 18 February 2019. [<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:2019:046:FULL&from=EN>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>430</sup> *Council Decision (EU) 2020/865 of May 2020 on the conclusion of the Status Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Serbia on actions carried out by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency in the Republic of Serbia*, Official Journal of the European Union, L202, Vol. 63, 25 June 2020. [<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:2020:202:FULL&from=EN>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>431</sup> Human Rights Watch: *Frontex Failing to Protect People at EU Borders Stronger Safeguards Vital as Border Agency Expands*, 2021, [Online article 23.6.2021]. [<https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/06/23/frontex-failing-protect-people-eu-borders>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>432</sup> Santos Vara, Juan & Ramses A. Wessel: *New Options for Differentiated Integration in the European Union: Introduction to the Special Section*, *European Papers*. Vol. 7, No. 3, 2022, pp. 1141-1144.

establishing a Constitution for Europe<sup>433</sup> has been declined previously. However, it is debatable if this is already possible in the current Treaty framework, but driving integration only in a narrow policy field may be perceived with resistance from the MS. Hence, this scenario may appear as unrealistic, even utopistic. However, two new relevant Regulations with broader EBCG mandates have been adopted in quick succession. Furthermore, EU's response to Russia's escalation in Ukraine in 2022 appears to demonstrate clear unity<sup>434</sup>. In the correct circumstances, such as a successful outcome in a renewed migration crisis as in the scenario, the EBCG may form into a supranational authority.

### **The “Disarray”-scenario**

In the “Disarray”-scenario, the EBCG has figuratively dissolved, if not literally as well. The EU has disintegrated in relative terms and appears close to obsolescence. These outcomes could occur by many ways. Firstly, through an accelerated expansion from multiple new MS resulting in a less cohesive Union. Secondly, by cumulative losses of mutual trust through political scandals. In the EBCG, Frontex as a formerly progressive EU agency has diminished back to its roots into a small expert organisation or even disbanded altogether. MS are actively participating in their own bilateral and multilateral frameworks.

The clear difference from the “Paper Tiger”-scenario is Frontex's role and funding issues. Instead of actively pursuing its own agenda, Frontex has had to drastically balance its own staff and activities, primarily due to lack of funding. This was the result of MS perception that the SC and other framework cooperation is both ineffective and inefficient. Furthermore, the perception of an illegitimate EU may extend to the foundation of questioning the Schengen system altogether, similarly to what de Toro Mezquita analysed<sup>435</sup>. From a European cooperation perspective, the scenario is obviously pessimistic. However, even though evidence of a fresh scandal case has emerged<sup>436</sup>, it unfortunately is not a single case in the EU's history<sup>437</sup>. Furthermore,

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<sup>433</sup> *Draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe*, Official Journal of the European Union, C 169, Vol. 46, 18 July 2003. [<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:C:2003:169:FULL&from=EN>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>434</sup> Council of the European Union: *EU response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine*. [<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/eu-response-ukraine-invasion/>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>435</sup> de Toro Mezquita (2021).

<sup>436</sup> Gijs, Camille and Eddy Wax: *Qatargate: Corruption scandal widens with more EU lawmakers in frame*, [Politico online news article 16.2.2023]. [<https://www.politico.eu/article/arrest-warrant-two-meps-connected-qatar-gate-parliament-corruption-probe-maria-arena-alessandra-moretti/>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>437</sup> Banks, Martin: *5 of the largest EU scandals in our history*, [The Brussels Times online news article 1.5.2015]. [<https://www.brusselstimes.com/news/magazine/32741/5-of-the-largest-eu-scandals-in-our-history>], accessed 15.3.2023.

the EU is likely to expand into the Western Balkans in the coming few years; many countries in that region occupy candidate status for future membership in the EU<sup>438</sup>.

### **The “Operational Coordinator”-scenario**

In the “Operational Coordinator”-scenario, the EBCG remains as a common legal entity. The EU will disintegrate in relative terms, potentially risking common funding levels. The primary focus of the SC will remain in supporting MS endeavours. The observed synergies gained from common EBCG cooperation sustain cohesion, offsetting the realised funding risks. However, the MS maintain strong interests in territorial sovereignty despite the perception of synergies from cooperation.

In contrast to the “Federal Actor”-scenario, the current regulatory framework will either remain or minor adjustments will be made. The potential adjustments may relate to three things. One, clarification of the executive powers of the SC<sup>439</sup> after lessons learned. Two, improving oversight of the SC by developing a comprehensive quality control mechanism<sup>440 441</sup>, including a further update to the newly introduced Schengen evaluation mechanism<sup>442</sup>. Three, revocation of the most stringent coercive Union measures over the MS<sup>443</sup>. Finally, the MS may step up their contributions voluntarily to compensate the potentially decreasing EU funding.

## **5.4 Summaries of the analyses**

### **Finnish strategic plans**

The strategy documents present Finland as an active and committed member in the EBCG. This is due to the foreseen benefits for the national system in an apparent synergy-seeking mode. Activity can be perceived as a progressive stance to development in the scope where potential national benefits are the clearest. Thus, the value of competence extends beyond national issues. The FBG inherits the role of Finland in the IBM strategy due to its leading position in the national structure. There, a securitisation act is evident in the reflection of the volatile contemporary environment. This is a means to tie the other national authorities into the sphere of

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<sup>438</sup> European Commission: *Candidate Countries and Potential Candidates*. [<https://ec.europa.eu/environment/enlarg/candidates.htm>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>439</sup> *Regulation (EU) 2019/1896*, Article 42.

<sup>440</sup> *Ibid.* Articles 32, 33 and 47.

<sup>441</sup> See Højland Jensen (2019), Larsen Kristmoen (2021) and Marquis (2021).

<sup>442</sup> *Council Regulation (EU) 2022/922 of 9 June 2022 on the establishment and operation of an evaluation and monitoring mechanism to verify the application of the Schengen acquis, and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1053/2013*, Official Journal of the European Union, L 160, Vol. 65, 15 June 2022. [<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:2022:160:FULL&from=EN>], accessed 15.3.2023.

<sup>443</sup> *Regulation (EU) 2019/1896*, Article 42.

EBCG-related cooperation. Cooperation in the EBCG is promoted as one solution to maintain border security and relevant parts of internal security in Finland.

### Strategic foresight

Dator identified four archetypal images as generic alternative scenarios in futures studies. They are: continuity, transformation, discipline and collapse. Furthermore, he argued that each of these alternatives needs to be considered equally.<sup>444</sup> These archetypes can be attributed to the present scenarios, but requires preference. Instead, the scenarios are equally considered. It appears that elements for all four scenarios fulfilling are in place. Indicators for monitoring scenarios<sup>445</sup> can assist in distinguishing what scenario is occurring. The identified pendulum model of the previous chapter relates to this. Epistemic communities in the EBCG strategic culture influence discourse and through EIBM practice, shapes the ultimate outcome of the community. The shaping of the future of EU integration is out of the scope of this research. Instead, broad contextual issues are presented below to demonstrate future milestones.

Firstly, the operational concept of the SC. A prior recommendation was to form a commonly accepted operational concept in the medium-term<sup>446</sup>. Now, the MB WG EIBM is in place and likely acts in a central role in this process. It appears to be the forum for principled discussion on the matter. In relation to this, the European Commission will conduct its mid-term review of the Regulation this year<sup>447</sup>. During this period of review, decisions or indecisiveness on the operational concept will likely have long-lasting effects of the SC. The effects will likely reflect beyond 2027. This in turn will spawn a new direction for future centralisation or decentralisation of operational functions. Centrally, the issue appears to revolve around the perception of sufficiency in the principle of subsidiarity<sup>448</sup> in MS achieving the required aims themselves. One can argue that the operational concept is a practical manifestation of subsidiarity of the time and is thus a fundamental issue.

Secondly, integrated planning is an equally potent issue with its novelty. Furthermore, integrated planning is the primary beneficiary of the operational concept. The operational concept may even be a necessary requirement for integrated planning. Ultimately, integrated planning

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<sup>444</sup> Dator, Jim: Alternative futures at the Manoa school, *Journal of Futures Studies*. Vol. 14, Iss. 2, 2009, pp. 1-18.

<sup>445</sup> Nekkers (2016), pp. 35-37.

<sup>446</sup> Marquis (2021), p. 78.

<sup>447</sup> *Regulation (EU) 2019/1896*, Article 121.

<sup>448</sup> *Consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union*, Article 5(3). "Under the principle of subsidiarity, in areas which do not fall within its exclusive competence, the Union shall act only if and in so far as the objectives of the proposed action cannot be **sufficiently** achieved by the Member States, either at central level or at regional and local level, but can rather, by reason of the scale or effects of the proposed action, be better achieved at Union level."

implies that it will influence all components of EIBM in the short-term (contingencies, operations) and long-term (capabilities)<sup>449</sup>. In particular, the capability planning has the biggest potential to shape the future. The end-result will be technical means and necessary infrastructural support that the EBCG uses to conduct operations for years, even decades to come. Thus, choices made there will have an impact with its implications, such as path-dependencies.

Thirdly, the question of institutionalisation of the EBCG. The EBCG is a community consisting of more than 100,000 professionals covering all the components of EIBM across a diverse field of national authorities. This community is the source for legitimising approaches from the bottom up. The shared responsibility premise is everyone's business at the results level. In order to overcome perceptions of externality (i.e. us versus them), the community members need to be affiliated with the EBCG. This is fundamentally a cultural issue. The Regulation calls for this to be a part of the SC<sup>450</sup>, but as such, it is only a partial approach. The key issue for involving the whole community over a long period will be a matter of communication. This can be viewed most visibly in the progressive or cautious sense. Progressively, the new status and importance of Frontex and the EBCG overall will be emphasised. Cautiously, the EBCG will be viewed as an additional element on top of the traditional MS primary role.

Finally, about Finland's role in all these developments. Finland was perceived to be an active participant in European cooperation in the past strategies. Cooperation was seen as a means to align the national system and to gain perceived added value nationally. The notions of providing considerable added value to cooperation partners, complying with its duties and the aim of maintaining the effectiveness of the European system all carry responsibilities. The three above examples are issues subject to change by contemporary forces. Furthermore, the national political landscape periodically shifts as well. In sum, meeting the strategic communication of the past calls for a duty to meet those issues with equal responsibility in the present.

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<sup>449</sup> *Regulation (EU) 2019/1896*, Article 9.

<sup>450</sup> *Ibid.* Recital 77.

The discussion is divided into three central themes. They are: the notion of strategic culture in general, the utility of sociology as a source of descriptive power and harnessing strategic management to utilising this knowledge potential into practice. These are followed with a converging section.

Strategic culture literature focuses on: context, continuity and change. The parallel issues of competing subcultures and epistemic communities relate to contemporary research. All of these issues are all detectable, but unobservable<sup>451</sup>. Seppo depicts strategic culture as dynamic, instead of static and occupying a deep reality. He argued that although the issue is evolving constantly and thus difficult to pin down, it remains within our reach in research.<sup>452</sup> Thus, the key themes appear fused together. Wendt describes this fusion well: “In both a causal and constitutive sense, therefore, structure is an ongoing effect of process, at the same time that process is an effect of structure.”<sup>453</sup>. In fact, Wendt’s sections on structure, agency, and culture<sup>454</sup> are visible in parallel here. The structure is the EBCG, the agency is EIBM and culture is the comprehensive context. Furthermore, subcultures appear to be personified through the actors of epistemic communities. Lantis summarises this in a related statement<sup>455</sup> and Høiback refers to this as well<sup>456</sup>. Foucault raised the question on the unity of discourse. He posited that a discourse may raise its profile in a changing space altering its form constantly, instead of it being fixed in uniqueness or continuity.<sup>457</sup> Furthermore, Wendt stated that: “Culture is constantly in motion, even as it reproduces itself.”<sup>458</sup>. It becomes apparent that the observed discourses of legitimacy of the EBCG and agency of EIBM interact in the reproduction of strategic practice.

Wendt configures his social theory of international politics on different sociologies<sup>459</sup>. The simple notion of sociology appears important. In the theoretical framework, the EBCG was outlined

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<sup>451</sup> Jackson (2011), pp. 86-88.

<sup>452</sup> Seppo (2021), pp. 295, 302-303.

<sup>453</sup> Wendt (1999), p. 186.

<sup>454</sup> Ibid. pp. 139-190.

<sup>455</sup> Lantis, Jeffrey S.: Strategic culture: from Clausewitz to Constructivism, in Larsen, Jeffrey A. (ed.), *Comparative Strategic Cultures Curriculum*, Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Fort Belvoir, 2006. [<https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/document?repid=rep1&type=pdf&doi=492af0f359dc596158136b5ac408aa58a4cc35cb-#page=91>], accessed 15.3.2023, p. 31. “Considering strategic culture as “a dynamic interplay between discourse and practice” offers a means for accommodating the issue of the mutable nature of strategic culture. Similarly, it may illuminate both how strategic culture evolves from generation to generation and is transformed by competing groups through negotiation and debate.”.

<sup>456</sup> Høiback (2013), pp.113-116.

<sup>457</sup> ”Niin herää kysymys siitä, syntyykö diskurssin ykseys kohteen pysyvyyden ja ainutkertaisuuden sijasta pikeminkin tilasta, jossa erilaiset kohteet profiloituvat ja muuttavat jatkuvasti muotoaan.” in Foucault (2005), p. 48.

<sup>458</sup> Wendt (1999), p. 188.

<sup>459</sup> Ibid. p. 23- 33.

as a social phenomenon and sociological viewpoints appear to connect. Linklater, building on famed sociologist Norbert Elias' work, enlarged the boundaries of sociology to include international relations sociological intersubjective relations.<sup>460</sup> Furthermore, Cladi and Locatelli introduce a "sociology of bureaucracy" itself in conjunction with traditional IR theories<sup>461</sup>. Soeters provides a balanced setup of the historical development of sociology in the perspective of military studies. He summarises three main levels of analysis in sociology: the macro (societal interaction), meso (institutional interaction) and micro (individual interaction).<sup>462</sup> The EBCG is a supranational legal entity that is primarily formed by sub-state actors, but all three of these appear to relate to its strategic culture. These are: the interaction of MS in the EU, the interaction within the EBCG and the interaction of representatives in the MB. Soeters' introduction of two French sociologists are of note: Emile Durkheim on the topic of integration in society and Michel Foucault on the topic of governmentality<sup>463</sup>. The importance of these sociologists' contributions is discussed below.

Durkheim researched integration in society and three interesting parts of his work can be distinguished: solidarity (organic and mechanistic), the conscience collective and isomorphism<sup>464</sup>. Soeters distinguished Durkheim's division of labour, where work division is either simple or differentiated. In the simple sense, accomplishment of a common goal is attributable to a mechanistic solidarity, whereas the situation of interdependence of a process implies organic solidarity.<sup>465</sup> Soeters explains:

*"In the first case one simply feels one belongs together, as in a family. In the second case one simply knows one belongs together because everyone has to do their bit to make the whole system work, like the proper functioning of all organs is needed to keep the whole body healthy."*<sup>466</sup>

For the EBCG, solidarity is a central element in conjunction with the premise of "shared responsibility". Elements of both of the abovementioned types exist. The premise prescribing portions of the individual and communal. Soeters explains the Durkheimian concept of the conscience collective being: "...the collective mindset or institutional culture of societies..."<sup>467</sup>, which he argues is fundamental for culture studies<sup>468</sup>. Connecting strategic culture with sociology in this way describes the similar cultural anthropological nature of these endeavours. Finally, Soeters introduces the tendency of militaries to operate similarly, which he identifies as

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<sup>460</sup> Linklater, Andrew: Process sociology and IR, *The Sociological Review*. Vol. 59, Iss. 1, 2011, pp. 48-64.

<sup>461</sup> Cladi, Lorenzo & Andrea Locatelli, Introduction, in Cladi & Locatelli (2016), pp. 1-8.

<sup>462</sup> Soeters, Joseph: *Sociology and military studies classical and current foundations*. Routledge, Oxon 2018, pp. 196-197.

<sup>463</sup> Ibid. pp. 22-36, 105-117.

<sup>464</sup> Ibid. p. 22-36.

<sup>465</sup> Ibid. p. 24.

<sup>466</sup> Ibid. p. 24.

<sup>467</sup> Ibid. p. 92.

<sup>468</sup> Ibid. p. 24.

isomorphism. It is described as the tendency to converge in operational conduct by mimetic (mimicking), normative and coercive forces to achieve either assimilation, separation or integration of operational approach<sup>469</sup>. The topic of EIBM in the EBCG relates strikingly well with Soeters' definition of integration:

*“Integration is the most difficult way of obtaining cooperation among armed forces of different nationalities, as it relies on the idea that all partners are equal and can have comparable input to achieving the mission goals.”*<sup>470</sup>

Apart from discourse analysis, Michel Foucault is also known for many issues in philosophy and sociology. Soeters introduces Foucault's concept of governmentality being: “...about the rationalities and techniques of power...”<sup>471</sup>. Merlingen states that governance and governmentality overlap and the latter is a tool to study “networked governance beyond the state”. He delineates two key terms of governmentality, political rationality and political technology, which shape the rational limits of governance and the operationalisation of it into actual activities, respectively. He concludes that governmentality orients the focus of study to the micro-level of governance.<sup>472</sup> The EBCG and its MB is the central forum how relevant EU governance is further operationalised downwards, in a similar manner as Merlingen described the key terms.

Mintzberg's, Ahlstrand's and Lampel's introduced premises of the cultural school of strategic management can be applied to the results of this thesis<sup>473</sup>. In short, strategy is formed in social interaction by its members. The members are socialised over time to the organisation explicitly and implicitly. In this sense, strategy is a perspective founded on the collective, which does not encourage change as much as a simpler shift in the organisation's existing perspective.<sup>474</sup> The authors conclude that: “In this school, strategy formation becomes the management of collective cognition—a critically important idea, although hardly an easy one to manage.”<sup>475</sup> Here, the MB was found to be a central node in the governance chain from the EU to the MS in the field of border and migration management. It acts continuously in a steering function and it is the authority that agrees on the long-term TO EIBM among other issues. This practice summarises the consensus and shared perspective of the MS primarily and the European Commission secondarily. This perspective is likely influenced by implicit processes of epistemic communities, both within the MB representatives themselves and the facilitating background groups they

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<sup>469</sup> Soeters (2018), p. 27-28.

<sup>470</sup> Ibid. p. 28.

<sup>471</sup> Ibid. p. 111.

<sup>472</sup> Merlingen, Michael: From Governance to Governmentality in CSDP: Towards a Foucauldian Research Agenda, *Journal of Common Market Studies*. Vol. 49, No. 1, 2011, pp. 149-169.

<sup>473</sup> Mintzberg, Ahlstrand & Lampel (2009), p. 275-300.

<sup>474</sup> Ibid. p. 281.

<sup>475</sup> Ibid. p. 300.

utilise. The authors appear to recommend a view of managing “collective cognition” across the power-wielding epistemic communities of the EBCG. Simple awareness may be the first step.

In summary, strategic culture is evolving constantly within the social aspects of the EBCG. Sociological analysis can shed light on this as a process and environment. Successful management necessitates cultural consciousness, especially on a strategic European scale. The study’s approach was a snapshot about two central discourses, contextual information and an attempt to foresee the future for further European and Finnish benefit. At the end of this process, a few issues must be highlighted.

Dennison and Geddes argue that the EU’s migration policy is a crucial area of the EU itself in the future<sup>476</sup>. This effect of political steering can be perceived as a slow paradigmatic change. The shared responsibility premise is founded on MS primacy, but now appears to rupture with the newest regulatory framework. In this study, this was perceived by Frontex’s increased importance and relative equal status that provides security within the MS and abroad. In fact, two foreseen scenarios implied a growing Frontex. This can link with a long-term alignment drive towards a common operational art for the collaboration purposes of the EBCG<sup>477</sup>. However, this appears to necessitate a strategic culture with some instrumental function<sup>478</sup>. Key stakeholders in this evolutionary alignment process are the epistemic communities holding influential knowledge and power.

Historical sedimentation defines a structure of culture. Santayana emphasised retentiveness in his quote: “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”<sup>479</sup>. This applies to learning and researching the EBCG strategic culture. It is a method of knowing oneself during this evolution. It is with retrospection that we can observe with accuracy. But in the present, we rely on interpretation. This study’s interpretation is that we are at the early stages of a new cultural layer. Something new appears to be emerging.

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<sup>476</sup> Dennison, James & Andrew Geddes: Migration and the future of Europe, in Damro Chad, Elke Heins & Drew Scott (eds.), *European Futures: Challenges and Crossroads for the European Union of 2050*. Routledge, Oxon 2021, p. 125.

<sup>477</sup> Marquis (2021), pp. 77, 79.

<sup>478</sup> Høiback (2013), pp. 127-128.

<sup>479</sup> Santayana, George, *The Life of Reason the Phases of Human Progress Volume I*, Project Gutenberg, 2021 [1905], <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/15000/15000-h/15000-h.htm>, accessed 13 February 2023. In *Continuity necessary to progress*. “Progress, far from consisting in change, depends on retentiveness. When change is absolute there remains no being to improve and no direction is set for possible improvement: and when experience is not retained, as among savages, infancy is perpetual. **Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.** In the first stage of life the mind is frivolous and easily distracted; it misses progress by failing in consecutiveness and persistence. This is the condition of children and barbarians, in whom instinct has learned nothing from experience.”.

## **7 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **7.1 Conclusions**

This study sought to answer a main research question: What is the nature and character of the EBCG's strategic culture following the adoption of Regulation (EU) 2019/1896 and how should this strategic culture be considered in Finnish strategic planning? Two conclusions and recommendations are constructed in two groups like the question itself. Furthermore, one general conclusion was drawn.

The EBCG strategic culture is an evolving concept that intertwines the topics of context, continuity and change into an inseparable and evolving whole. The EBCG strategic culture is represented through the MB interaction, but it is socially constructed in a decentralised manner among epistemic communities. Across these epistemic communities, discourses on EIBM agency and EBCG legitimacy were identified. The discourses tendentially influence the process of EIBM as a practice and the outcome of the EBCG, respectively. The SC, as a common operational resource of the EBCG, creates high expectations as the target year 2027 of the full roll-out approaches. The SC will likely define how operational cooperation will be organised beyond 2027. This process appears to shift Frontex into a new status and level of importance within the EBCG.

Finland perceived itself as a committed member in the EBCG, which seeks synergy benefits actively. These past commitments need to be met with responsibility in the present, as they influence the future. Three apparent indicators for the future of the EBCG emerged: 1) the operational concept for the SC, 2) the adoption of the EBCG-wide integrated planning and 3) the cultural institutionalisation of the EBCG and they all carry decision-making implications for the EBCG towards the future. Finland has a role in this process. The central issue is its profile in the EBCG. The boundaries of this profile are shaped by legitimate expectations of acceptability from the community towards Finland. As an active and committed MS, Finland can assist in driving the EBCG towards a commonly preferred future.

The study was a snapshot to the EBCG strategic culture, which pointed to the connectedness of discourse and practice in a broad manner. The EBCG continues its alignment of efforts according to a European vision. The SC and the new status of Frontex points to a new, emerging cultural layer among the existing sediments of the community. Further introspection can assist in better detecting this unobservable culture. This quest will lead to better descriptions of the nature and character of the EBCG itself.

## 7.2 Recommendations and recommendations for further research

Within the EBCG, significant effort is oriented to foreseeing the external operating environment through risk analysis processes. As in Dator's recommendation on the futures studies<sup>480</sup>, institutionalising this same aspect to the internal environment would be beneficial. Ideas and identities matter as they shape discourse. This could start with simple mapping. With the recent conjunction of border and migration management, the extent of participation in this community are yet to be pinpointed accurately. This is a rewarding process of introspection and learning. Reciprocally, this institutionalisation would link with synergies to what we do as a community<sup>481</sup>.

As a MS, Finland is constantly assessing both its role in the EBCG community and how it will be shaped through being a member of this community. This two-way influence is a natural element of socialisation at all levels of cooperation. Finland should work to establish two communications: 1) its current profile in a situational picture sense and 2) a vision-like picture of its desired profile. These supporting communications would assist its strategic planning by steering its activities that link closely to cooperation in the EBCG. The confines of acceptability within the EU, the EBCG and the national political establishment apply to this.

The EBCG is young and under-researched. Many research strategies could be viable and assist the community. First, researching the EBCG from an EU security actor viewpoint on an international or system level. This extends to comparison within the EU<sup>482</sup> or between other external<sup>483</sup> settings. This would likely assist in perceiving a comprehensive European strategic culture. Second, a longitudinal approach into the EBCG strategic culture could unearth the cultural sediments better, supplementing the work what this study did. Third, cultural studies could be focused on developing the SC and, in particular, on mechanisms of institutionalisation of a broader European practitioners' culture<sup>484</sup>. This is consistent with a recommendation of a previous study<sup>485</sup>. Finally, research aiming to support the strategic management of the MB and its affiliated governance bodies would likely be welcomed.

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<sup>480</sup> Dator (2009), p. 3.

<sup>481</sup> Marquis (2021), pp. 78-79.

<sup>482</sup> Such as the European Defence Agency, Permanent structured cooperation (PESCO) or Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

<sup>483</sup> Such as NATO or the Organisation for Security Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

<sup>484</sup> *Regulation (EU) 2019/1896*, Recital 77.

<sup>485</sup> Marquis (2021), pp. 79-80.

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## APPENDICES

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## Record of key events during the research process

Date	Key event	Notes
11.4.2022	Orienting interview with FIIA expert	An orienting interview was held with an expert from the Finnish Institute for International Affairs (FIIA). The notes were summarised, approved by the interviewee on 17.5.2022 and presented as a reference source in the thesis report.
31.5.2022 and 2.6.2022	First seminar and compulsory written response	The first seminar yielded positive comments and a green light for starting the research. Some concerns were noted about the breadth of the thesis. The compulsory written response to the supervisors yielded thoughts of orienting the title better, to broaden it to cover Finland as a Member State. This would alter the main research question slightly as well.
3.6.2022	Application for the FBG research permit	The application was sent to Border and Coast Guard Academy. The application was further clarified further to the handler on 5.7.2022.
6.- 10.6.2022	Choice about presenting the strategic culture of the EBCG	During the basic studies of fall 2021, several system modelling tools were utilised in the preparation of a written group concept document. Especially, the tool known as "rich picture". The rich picture would accompany the "thick description" text for illustrative purposes. A first draft of a legend for a rich picture in the thesis was produced.
8.8.2022	Invitations for interviews	Invitations to five experts were sent to organise interviews. The interviews were planned to be held during August-September. The draft invitations were approved by the supervisors prior to sending.
22.8.2022	Approved FBG research permit	The official approved research permit from the Border and Coast Guard Academy was signed (authorised). However, the FBG national IBM WG members were not named due to pending personnel changes.

Date	Key event	Notes
30.8.2022 and 1.9.2022	Second seminar and compulsory written response	The second seminar yielded some positive comments on the state of the research and some recommendations to consider. The compulsory written response to the supervisors yielded some actionable issues related to streamlining the first three supporting research questions, supporting and clarifying the analysis at this time and considering the breadth and thus shallow appearance of the research results.
31.8.2022 and 1.9.2022	Emails to identified experts	Emails were sent to all previously identified five experts. The document stating the privacy policy and informed consent was sent to all five persons. At this time, the research had established contact (at least one email response) with four of the five identified experts.
5.- 9.9.2022	Preliminary discourse analysis of documents	Preliminary results and ideas were generated in the discourse analysis method. Reflection on (military) sociological issues founded by Weber, Foucault and Durkheim were reflected upon (Soeters, 2018). The preliminary results were elaborated and discussed with the first supervisor on 8.9.2022.
14.9.2022	First interview with expert	The first online interview was conducted in the Finnish language via phone call. Permission to record the interview audio was granted.
15.9.2022	1. Draft transcript of first interview 2. Email to Finnish participants of the foreseen workshop	The draft interview transcript was sent for feedback to the interviewee. 2. An orientational / introductory email was sent to the foreseen Finnish participants of the planned workshop 2022/2023.
21.9.2022	Second interview with expert	The second online interview was conducted in the English language via phone call. Permission to record the interview audio was granted.
22.9.2022	Third interview with expert	The third online interview was conducted in the English language via phone call. Permission to record the interview audio was granted.
7.10.2022	Feedback from second interviewee	The second interviewee (21.9.2022) provided the feedback on the interview transcript for analysis purposes.
13.10.2022	Fourth interview with expert	The fourth online interview was conducted in the English language via a Teams-software call. Permission to record the interview audio was granted.

Date	Key event	Notes
25.10.2022	Identified FBG national IBM WG chairperson	The identified chairperson of the Finnish IBM working group was identified. The secretary of the working group remained unidentified for the time being.
2.11.222	Fifth interview with expert	The fifth online interview was conducted in the Finnish language via a Skype for Business-software call. Permission to record the interview audio was granted.
9.11.2022	Feedback from first interviewee	The first interviewee (14.9.2022) provided the feedback on the interview transcript for analysis purposes.
10.11.2022	Feedback from fifth interviewee	The fifth interviewee (2.11.2022) provided the feedback on the interview transcript for analysis purposes.
7.- 11.11.2022	Organising the workshop for early 2023	A second email was sent to the foreseen Finnish participants of the planned workshop. The workshop was decided to be held in early 2023, due to delays with the interviews and overlap with other basic studies. The dates for the workshop (main date and two reserve dates) were notified to the Finnish participants on 16.11.2022.
5.12.2022 and 16.12.2022	The official invitation for the workshop	The official invitation was prepared and sent to the Finnish participants on 5.12.2022. A summarised English-language version was sent to international interviewees on 16.12.2022
10.1.2023	Hand-out material for the workshop	The voluntary reading material for the workshop participants was provided at this time via email to the recognised participants (annex V).
12.1.2023 and 13.1.2023	Conducting workshop	The workshop was conducted in two separate parts due to overlap in schedules. A total of five Finnish high-level experts were present, of which three on 12 <sup>th</sup> January and two on 13 <sup>th</sup> January. The first session on 12 <sup>th</sup> January was conducted according to plan and the second session on 13 <sup>th</sup> January was conducted with a focus on assessment and discussion of prior work.
23.1.2023 and 3.2.2023	Feedback of the workshop	The workshop results and hand-written notes were gathered into a single document summary and provided for reflective feedback for the workshop participants on Monday 23.1.2023. An initial deadline up to 3.2.2023 was provided. As a result of the feedback cycle, minor corrections for the summary was made.
7.2.2023	Third and final seminar	The final official seminar was conducted with feedback gained from the version handed on 30.1.2023.

Date	Key event	Notes
9.2.2023	Orienting interview with expert working for the Finnish Ministry of Interior	An orienting interview was held with an expert working for the Finnish Ministry of Interior to gain information on strategic foresight practice that is conducted at national ministerial level.
21.2.2023	Thick description	Following the reading of a text regarding quality of interpretive research, the issue of thick description was reoriented. Instead of writing a literal thick description, it was considered as an overall indicator of quality, especially on the fourth and fifth chapters. Furthermore, this influenced the presentation, omitting the rich picture method.
22.2.2023	Sixth interview	The final interview was conducted at this time following clarifying information about the Finnish national IBM working group staffing.
24.2.2023	Feedback from sixth interviewee	The sixth interviewee (22.2.2023) provided the feedback on the interview transcript for analysis purposes.
28.2.2023	Final title of the thesis	A request to change the final title was sent to the professor of the department. The request was accepted on 7.3.2023.
8.3.2023	Focus of research questions	The issue of focus of the research was finally clarified (first raised on 31.5.2022). The research followed the national model instead of the FBG.

Full analyses of the official documentation

ANALYSIS LEGEND						
Discourse	Legitimacy			Agency		
Approach (colour)	Persuasive (green)	Balancing (blue)	Coercive (red)	Cautious (yellow)	Neutral (grey)	Progressive (purple)
Contextual textual data not highlighted						

Recital or Article	Text
Rec. 1	The objective of Union policy in the field of external border management is to develop and implement European integrated border management at national and Union level, which is a necessary corollary to the free movement of persons within the Union and is a fundamental component of an area of freedom, security and justice.
Rec. 9	It is necessary to monitor the crossing of the external borders efficiently, to address migratory challenges and potential future threats at the external borders, to ensure a high level of internal security within the Union, to safeguard the functioning of the Schengen area and to respect the overarching principle of solidarity. Those actions and objectives should be accompanied by the proactive management of migration, including the necessary measures in third countries. To that end, it is necessary to consolidate the European Border and Coast Guard and to further expand the mandate of the Agency.
Rec. 12	European integrated border management should be implemented as a shared responsibility... While Member States retain the primary responsibility for the management of their external borders in their interest and in the interest of all Member States and are responsible for issuing return decisions, the Agency should support the application of Union measures relating to the management of the external borders and return by reinforcing, assessing and coordinating the actions of the Member States which implement those measures. The activities of the Agency should complement the efforts of the Member States.

Recital or Article	Text
Rec. 13	To ensure the effective implementation of European integrated border management and increase the efficiency of Union return policy, a European Border and Coast Guard should be established. It should be provided with the requisite financial and human resources and equipment.
Rec. 16	The effective implementation of European integrated border management by the European Border and Coast Guard should be ensured by means of a multi-annual strategic policy cycle. The multiannual cycle should set out an integrated, unified and continuous process for providing strategic guidelines to all the relevant actors at Union level and at national level in the area of border management and return so that those actors are able to implement European integrated border management in a coherent manner
Rec. 17	European integrated border management requires integrated planning between the Member States and the Agency for border and return operations in order to prepare responses to challenges at the external borders, for contingency planning and for coordinating the long-term development of capabilities both in terms of recruitment and training and in terms of the acquisition and development of equipment.
Rec. 25	The Agency relies on the cooperation of Member States to be able to perform its tasks effectively. In that respect, it is important for the Agency and the Member States to act in good faith and to exchange accurate information in a timely manner. No Member State should be obliged to supply information the disclosure of which it considers contrary to the essential interests of its security.
Rec. 26	Member States should also, in their own interest and in the interest of the other Member States, contribute relevant data necessary for the activities carried out by the Agency, including for the purposes of situational awareness, risk analysis, vulnerability assessments and integrated planning.
Rec. 42	In a spirit of shared responsibility, the role of the Agency should be to monitor regularly the management of the external borders, including the respect for fundamental rights in the border management and return activities of the Agency. The Agency should ensure proper and effective monitoring not only through situational awareness and risk analysis, but also through the presence of experts from its own staff in Member States.

Recital or Article	Text
Rec. 57	<p>Where external border control is rendered ineffective to such an extent that it risks jeopardising the functioning of the Schengen area, either because a Member State does not take the necessary measures in line with a vulnerability assessment or because a Member State facing specific and disproportionate challenges at the external borders has not requested sufficient support from the Agency or is not implementing such support, a unified, rapid and effective response should be delivered at Union level. For the purpose of mitigating these risks, and to ensure better coordination at Union level...</p>
Rec. 77	<p>The Agency and the Member States, in particular their training academies, should cooperate closely with respect to the training of the standing corps, while ensuring that training programmes are harmonised and foster the common values enshrined in the Treaties. The Agency should be able, after obtaining the approval of the management board, to set up an Agency training centre to facilitate further the inclusion of a common European culture in the training provided.</p>
Rec. 103	<p>This Regulation respects the fundamental rights and observes the principles recognised by Articles 2 and 6 TEU and by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union ('the Charter'), in particular respect for human dignity, the right to life, the prohibition of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the prohibition of trafficking in human beings, the right to liberty and security, the right to the protection of personal data, the right of access to documents, the right to asylum and to protection against removal and expulsion, non-refoulement, non-discrimination and the rights of the child.</p>

Recital or Article	Text
Rec. 106	<p>The Commission and the Member States should be represented within a management board to exercise oversight over the Agency. The management board should, where possible, consist of the operational heads of the national services responsible for border management or their representatives. The parties represented in the management board should make efforts to limit turnover of their representatives in order to ensure continuity of the management board's work. The management board should be entrusted with the necessary powers to establish the Agency's budget, verify its execution, adopt appropriate financial rules, establish transparent working procedures for decision-making by the Agency and appoint the executive director and three deputy executive directors, each of whom should be assigned responsibilities in a certain field of competence of the Agency, such as managing the standing corps, overseeing the Agency's tasks regarding returns or managing the Agency's involvement in large-scale IT systems. The Agency should be governed and operated taking into account the principles of the common approach on Union decentralised agencies adopted on 19 July 2012 by the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission.</p>
Rec. 111	<p>The Agency is expected to face challenging circumstances in the coming years as regards fulfilling exceptional needs for recruiting and retaining qualified staff from the broadest possible geographical basis.</p>
Rec. 112	<p>In the spirit of shared responsibility, the Agency should require the staff it employs, in particular the statutory staff of the standing corps, including statutory staff deployed in operational activities, to possess the same level of training, special expertise and professionalism as staff seconded or employed by the Member States. Therefore, the Agency should review and evaluate whether its statutory staff conduct themselves properly in operational activities in the field of border control and return.</p>
Art. 1	<p>This Regulation establishes a European Border and Coast Guard to ensure European integrated border management...</p>
Art. 4	<p>The national authorities of Member States responsible for border management, including coast guards to the extent that they carry out border control tasks, the national authorities responsible for return and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency ('the Agency') shall constitute the European Border and Coast Guard.</p>

Recital or Article	Text
Art. 5	3. To ensure coherent European integrated border management, the Agency shall facilitate and render more effective the application of Union measures relating to the management of the external borders, in particular Regulation (EU) 2016/399, and of Union measures relating to return.
Art. 7	<p>1. The European Border and Coast Guard shall implement European integrated border management as a shared responsibility of the Agency and of the national authorities responsible for border management, including coast guards to the extent that they carry out maritime border surveillance operations and any other border control tasks. Member States shall retain primary responsibility for the management of their sections of the external borders.</p> <p>2. The Agency shall provide technical and operational assistance in the implementation of measures relating to return as referred to in Article 48 of this Regulation, upon request of the Member State concerned or on its own initiative and with the agreement of the Member State concerned. Member States shall retain sole responsibility for issuing return decisions and for adopting the measures pertaining to the detention of returnees in accordance with Directive 2008/115/EC.</p> <p>3. Member States shall ensure the management of their external borders and the enforcement of return decisions, in close cooperation with the Agency, in their own interests and in the common interest of all Member States in full compliance with Union law, including respect for fundamental rights, and in accordance with the multiannual strategic policy cycle for European integrated border management referred to in Article 8.</p> <p>4. The Agency shall support the application of Union measures relating to the management of the external borders and the enforcement of return decisions by reinforcing, assessing and coordinating the actions of Member States and by providing technical and operational assistance in the implementation of those measures and in return matters. The Agency shall not support any measures or be involved in any activities related to controls at internal borders. The Agency shall be fully responsible and accountable for any decision it takes and for any activity for which it is solely responsible under this Regulation.</p> <p>5. Member States may cooperate at an operational level with other Member States or third countries, where such cooperation is compatible with the tasks of the Agency. Member States shall refrain from any activity which could jeopardise the functioning of the Agency or the attainment of its objectives. Member States shall report to the Agency on that operational cooperation with other Member States or third countries at the external borders and in the field of return. The executive director shall inform the management board of such matters on a regular basis and at least once a year.</p>

Recital or Article	Text
Art. 8	<p>1. The Commission and the European Border and Coast Guard shall ensure the effectiveness of European integrated border management by means of a multiannual strategic policy cycle that is adopted in accordance with the procedure laid down in paragraph 4.</p> <p>2. The multiannual strategic policy for the European integrated border management shall set out how the challenges in the area of border management and return are to be addressed in a coherent, integrated and systematic manner. It shall set out the policy priorities and provide strategic guidelines for a period of five years in relation to the components set out in Article 3.</p>
Art. 11	<p>The Agency, the national authorities responsible for border management, including coast guards to the extent that they carry out border control tasks, and the national authorities responsible for return shall be subject to a duty to cooperate in good faith and an obligation to exchange information.</p>
Art. 12	<p>1. In order to perform the tasks conferred on them by this Regulation, the Agency, the national authorities responsible for border management, including coast guards to the extent that they carry out border control tasks, and the national authorities responsible for return shall, in accordance with this Regulation and other relevant Union and national law regarding the exchange of information, share in a timely and accurate manner all necessary information.</p>
Art. 42	<p>1. Where external border control is rendered ineffective to such an extent that it risks jeopardising the functioning of the Schengen area because:</p> <p>(a) a Member State does not implement the necessary measures in accordance with a decision of the management board referred to in Article 32(10); or</p> <p>(b) a Member State facing specific and disproportionate challenges at the external borders has either not requested sufficient support from the Agency under Article 37, 39 or 40 or is not taking the necessary steps to implement actions under those Articles or under Article 41;</p> <p>8. The Member State concerned shall comply with the Council decision referred to in paragraph 1. For that purpose, it shall immediately cooperate with the Agency and take the necessary action to facilitate the implementation of that decision and the practical execution of the measures set out in that decision and in the operational plan agreed upon with the executive director, in particular by implementing the obligations provided for in Articles 43, 82 and 83.</p> <p>10. The Commission shall monitor ... If the Member State concerned does not comply with the Council decision referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article within 30 days and does not cooperate with the Agency in accordance with to paragraph 8 of this Article, the Commission may trigger the procedure provided for in Article 29 of Regulation (EU) 2016/399.</p>

Recital or Article	Text
Art. 100	<p>1. The management board shall be responsible for taking the strategic decisions of the Agency in accordance with this Regulation.</p> <p>7. The management board may establish an executive board composed of up to four representatives of the management board, including its chairperson, and a representative of the Commission, to assist it and the executive director with regard to the preparation of the decisions, programmes and activities to be adopted by the management board and to take certain provisional, urgent decisions on behalf of the management board when necessary. The executive board shall not take decisions that must be passed by a majority of two thirds of the management board. The management board may delegate certain clearly defined tasks to the executive board, in particular where this improves the efficiency of the Agency. It may not delegate to the executive board tasks related to decisions that must be passed by a majority of two thirds of the management board.</p>
Art. 101	<p>1. Without prejudice to paragraph 3, the management board shall be composed of one representative of each Member State and two representatives of the Commission, each with a right to vote. To this effect, each Member State shall appoint a member of the management board as well as an alternate who will represent the member in his or her absence. The Commission shall appoint two members and two alternates. The duration of the terms of office shall be four years. The terms of office shall be extendable.</p> <p>2. The management board members shall be appointed on the basis of the degree of their relevant high-level experience, their expertise in the field of operational cooperation on border management and return, and their relevant managerial, administrative and budgetary skills. Member States and the Commission shall aim to achieve a gender-balanced representation on the management board.</p>

European Commission policy document 24.5.2022	
Page(s)	Text
1	To achieve this objective, the European Union and its Member States need to work together, especially in the framework of the European Border and Coast Guard (EBCG), towards achieving a fully effective <b>European integrated border management</b> (EIBM), bringing together all relevant players at both European and national levels.
1	The Multiannual Strategic Policy cycle will guide how the European Border and Coast Guard should effectively operate as a structure over the next five years and implement the European integrated border management. At <b>operational level</b> , this cycle should give a common framework, steering the daily work of more than 120 000 European Border and Coast Guard officers from national authorities and Frontex.
1	In addition, it will seek the views of the institutions on how to set out an <b>integrated, unified and continuous process</b> for providing strategic guidelines to all the relevant EBCG and other European and national actors to ensure a coherent EIBM implementation.
2	The EIBM policy cycle has as a strategic objective to determine how the European Border and Coast Guard should address the challenges in the area of border management and return in a coherent, integrated and systematic manner.
3	The development of a European integrated border management strategy is a responsibility of the Union institutions. Consequently, it is essential that there is effective cooperation between the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council in establishing a political framework to direct European integrated border management.
3	Frontex is tasked with establishing a technical and operational strategy for European integrated border management, by decision of its Management Board and based on a proposal from the Frontex executive director. That strategy is to be prepared in close cooperation with Member States and the Commission. The strategy must be in line with Article 3 of the EBCG Regulation... It should build on the Commission's Communication on a multiannual strategic policy on EIBM.

Page(s)	Text
4	Member States retain <b>primary responsibility for the management of their external borders</b> in their interest and in the interest of all Member States.
5	The EBCG Regulation creates a comprehensive architecture for the <b>European Border and Coast Guard...</b> The Regulation also tasks the EBCG with ensuring the effective implementation of EIBM in the spirit of <b>shared responsibility</b> . Realising the full potential of the European Border and Coast Guard would lead to a real and necessary change on the ground. To that end, the EU and Member States should collectively make use of this new architecture and strengthen the EBCG governance structures, while enhancing its new operational capabilities through better and faster coordination at EU level.
5	The governance structure of the European Border and Coast Guard must guarantee that the activities of Frontex and national border and coast guard authorities are fully aligned with the EU's political objectives in border and migration management, and that they follow the policy line related to internal security.
5	Member States retain primary responsibility and competence for management of their borders. Thanks to its new mandate, Frontex is now playing a central role within the European Border and Coast Guard by reinforcing, assessing and coordinating the actions of Member States and by establishing European capabilities.
5	Since 2019, these tools have now been complemented by the possibility to support Member States more effectively through the Agency's own operational force, the EBCG standing corps. The standing corps is deployed under the command and control of the hosting Member State... The Agency is also initiating, coordinating and supporting many other processes (e.g. standardisation for technical equipment and exchange of information), with the objective to further reinforce the European Border and Coast Guard and facilitate the daily work of border guards in the EU.

Page(s)	Text
9	The multiannual strategic policy needs to be guided by the main principles and concepts of European integrated border management which stem directly from the EBCG Regulation and have as an objective to allow the European Border and Coast Guard to operate effectively and in full compliance with the legal framework.
9	According to the EBCG Regulation, implementing EIBM is a shared responsibility of Member State authorities responsible for border management and return, and of Frontex, together forming the European Board and Coast Guard. This is the cornerstone of the EBCG architecture and an operational translation of the shared competence of the EU and Member States for the implementation of integrated management of the EU's external borders, as provided for in the Treaty. The shared responsibility is complemented by the underlying duty of all EBCG actors (Frontex and national authorities) to cooperate in good faith and by the overarching obligation to exchange information within the EBCG community.
9-11	Other principles listed and described: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Constant readiness to respond to emerging threats,</li> <li>- Greater coordination and integrated planning,</li> <li>- Comprehensive situational awareness</li> <li>- EIBM technical standards,</li> <li>- Common border guards culture and high level of professionalism and</li> <li>- Functional integrity</li> </ul>

Frontex technical and operational strategy for European Integrated Border Management 2019	
Page(s)	Text
8	<p>Strengthening the European Union (EU), upholding its values and promoting them globally, relies, inter alia, on the credible provision of safety and security to European citizens... the ultimate goal is to sustain a safe and secure area of freedom, security and justice. Realisation of this aim implies being able to tackle geopolitical instability generating conflicts migration and the threat of serious organised crime with cross-border dimensions as well as terrorism.</p>
8	<p>At the nexus, the European Border and Coast Guard (EBCG) has been established to ensure integrated border management of the external borders to enable a single area without border checks – the Schengen Area. Member States and Schengen Associated Countries (MS/SAC) have the main responsibility for the management of their sections of the external borders... This collective effort constitutes European Integrated Border Management (EIBM)</p>
9	<p>The purpose of the TO EIBM is to operationalise EIBM in a comprehensive manner at EU and national levels. It strives to boost strengths and to mitigate weaknesses associated with the management of the EU's external borders today, and, at the same time, to prepare for the challenges of tomorrow... the TO EIBM is designed to ensure a long term efficiency of the EBCG as a multilevel entity</p>
9-10	<p>Thus, the TO EIBM, based on the legal and policy frameworks of the EU, consequently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establishes common vision, mission and values of EBCG;</li> <li>- Summarises the strategic context for the operationalisation of the EIBM at the internal-external nexus;</li> <li>- Describes how the implementation of the TO EIBM should be governed at European level;</li> <li>- Operationalises the level of ambition for EIBM, set by the Commission and Council, through strategic objectives and specific objectives, which are to be implemented at European and national level<sup>3</sup>;</li> <li>- Proposes, on the basis of those objectives, a series of technical and operational actions and activities along with their respective expected added value, guiding the implementation of EIBM at European or national level.</li> </ul>

Page(s)	Text
11	<p>A common vision and mission for the EBCG is essential to align the expectations of its stakeholders on the TO EIBM outcome. The MS/SAC, supported by... Frontex – ensure <b>the smooth and lawful transit of persons including their means of transport and objects in their possession across the safe, secure and well-functioning external borders of the EU</b> in support of a European area of freedom, security and justice. Underpinned by strict compliance with fundamental rights, in the spirit of shared responsibility and governed by principles of transparency and accountability, this is achieved by activities undertaken at European and national level aimed at <b>controlling the external borders in a fully integrated manner together</b>, working across policy areas, borders and authorities. EIBM is implemented by the EBCG and its partners drawing on a culture that fosters the core values of <b>professionalism, respect, cooperation, compliance, transparency, accountability and fundamental rights</b></p>
12	<p>The legal and policy frameworks of EIBM... based on Article 77 of the Lisbon Treaty, which includes in its third objective a specific provision referring to “any measure necessary for the gradual establishment of an integrated management system for external borders”.</p> <p>Before arriving at Article 77 of the Lisbon Treaty, there were two main stages in the development of the concept of IBM:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Commission Communication of 2002 introducing three main pillars for IBM – a common body of law, operational / practical / technical cooperation between the MS/SAC in the field of operations, training, pooling resources, equipment and financial solidarity / burden sharing between MS/SAC.</li> <li>2. The Council Conclusions of December 2006, which defined IBM according to the following main components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Border control (checks and surveillance) according to SBC, risk analysis and crime intelligence;</li> <li>• Investigation of cross-border crime in coordination with law enforcement authorities;</li> <li>• The four-tier access control model;</li> <li>• Inter-agency cooperation and international cooperation (Third Countries);</li> <li>• Coordination and coherence of activities in MS/SAC and Institutions and other bodies of the Community.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

Page(s)	Text
16-17	<p>The effective management of the EU's external borders is of strategic importance to the Union and, in particular, to the functioning of the Schengen area. Of key value to EU's internal and external policies, well-functioning external borders enable the EU to prosper through trade with the wider world while protecting our safe and secure European area of free movement from existing and emerging challenging situations at the external borders. At the core of EIBM there is the EBCG, ensuring the integrity of the EU's external borders surrounded by a dynamic world (Figure 3).</p> <p>(caption) Figure 3. The EBCG at the core of EIBM, ensuring the integrity of the EU's external borders in a dynamic world.</p>
17-18	<p>Given the dynamics of international security, protecting the EU against the implications of existing and emerging challenging situations at the external borders implies the need to be able to counter terrorism and crime as well as cyber, health and hybrid threats. In this context the role of the well-organised and fully operational EBCG is crucial. Interagency cooperation with other authorities and Agencies involved in the implementation of IBM concept and especially working at the border is of great importance.</p>
19	A fully integrated approach is the only viable way to cope with the ever evolving complexity of managing the EU's external borders.
19	At the heart of EIBM is the EBCG, which is tasked to implement EIBM as a shared responsibility
20	As such the EBCG shall ensure national and international coordination and cooperation among all relevant authorities and agencies involved in border management and trade facilitation to establish effective, efficient and integrated border management at the external EU border, in order to reach the objective of open, but well controlled and secure borders.
20	The European Commission in its Communication of May 2018 states that EIBM serves both migration and security policies of the Union

Page(s)	Text
20-21	<p>In addition, the EBCG as a whole is dependent on legislation, policies and financial resources enabling the implementation of EIBM for a more prosperous and secure society within the Schengen area. Furthermore, it is dependent on operationally available EBCG capacities and capabilities, underpinned by personnel, infrastructure and facilities able to operate. Lastly, it is dependent on thorough capability and investment planning processes to address the actual needs as well as research and innovation in order to ensure the appropriate supply of equipment and technology from the market (Figure 4).</p> <p>(caption) Figure 4: An illustration of the different elements of the border and coast guard system present at both the national level and at the European level, each of which may come with possibilities and constraints</p>
24	<p>Effective implementation of TO EIBM at European and national level carries the need for efficient coordination to enable the proper exchange of experiences, best practices, arising needs and new developments.</p>
24	<p>In the spirit of shared responsibility of implementing EIBM, in full respect of the concept of the EBCG and allowing for a structured way of coordination and review of the planning, operationalisation-processes of the TO EIBM both at European and national level, a High Level Integrated Border Management Working Group (HL IBM WG) shall be established, hosted at the European Border and Coast Guard Agency – Frontex.</p>
24-25	<p>The HL IBM WG shall be without prejudice to the upcoming multi-annual IBM policy cycle proposed under the revised EBCG Regulation as a comprehensive governance and advisory mechanism for the effective implementation of the EIBM</p> <p>(caption) Figure 5: The role of the HL IBM WG is to facilitate coherent implementation of the legislative and political framework of EIBM in the TO EIBM and national IBM strategies.</p>

Page(s)	Text
26	The common goal shall be a comprehensive, coherent, updated and dynamic EIBM concept, to be regularly reviewed on the basis of achieved results, where all partners involved jointly analyse, pool their knowledge and cooperate to the highest extent aiming at facilitating orderly border traffic and successfully combating all forms of cross-border crime, thus preserving and protecting the common area of freedom, security and justice.
26-27	<p>When operationalising EIBM it is important to consider the overall strategic framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implementing EIBM relies on the sovereign MS/SAC and on the European Border and Coast Guard Agency – Frontex, each with their own set of interoperable EBCG capabilities, working together in solidarity as the EBCG (Figure 6).</li> <li>- It further relies on the EBCG being coordinated with partners including other agencies and institutions cooperating with Third Countries. The resulting whole being greater than the sum of the individual parts – the spirit of shared responsibility, through partnerships, increases access to operationally available capabilities, contributing to EU's overall strategic autonomy, allowing for effective implementation of comprehensive and coherent EIBM (Figure 7);</li> </ul> <p>(caption) Figure 6: The spirit of shared responsibility in the context of operationalising EIBM</p> <p>(caption) Figure 7: In the spirit of shared responsibility, partnerships increase access to operationally available EBCG capabilities, allowing for effective EIBM</p>

Finnish Border Guard Strategy 2027	
Page(s)	Text
p. 24	The Finnish Border Guard strengthens the security of Finland, and prevents security threats directed at Finland and Europe at the external borders.
p. 24	The Finnish Border Guard is a capable European border security organisation and an efficient provider of safety for Finland.
p. 25	The Finnish Border Guard operates in the areas of internal and external security, and is part of the European border and coast guard system.
p. 11, p. 27	<p>Contribute to the development of coherent and effective border control at the external borders within the EU. Promote the development and rapid deployment of joint operating models and technology. Participate in cooperation coordinated by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (FRONTEX) with both personnel and equipment. Ensure, as the authority with responsibility, the execution of the EU's integrated border management in Finland. Take part in projects enforcing the EU's maritime policy and in the development of cooperation between maritime authorities.</p> <p>In Finnish:</p> <p>Vaikutetaan EU:n rajaturvallisuuteen ja merelliseen turvallisuuteen</p> <p>Edistetään yhteisten toimintamallien ja tekniikan kehittämistä ja nopeaa käyttöönottoa.</p> <p>Osallistutaan Eurooppalaisen raja- ja merivartioston kehittämiseen ja turvataan kyky osallistua Euroopan raja- ja merivartiostoon (Frontex) operaatioihin.</p> <p>Varmistetaan Schengen-järjestelmän, sen arviointimenettelyn ja haavoittuvuusarvioinnin pitäminen tehokkaana ja tarkoituksenmukaisena.</p> <p>Lisätään rannikkovartiostoyhteistyötä naapurimaiden kanssa ja varmistetaan EU-yhteistyön tehokas kehittyminen.</p>
p. 27	<p>The Finnish Border Guard maintains its competence in border security and maritime search and rescue at a high standard in international terms.</p> <p>The Finnish Border Guard will utilise information submitted by its partners and produce, with its own activities, significant benefits for its cooperation parties.</p>


Finnish National IBM Strategy 2019-2021 (in Finnish)	
Page(s)	Text
p. 3	Tämän kansallisen yhdenmetyt rajaturvallisuuden strategian (IBM-strategia) tarkoituksena on antaa selkeä käsitys yhdenmetyt rajaturvallisuuden täytäntöönpanosta ja edelleen kehittämisestä Suomessa Euroopan unionin standardien mukaisesti.
p. 3	Suomen ulkorajoilla vallitseva tilanne on suhteellisen vakaa... Koska Suomella on pitkä maaulkoraja, kansallisen IBM-konseptin on mukaudut-tava monenlaisiin tilanteisiin. Tämän vuoksi, ja koska tilanteet voivat vaikuttaa koko Schengen-alueeseen, Suomen kansallisen IBM-konseptin on myös toimittava erityisen luotettavasti ja häiriönsietokykyisesti kaikissa olosuhteissa.
p. 3	Suomen tärkeimpänä haasteena on kansallisen rajaturvallisuusjärjestelmän korkean suorituskyvyn ylläpitäminen, samalla kun julkisessa talou- dessa toteutetaan säästötoimia ja laittoman maahanmuuttovirran kansainvälinen ennustettavuus on heikentynyt. Suomen IBM-strategian viisi kes- keistä kehittämisaluetta ovat 1) uskottavan rajavartioinnin turvaaminen itärajalla, 2) turvallisen ja sujuvan rajaliikenteen edistäminen tärkeimmillä ra- janylityspaikoilla, kuten Helsinki-Vantaan lentoasemalla, samalla kun torjutaan laitonta maahanmuuttoa ja ehkäistään tehokkaasti rajat ylittävää rikol- lisuutta, 3) palautusprosessin tehostaminen, 4) toimintavalmiuden ylläpitäminen laajamittaisten monialaisten valvontatehtävien suorittamiseksi Itäme- rellä ja 5) valmius panna täytäntöön nopeasti kehittyvää, rajavalvontaan liittyvää uutta EU-lainsäädäntöä,
p. 4	Suomen ulkorajat ovat Euroopan turvallisimmat ja parhaiten toimivat. Suomi on yhteistyökykyinen ja kansainvälisesti tunnustettu toimija yhden- metyt rajaturvallisuuden alalla ja edistää tehokkaasti Euroopan unionin turvallisuutta. Luotettava ja ammattitaitoinen henkilöstö, tehokkaat orga- nisaatiot ja tehokas tehtävien jakaminen sekä huipputeknologia takaavat korkean suorituskyvyn.

Page(s)	Text
p. 4	Suomen IBM-konsepti on luotettava, ja sitä kehitetään edelleen. Suomen rajavalvonta- ja palautusjärjestelmä tukee sisäistä turvallisuutta ja torjuu tehokkaasti rajat ylittävää rikollisuutta. Suomi edistää Euroopan yhdenmukaistettua rajaturvallisuutta ja kehittää eurooppalaisia parhaita käytäntöjä yhdessä muiden jäsenvaltioiden kanssa ja luotettavana ja yhteensopivana osana Eurooppalaista raja- ja merivartiostoa. Tavoitteena on kehittää edelleen kustannustehokasta ja suorituskykyistä yhdenmukaistettua kansallista IBM-järjestelmää, joka vastaa täysin Euroopan unionin standardeja.
p. 4	Luotettavuus, ammattitaito ja yhteistyökyky
p. 5	<p>Kansallisen IBM-strategian tavoitteena on antaa selkeä käsitys yhdenmukaistettujen rajaturvallisuuden täytäntöönpanosta ja kehittämisestä Suomessa Euroopan unionin standardien mukaisesti ja edistää tiedon, valmiuksien ja järjestelmien yhteistä käyttöä kansallisella tasolla ja Frontexin toimia unionin tasolla.</p> <p>Suomen kansallinen IBM-strategia on linjassa Euroopan yhdenmukaistettujen rajaturvallisuuden teknisessä ja operatiivisessa strategiassa määriteltyjen kolmen strategisen tavoitteen kanssa:</p> <p>IBM-strategia on sopusoinnussa sisäisen turvallisuuden strategian kaltaisten muiden kansallisten strategioiden kanssa. Tämä strategia antaa yhdenmukaistettujen rajaturvallisuuden osalta perusteet asianomaisille viranomaisille omien strategioidensa laadinnassa. Strategiat pannaan täytäntöön vuotuisten ja monivuotisten suunnitelmien ja muiden asiakirjojen avulla. Oikeusperusta, ohjeistus, sopimukset ja täytäntöönpanoasiakirjat on lueteltu liitteessä.</p>
p. 5-6	Turvallisuuden rajapintojen sulautuminen ja yhä moninaisemmat turvallisuusuhat, hybridiuhat mukaan lukien, haastavat perinteiset turvallisuusnäkymät. Viranomaisten haasteina ovat laajamittainen laiton maahanmuutto, terrorismi, järjestäytynyt rikollisuus, valtiolliset toimijat, kyber- ja hybridiuhat ja modernin yhteiskunnan lisääntyvä haavoittuvuus. Suomi korostaa tällaisessa ympäristössä kansallisia erityispiirteitään ja kehittää rajaturvallisuusviranomaisten valmiuksia, jotta se voi torjua sisäisiä ja ulkoisia uhkia sekä itsenäisesti että osana Euroopan unionia.

Page(s)	Text
p. 6	<b>Kansallinen IBM-konsepti on selkeästi määritelty.</b> Rajavartiolaitos on yhdenmukaisesti rajaturvallisuudesta pääasiallisesti vastaava viranomais.
p. 14-15	<p>Aktiivisen Frontexin koordinoimiin yhteistoiminnallisiin ja operatiivisiin tehtäviin osallistumisen päämääränä on kehittää Suomen kansallista rajaturvallisuutta tukevan Euroopan yhdenmukaisen rajaturvallisuusjärjestelmän korkeaa laatua ja kustannustehokkuutta. Suomi on täysin sitoutunut täyttämään velvoitensa osana eurooppalaista raja- ja merivartiostoa.</p> <p>Suomi osallistuu Frontexin koordinoimaan yhteistyöhön aktiivisesti ja laajasti. Suomea edustaa Frontexin hallintoneuvostossa Rajavartiolaitos, joka on vastuussa käytännön yhteistyöstä Frontexin kanssa ja vastuussa Frontexin kanssa tehtävän kansallisen yhteistyönvelvoitteen täyttämisestä. Rajavartiolaitoksen esikunta on Frontexin kansallinen yhteyspiste. Rajavartiolaitos on vastuussa osallistumisesta Frontexin korkean tason IBM-työryhmään, samoin kuin muihin työryhmiin, lukuun ottamatta palautuksiin liittyviä työryhmiä, joissa edustajana toimii poliisi. Yhdenvertaisuusvaltuutettu osallistuu kaikkiin palautusten valvontaan liittyviin tehtäviin ja kokouksiin. Rajavartiolaitoksen esikunta koordinoi Frontexin yhteyshenkilön kanssa tehtävää yhteistyötä Suomessa ja tarjoaa tehtävissä tarvittavat työtilat.</p> <p>Eurooppalaisen raja- ja merivartioston kehittyminen edellyttää vahvempia kansallisia koordinoitirakenteita Frontexin kanssa tehtävän yhteistyön osalta. Tähän kuuluu myös kansallisten voimavarojen ja valmiussuunnittelun järjestelmien kehittäminen yhdessä Frontexin kanssa vahvistettujen periaatteiden mukaisesti.</p>

## Invitational letter and privacy policy and informed consent document to interviewees

Invitational letter:



[Mr./ Mrs. First Name SURNAME]

[Organisation]

Subject: Call for interview for Finnish National Defence University thesis purposes

Porvoo, 8 August 2022

Dear [Sir/Madam],

I am first lieutenant Timo Marquis and I represent the Finnish Border Guard. Since September 2021, I am a student in the Finnish Master of Military Sciences degree programme organised by the National Defence University in Helsinki. Currently, I am conducting my Master's thesis alongside basic studies. I am a graduate from the third iteration (2021) of the European Joint Master's in Strategic Border Management coordinated by Frontex and now I am continuing to research my field of interest, European Integrated Border Management. I am pursuing my current thesis in the academic field of strategy (strategic studies) with the title of: *"The effect of the European Border and Coast Guard's strategic culture on the Finnish Border Guard's strategic planning"*.


The main research question defined within the scope of the thesis is as follows: *"What kind is the EBCG's strategic culture's development since Regulation (EU) 2019/1896 and how should this be considered in the Finnish Border Guard's strategic planning?"*.

I have identified the need for expert-level insight that would assist me in defining strategic culture of the EBCG. The research has clarified that added value from members of the HL WG EIBM due to its proximity to the Frontex Management Board could greatly assist in this issue. The interview would be implemented in an online format and cover a duration of approximately one hour. I would highly appreciate if the interview could be conducted during August-September 2022.

For any questions regarding the research please contact me via email: [timo.marquis@raja.fi](mailto:timo.marquis@raja.fi) or via phone +358 295 422 071. For any questions or queries of a general nature, you may contact my thesis supervisors [Rank/title, full names of first and second supervisor and their respective contact details]. The Finnish National Defence University can be contacted via its general email address [maanpuolustuskorkeakoulu@mil.fi](mailto:maanpuolustuskorkeakoulu@mil.fi) and more information is available at its website <https://maanpuolustuskorkeakoulu.fi/en/frontpage>.

Thank you for considering to participate in my research!

Respectfully,

Timo Marquis 

Note: a Finnish language version of this letter was used for Finnish participants.

Privacy policy and informed consent document:



#### PRIVACY POLICY AND INFORMED CONSENT

Dear interviewee,

Thank you for considering to participate in my research. Please, familiarise yourself to the below information carefully:

1. Unless explicitly stated elsewhere, the term "interviewee" refers to You as a signatory party for the purpose to participate in my research in a data collection role and the term "researcher" refers to the author of the Master's thesis (Timo Matias Marquis D.O.B 17.8.1989), who represents the Finnish Border Guard in a student officer role during the Master of Military Sciences-study programme organised by the National Defence University.
2. The researcher respects your privacy. During the research process the researcher works diligently to maintain Your identity a private matter (anonymity). Your identity will not be revealed to parties not related to the research during the research process. Information that you may provide will be generally acknowledged, such that You are: [Broad reference to the interviewee's background and participation in relevant work, as visible in the analysis results].
3. All written communication is organised via the researcher's professional email address [timo.marquis@raja.fi](mailto:timo.marquis@raja.fi). Messages sent to the email address will not be forwarded to other parties.
4. The interview is designed to be conducted in an online format: a) phone call to the researcher's professional mobile phone number +358295422071 or b) other online audiovisual means jointly agreed upon prior to the interview. The researcher does not have the capability to host international connections directly from professional devices. Thus, connections will likely involve the use of devices and/or user credentials attributed to private use. The researcher is responsible for ordinary user-level information security responsibilities of software and devices.
5. The research is processed, assessed and published as a public thesis. The researcher's assumption is that all the information given for the use of the research is either public knowledge or similarly available by information requests.
6. The research plans on using a third-party software that records the audio of the interview for transcription purposes. The request to record the interview audio will be repeated by the researcher at the beginning of the session before beginning the interview.
  - a. In the event, where You do not grant permission to record the interview audio, the researcher will draft notes during the interview, which will be sent to You for review as soon as possible following the interview session.
  - b. In the event, where You grant permission to record the interview audio, the researcher will form a full transcript of the interview session that will be sent to You for review as soon as possible following the interview session.
  - c. Regardless of your prior choice, you may edit the sent text freely during your review. Once you return the edited text back to the researcher, the proper text data for analysis is created. Original audio recordings and notes written for temporary purposes are deleted immediately following the receipt of the proper text information. The proper text data is analysed and selectively presented in the thesis alongside information provided by other interviewees [reference to other foreseen interview results provided by other experts from the similar background or a statement that particular interviewee's singular relationship to other interview results.]
7. The researcher has assessed that the final, proper text data for analysis is not personal data. However, due to the context of the interview research, the researcher cannot fully rule out the



possibility that third parties could identify You based on the information you provide, especially persons working in the same organisation(s) as You.

8. The proper text data for analysis is arranged as an annex for the version provided for the assessment of the thesis, but will not be provided in the final published thesis. The researcher retains the proper text data for possible post-assessment review purposes in accordance with the National Defence University's guidance for a total of two (2) years following the foreseen graduation date (10.8.2023), until 10.8.2025.
9. The assessed thesis will be made publicly available following the written consent of the researcher at the online Doria-service (<https://www.doria.fi>).
10. The researcher values Your voluntary participation. You may revoke your consent to participate at any point until your proper text data has been fully analysed and integrated to the thesis. The researcher will notify You via email of the deadline, up until when this is still possible. The researcher respects your decision and a justification need not be stated. No ramifications will occur to You on behalf of the research.
11. By signing and providing the date of Your signature in the below table, You agree to the following:  
*"I have read the above information, I understand my position and rights as an interviewee and acknowledge that I may ask any question related to the research from the researcher. I understand that I may revoke my consent to participate at any time until the deadline set by the researcher."*

Signature of the interviewee:	Date of signature:

*"I commit to follow the above ethical principles related to interview research and the requirements of processing data."*


Signature of the researcher:	Date of signature:
Print name: Timo Marquis	

This document has been formed and signed in two copies, one for each party. The final document has been transmitted in electronic form to the interviewee via email on: 202

[page 2 of 2]

Note: a Finnish language version of this document was used for Finnish participants.

**Formal invitation and relevant appendices for the workshop**

	Letter	RVL2267487	1 (2)
		00.01.03	
		RVLDno-2022-2029	
Southeast Finland Border Guard District Border Office	16.12.2022		
The identified participants in the framework of the thesis			
<b>Invitation to participate in a workshop</b>			
<b>General</b>			
<p>I warmly welcome you to an optional workshop event in January 2023. You have already provided valuable input as an interviewee during Autumn 2022. In this future event you have the opportunity to further provide your views in support of the thesis research and support important strategy work of the Finnish Border Guard in particular and the European Border and Coast Guard in general.</p>			
<b>The purpose of the event</b>			
<p>The main purpose of the event is to generate new data in a high-level expert group for the thesis. The data is utilised to provide results and conclusions in support of the research. The secondary purpose of the event is to demonstrate the opportunities of strategic foresight research in support of strategic planning and management. I refer to the event by its characteristic name: workshop, in further instances.</p>			
<b>The implementation of the workshop</b>			
<p>The workshop is planned as a form of action research. The researcher is responsible for adhering to the identified general and particular ethical principles in accordance with appendix 1 (privacy policy and informed consent).</p>			
<p>The workshop is planned as a hybrid meeting, where participants from the Finnish Border Guard Headquarters are present both locally at Helsinki and potentially online via designated videoconferencing software.</p>			
<p>The online mode of the workshop is arranged via the official Finnish accredited videoconferencing service "eTUVÉ". The software is provided by Polycom® RealPresence® Web Suite and maintained by our ICT-service provider "Valtoni". Instructions for accessing an online meeting on the service is provided in appendix 2.</p>			



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2 (2)

In the case you have the opportunity to arrive locally to Helsinki at the above-mentioned date and time, please contact the researcher for arranging the details.

#### The schedule of the workshop

The workshop is planned as a three-hour meeting that includes 30 minutes in breaks. The primary time for the workshop is on January 12<sup>th</sup> 2023 at 12:00-15:00 (Finnish local time). The secondary timeslot on January 13<sup>th</sup> 2023 at 09:00-12:00 (Finnish local time) acts as a reserve timeslot.

The detailed schedule of the workshop is provided in appendix 3.

#### Preparatory guidelines for the workshop

Your voluntary input is highly appreciated as a European high-level expert on the subject matter of the European Border and Coast Guard strategic culture. Your European views are particularly sought for during the discussion of the workshop, even if the actual output of the workshop is oriented towards the Finnish Border Guard strategy work.

#### Other issues

The researcher's contact details are: [timo.marquis@raja.fi](mailto:timo.marquis@raja.fi), mobile phone: +358 295 422 071.

More information is available from the thesis supervisors:

1. Primary supervisor, special researcher Matti Puranen (theory), [matti.puranen@mil.fi](mailto:matti.puranen@mil.fi), +358 299 530 573 and
2. Secondary supervisor colonel (ret.), policy officer Arto Niemenkari (content), [arto-tapani.niemenkari@ec.europa.eu](mailto:arto-tapani.niemenkari@ec.europa.eu), +32 460 762 051.

This document has been electronically signed.

Student officer  
First lieutenant

Timo Marquis

This document has been signed electronically. Finnish Border Guard 16.12.2022 at 16:53. Authenticity of the signature can be verified by the Registry.

#### APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 Privacy policy and informed consent
- Appendix 2 Guidelines for accessing an "eTUV" video conference meeting
- Appendix 3 Schedule of the workshop

[page 2 of 2]

Note: a Finnish-language document was prepared, signed and sent on 5 December 2022 to the Finnish participants. It contained more details relating to the necessary preparations. Appendix 2 is a purely technical guide and is not presented below.



Announcement

RVL2267489

1 (4)

00.01.03

RVLDno-2022-2029

Southeast Finland Border Guard District  
Border Office

16.12.2022

#### APPENDIX 1 Privacy policy and informed consent

Dear participant,

Thank you for considering to participate in my research. Pages 1 and 2 cover the actual privacy policy and informed consent. Pages 3 and 4 covers general and particular ethical principles that the researcher has considered when drafting the contractual part of this document.

1. Unless explicitly stated elsewhere, the term "participant" refers to You as a signatory party for the purpose to participate in my research in a data collection role and the term "researcher" refers to the author of the Master's thesis (Timo Matias Marquis D.O.B 17.8.1989), who represents the Finnish Border Guard in a student officer role during the Master of Military Sciences-study programme organised by the National Defence University.

2. The researcher respects your privacy. During the research process the researcher works diligently to maintain Your identity a private matter (anonymity). Your identity will not be revealed to parties not related to the research during the research process. Information that you may provide will be generally acknowledged, such that You are: a European high-level expert working in European Integrated Border Management matters.

3. All written communication is organised via the researcher's professional email address: [timo.marquis@raja.fi](mailto:timo.marquis@raja.fi). Messages sent to the email address will not be forwarded to other parties.

4. The workshop is planned primarily as a hybrid meeting, in which access is facilitated by videoconferencing software. The researcher utilises a PC provided by the Finnish government ICT service provider "Valtori". The videoconferencing access is further provided in the "eTUVÉ"-software in this same ICT environment. The researcher is responsible for ordinary information security as expected from a basic user in this environment.

5. The research is processed, assessed and published as a public thesis. The researcher's assumption is that all the information given for the use of the research is either public knowledge or similarly available by information requests.

6. Your information that you may provide during the workshop is collected with other participants' information and summarised as a group. Your responses will not be identified from this group response.

7. The primary working language in the workshop is English. Finnish may be utilised between the Finnish participants where needed. Translation will be provided by the researcher.



RVL2267489

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8. At the end of the workshop a commonly accepted summary will be formed. This summary will be used as the data in the results chapter of the thesis. Potential supportive material provided by You via email and other means will only be used for the support of this goal. These temporary materials will be deleted no later than when the thesis is sent for assessment (17<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at the latest).

9. The analysable and presentable summary will be attached as a part of the final published version of the thesis. The researcher has assessed that this final summary is not and does not contain personal data. The assessed thesis will be published as a public thesis online at the <https://www.doria.fi> -service following the consent of the researcher.

10. The researcher values Your voluntary participation. The researcher respects your decision and a justification need not be stated. No ramifications will occur to You on behalf of the research. You may revoke your consent by the following ways:

- a. You may decline to participate in this voluntary workshop (regardless of any prior communication indicating your participation).
- b. You may decline to answer or comment on any issue during the workshop.
- c. You may present a differing opinion when the final summary is being formed. You may demand an optional wording or request the deletion of any issue in the summary. The goal of the summary is to provide a consensual result. Any potential conflictual statement will be retracted.

11. By signing and providing the date of Your signature in the below table, You agree to the following:

*"I have read the above Information, I understand my position and rights as a participant and acknowledge that I may ask any question related to the research from the researcher. I understand that I may revoke my consent to participate fully or partially in the forms indicated above."*

Signature of the participant:	Date of signature:
<i>"I commit to follow the above ethical principles related to participatory action research and the requirements of processing data."</i>	
Signature of the researcher:	Date of signature:
Print name: Timo Marquis	
This document has been formed and signed in two copies, one for each party. The final document has been transmitted in electronic form to the interviewee via email on: _____ 2023	



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3 (4)

### The ethical principles of participatory action research (workshop)

The research follows the following ethical principles between the researcher and participants:

#### 1. *The researcher's roles and responsibilities in the workshop*

The researcher has multiple roles simultaneously during the workshop and is bound by several responsibilities:

- a. *Researcher.* In the basic role of a researcher, the goal is progression of knowledge scoped by the research questions. This may appear as an inquiring stance on the issues brought up in the workshop.
- b. *Chairperson.* In the framework of the workshop, all participants have equal right to speak and participate. The researcher aims to provide equal opportunity to all participants regardless of: the form of connection (face to face/online), the initiative of the participants, the status or rank of the participants or any other related issue in the workshop.
- c. *Expert.* The researcher has formed a view on the phenomenon that is researched and therefore he prepares to contribute to the workshop discussion as a content provider.
- d. *Interpreter.* The phenomenon of the research is complex and requires a broad sense of view to grasp. The researcher has during the process of the research formed a certain kind of interpretation and related thoughts. The researcher respects all argued viewpoints. Due to the research design, it is fully acceptable that issues are ultimately formed as questions rather than concrete answers.

#### 2. *Acknowledging social group and peer pressure*

The researcher has recognised the existence of potential group and peer pressure during the workshop. This is (at least partially) out of the control of the researcher and it may occur during other duties prior to or after the workshop. The researcher hopes for an open attitude towards the workshop and actions that reflect the values of the Finnish Border Guard: competence, reliability and cooperation. The researcher strives to provide a supportive environment for the workshop that fosters thinking, which allows for all justified views to be presented.

#### 3. *No harm to participants*


The researcher actively attempts to avoid harm to be formed for the participants. The researcher estimates that this is primarily achieved while adhering to all other ethical principles. Whether at any stage of the research the researcher receives information on active or potential harm to participants (e.g. loss of personal reputation), the issue is acted upon without delay. The researcher does not utilise information in any way or form, which may jeopardize this principle.

#### 4. *Confidentiality*

The research is conducted and published as a public thesis. The research has undergone the mandatory research permit process for the Finnish Border Guard (in accordance with permanent document "RVLPAK B.20 Research activities in the FBG"). The research prepares to supplement this research permit process if necessary.

#### 5. *Protection of participants' privacy*

The researcher respects every participants' privacy and utilises the information from the workshop anonymously. The participants may utilise the workshop's discussions and results as part of their everyday duties, but may not single out the individual who presented the particular com-



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ment/issue. Internationally this is commonly known as the Chatham House rule. The aim of the rule is to develop dialogue, especially in conflictual topics.

*6. Informed consent to participate and revocation of consent*

The participant must have all the necessary information prior to one's choice to participate. The participant has the right to revoke one's consent in full or in part without repercussions.

*7. Transparency*

The information that is gathered at the workshop will be distributed among the participants in the form of a summary and feedback. The researcher communicates on the state of the research at all times, when a relevant stage in the research changes or any organised issue changes. The researcher responds to all questions on the state of the research, the data or organisational issues upon request; the researcher kindly asks for contact without hesitation. The questions and answers that consider the whole group are shared as anonymous information to all participants. The methods chapter of the final thesis will contain a reporting overview of the workshop and the final results chapter will contain the analysed results or their key points. The final conclusions of the thesis are the sole responsibility by the researcher. The final research thesis is published online in the repository managed by the Finnish National Library and it will be made accessible online via the <https://www.doria.fi> -service following its assessment and consent of the researcher (estimate: during August 2023).

*8. Prohibition of deceit*

Any deception, withholding information or negligent harm originating from the researcher is strictly prohibited. Any doubts related to this issue must be presented to the researcher and the supervisors of the research without hesitation.

[page 4 of 4]

Note: a Finnish-language version of this document was used for the Finnish participants



Southeast Finland Border Guard District  
Border Office

Instruction

16.12.2022

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### APPENDIX 3 Schedule of the workshop

The programme is presented in accordance with the primary date of implementation, Thursday 12.1.2023. The start time is 09.00, if the implementation day is on the designated reserve date, Friday 13.1.2023, respectively.

Finnish time:	Topic:	Note:
12.00	Introduction, presentations, goal setting	Connection tests prior to 12.00.
12.15	The strategic culture of the EBCG (interim research results)	
12.30	The fundamentals of strategic foresight	
12.45	Break (10 min)	
12.55	Starting the workshop: 1. <i>Brief analysis of the future operational environment</i> 2. <i>Determining the common denominators</i>	Work time total 1h 30 min.  The location of the break is instructional.
13.40	Break (20 min)	
14.00	The workshop continues: 3. <i>Defining the scenarios</i> 4. <i>Assessing the scenarios and conclusions</i>	
14.45	Final discussion and feedback	
15.00	The workshop ends	

Note: a Finnish-language schedule was sent to the Finnish participants

## Workshop orientational material on the EBCG strategic culture

Note: the following text was provided as voluntary orientational reading material on 10 January 2023 prior to the workshop.

### The strategic culture of the EBCG – the phenomenon and interim research results

#### The origins of “strategic culture”

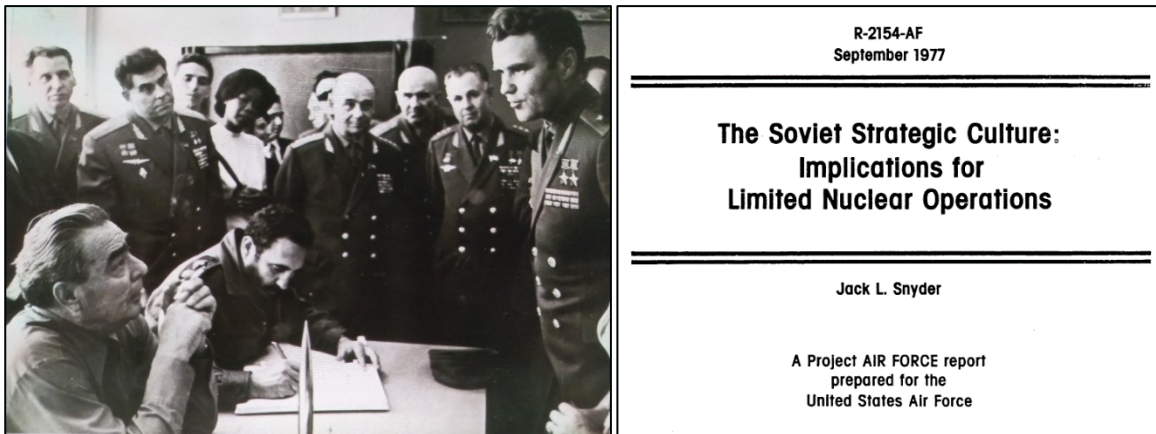


Figure 1 Jack L. Snyder's first work on strategic culture and Soviet leadership of the time. Jack L. Snyder is recognised for developing the term to describe the nature of decision-making of Soviet leadership on the topic of nuclear weapon doctrine. Up until then, rational, calculation-based models were widely used. Snyder came up with the idea that shared cultural factors may be the defining ones that either motivate or constrain the use of nuclear weapons in a doomsday scenario. During 1977 the Soviet Union was under the leadership of Leonid Brezhnev, pictured alongside Fidel Castro and military staff.

#### The premises of strategic culture

- **Strategic behaviour** in a nation-state's or security community's context
- Directly related with **cultural attributes** (ideas, traditions, norms)
- **Change** occurs in strategic culture, however its mechanisms are disputed

Strategic culture as a theoretical discipline has accrued a total of four identifiable generations. The three premises as listed above are my conclusion about what they all (appear to) agree upon.

“The strategic decision-making operational environment”

There exist multiple formal definitions for the term and my goal is not to add to that list. Instead, the sentence in quotation marks is my own wording for the phenomenon. With it, I try to simplify it by connecting it to the term commonly used elsewhere (the operational environment) to depict it as an identifiable setting among key strategic decision-makers.

**Contemporary strategic culture research – and how it appears to be in the EBCG**

These following three themes are found to be the most important, according to the latest fourth generation of interpretive strategic culture research (Bloomfield etc.).

- Change:
  - "2016 → 2019 ... 2021 ... 2023"
  - *Regulatory framework, Strategic policy cycle, Operational (EBCG Standing Corps)*

The research focuses on the current Regulation (EU) 2019/1896 and the contemporary timeframe. The latest regulatory change repealed the former Regulation (EU) 2016/1624 from a mere three years prior. Furthermore, they key years of 2021 and 2023 depict the initiation of the EBCG Standing Corps operational activities and the interim evaluation of the Regulation itself (Article 121), respectively. Furthermore, 2023 depicts the continuation and eventual conclusion of the very first EIBM strategic policy cycle in this regulatory framework. Thus, clear issues of change likely influencing strategic culture have been the regulatory framework shifts, which has spawned a new generation of strategic policy cycle preparation as well as grassroots-level effects on how operations are conducted in the EBCG (the Standing Corps).

- Continuity
  - "1985 ... 1999 →"
  - *AFSJ, Schengen Area, Cooperation, Legal EBCG entity based on diversity, democracy and European values*

One can argue that the original Schengen agreements and Tampere 1999 conclusions on the formation of an AFSJ still carry on to this day. Indeed, in practice the prior documents and statements have gained concrete shape and form with the great level of detail the current regulatory frameworks provide as a toolset. The European identity carries on with the latest series in the regulatory framework. The European Union with its Members States, its agencies and thus all activities are still based on the cultural diversity as a certain wealth and all democratic and other self-evident values, such as those proclaimed in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU (CFR) in 2000.

- Context
  - *Enormous change management project, Learning and reflecting while doing,*
  - *Unparalleled European ambition, Gradual integration,*
  - *Security community with sovereign interests and shared competences*

It is clear that the Regulation (EU) 2019/1896 carried immense ambition on a further path towards integration and cooperation. However, it is clear that the key managers and personnel (especially at Frontex) have been rushed. The recent regulatory framework shift and related work included has been an enormous change management project. It is still continuing with much learning available for everyone. For the professionals and decision-makers in the border management field, this comes without the luxury to stop and think things over. Despite the large change management, the EBCG continues to be a globally unique security community. Its Member States balance their individual interests with the benefits of sharing many aspects to accomplish something greater together. Compared to traditional military alliances and nation-state security contexts, the nature of border management as a continuous activity demonstrates, by example, the potential to actually measure policy through common activities.

## Final workshop results

The research presented interim research results of the EBCG strategic culture to the participants:

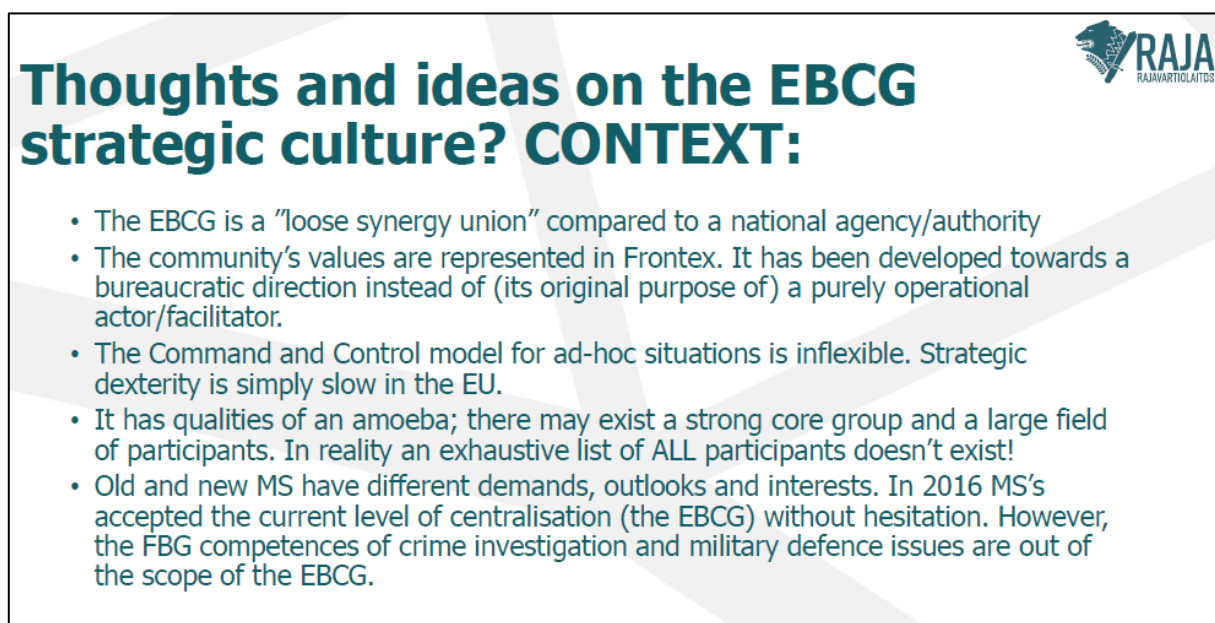


**Contemporary strategic culture research** and how it appears to be in the EBCG

- Change
  - "2016→2019...2021...2023"
  - Regulatory framework, Strategic policy cycle, Operational (EBCG Standing Corps)
- Continuity
  - "1985...1999→"
  - AFSJ, Schengen Area, Cooperation, Legal EBCG entity based on diversity, democracy and European values
- Context
  - Enormous change management project, Learning and reflecting while doing,
  - Unparalleled European ambition, Gradual integration,
  - Security community with sovereign interests and shared competences

Figure 1. The presented interim research results of the EBCG strategic culture


The interim findings of the research appear to valid. Direct opposition to the contrary was not present. However, several supplementary views adding to the topic were presented. These are presented in the following figures according to a general thematic division as the orienting theory (change, continuity and context).



**Thoughts and ideas on the EBCG strategic culture? CONTEXT:**

- The EBCG is a "loose synergy union" compared to a national agency/authority
- The community's values are represented in Frontex. It has been developed towards a bureaucratic direction instead of (its original purpose of) a purely operational actor/facilitator.
- The Command and Control model for ad-hoc situations is inflexible. Strategic dexterity is simply slow in the EU.
- It has qualities of an amoeba; there may exist a strong core group and a large field of participants. In reality an exhaustive list of ALL participants doesn't exist!
- Old and new MS have different demands, outlooks and interests. In 2016 MS's accepted the current level of centralisation (the EBCG) without hesitation. However, the FBG competences of crime investigation and military defence issues are out of the scope of the EBCG.


Figure 2. The workshop's ideas about context in EBCG strategic culture



## Thoughts and ideas on the EBCG strategic culture? CHANGE:

- The contemporary environment influences (changes) strategic culture in a powerful way.
- Hard, national security-styled interests have recently connected with traditional border security. For example during Russian-Belarusian instrumentalisation of migration in 2021.
- The decentralised quality of the EBCG is built in to the system – border management has been a focus so far and migration management is a recently added element.
- The "Juncker-like" 2018 European ambition for EBCG is a clear example for further integration towards a political federation, compared to a more restrained Von Der Leyen.
- Top politicians have a large influence on EBCG development. Especially those from the European Commission.
- Development outlooks and cycles for all EU agencies including Frontex are not equal. The development cycle and ideas are a part of a large and slow process.

Figure 3. The workshop's ideas about change in EBCG strategic culture



## Thoughts and ideas on the EBCG strategic culture? CONTINUITY:

- The long perspective focuses on the freedom of movement of the Schengen acquis – other policy issues support this core issue.
- Operational cooperation has been a central common base among border management authorities since 2004, as a sort shared professional identity. Currently disruptions to this foundation have been observed with current developments.
- A clear segregation revolving bloc-approach towards handling of issues exists; a focused and unified strategic culture does not (yet) exist, unless freedom of movement is joined with security interests.
- The issue of parliamentarism (shared power) is fundamental to the EBCG.
- Regardless, if the EU at large would disintegrate the EBCG as an institution will likely remain. This situation is somewhat comparable to the disintegration of the Soviet Union, where the Soviet Armed Forces appeared to transform into the Russian Armed Forces.
- MS traditions as they were inherited are still visible. For example the issue of physical barriers at borders may stem from the Cold War in some MS, but is a completely new issue in Finland.

Figure 4. The workshop's ideas about continuity in EBCG strategic culture

The written comments presented in the above figures were based on the spoken comments provided after the portion of the workshop that reflected on strategic culture. These written notes were conducted by the researcher and may not perfectly reflect the spoken comments.

Reflecting on a general level on these provided comments in a summative way:

- **Change:** The EBCG is way ahead in terms of perceived development among EU agencies. Political steering especially has a profound potential impact on this, which is visible in the different approaches between Juncker and Von der Leyen. This change is observed in the broadening policy fields. The original border management field has been supplemented with migration management and potentially in the near future into the security field in a broader sense due to recent (2021-2022) external shifts.
- **Continuity:** The Schengen foundation is crucial to understand that founded the border management cooperation since the early 2000's. Separation of power is reflected similarly as in the EU at large (issue- and geography-linked blocs). National strategic cultures continue to influence contemporary decision-making greatly (e.g. physical barrier issue).
- **Context:** The EBCG is a loose/decentralised union revolving around synergies primarily originating from the Schengen acquis. This is reflected in the vast number of actors and their particular fields of interest. This is further mirrored to Frontex with its apparent general bureaucratic nature nowadays. Although the EU appears stiff and lacks strategic dexterity relevant for EBCG operational issues, the swift regulatory changes in 2016 and 2019 demonstrates the support the Schengen acquis truly has. It should be highlighted that the FBG has a broader field in its national jurisdiction than what the EBCG focuses on.

## SCENARIO DEVELOPMENT

First, the workshop was engaged with the open question of: "What will the EBCG be like in 2035?". Then, a total of six relevant developments were formulated in the group. Of these, **the development of operational functions and level of EU integration** were deemed to be both highly impactful and highly uncertain. In other words, this meant that they had the greatest potential to influence the future of the EBCG to varying outcomes.

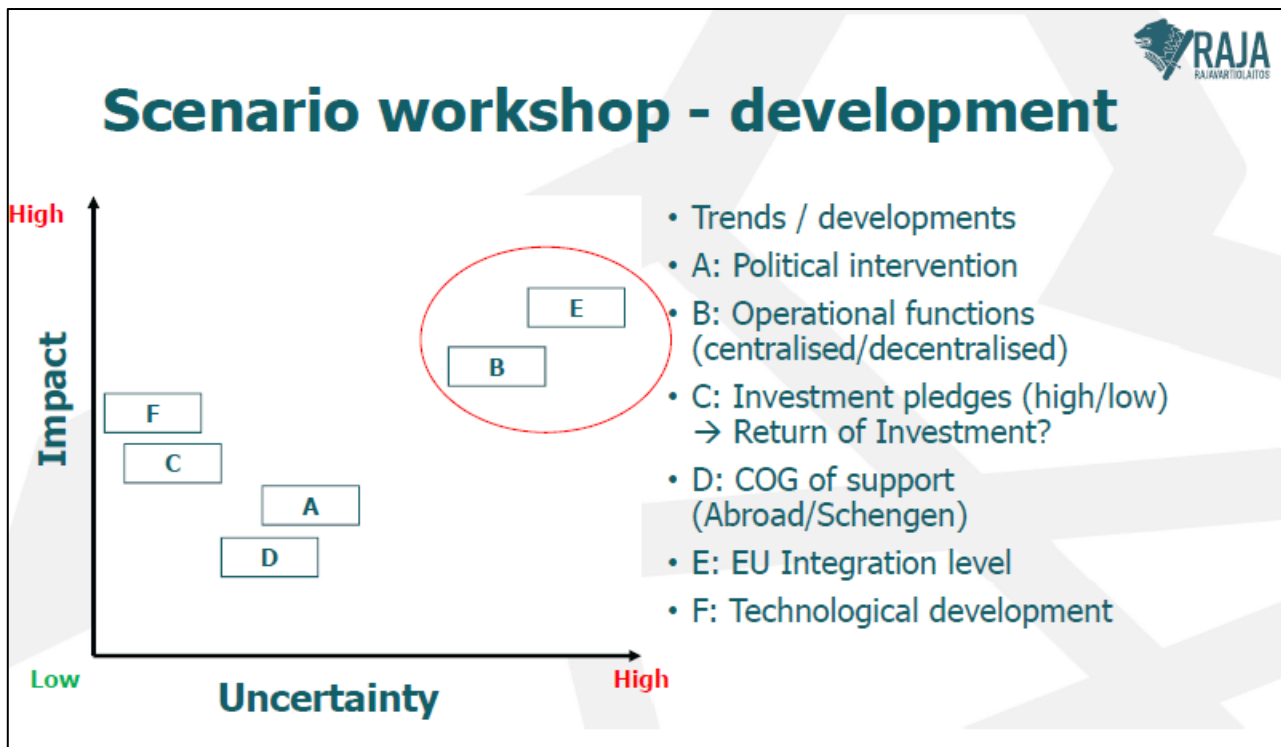


Figure 5. The formulated developments deemed important for the EBCG up to 2035

These two developments were oriented perpendicularly to form a total of four possible future scenarios for the EBCG. This is presented in figure six below.

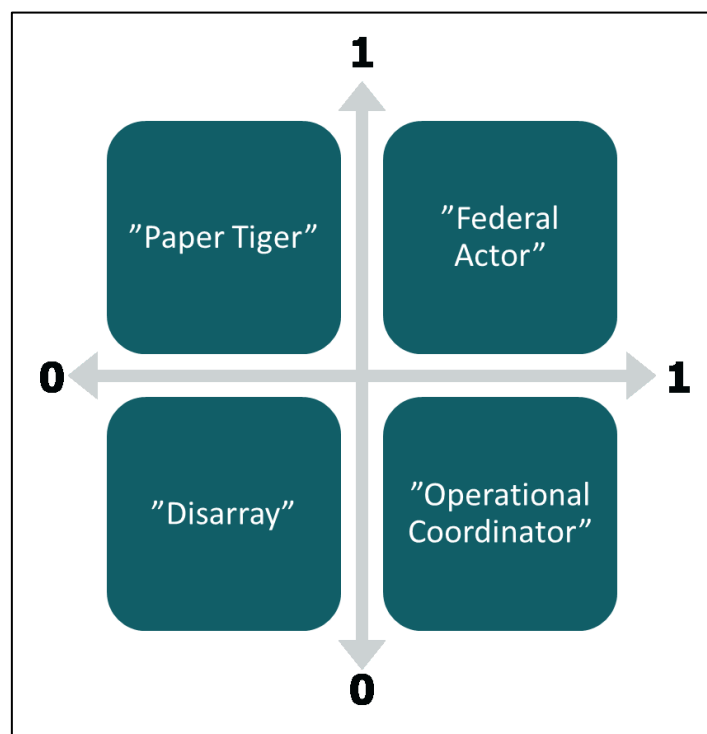


Figure 6. The formed and named scenarios for the EBCG in the target year 2035

The scenarios were given descriptive names to better distinguish them. During the workshop, the interim name of “Lame Duck” was worked with. However, the final name of “Paper Tiger” was chosen as an equally descriptive and it did not have the connotation to U.S. domestic politics.

The scenarios were then backcasted from the target year 2035 to the present time (2023). The researcher provided three fixed years for orientation purposes:

- The year **2027** was chosen to reflect the “end year” of the current Regulation (EU) 2019/1896
- The year **2030** was chosen as the beginning of a new decade, which may have relevance for some strategic planning/plans.
- The year **2035** was chosen as the target year as 12 years from now, to reflect the mid-decade and slightly more than two full FBG planning cycles (1+4 years).

Table 1. The “Paper Tiger”-scenario

<b>Scenario: “Paper Tiger”</b> <b>“The EU integrates further AND operational functions decentralise (from current levels)”</b>		
<b>2023-2027</b>	<b>2027-2030</b>	<b>2030-2035</b>
<p>SC implementation is weak/poor.</p> <p>Operational footprint compared to financial investment is poor.</p> <p>Distrust between MS and Frontex, internal border controls etc.</p>	<p>Frontex MB “marginalisation”, smaller footprint in deciding common issues.</p> <p>Frontex becomes a bureaucratic “conglomerate”.</p> <p>Regional diversity in operational issues are reinforced.</p>	<p>EU integration continues along other policy issues, interest towards Border management decreases.</p> <p>Interests towards border management diversifies.</p> <p>Distrust among MS towards EBCG/SC increases.</p>
<b><u>Conclusions:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EBCG / Frontex mandate, does it reflect to the needs of MS? If not, then “Paper Tiger” may be the result.</li> <li>• Frontex is not the same as a national border management authority. Political responsibility does not exist in Frontex. Compare it to an interior minister at national level.</li> <li>• Even if the development of Frontex stops here, it is still way ahead compared to other agencies at the moment.</li> </ul>		

Table 2. The "Federal Actor"-scenario

<b>Scenario: "Federal Actor"</b> <b>"The EU integrates further AND operational functions centralise (from current levels)"</b>		
<b>2023-2027</b>	<b>2027-2030</b>	<b>2030-2035</b>
Success story of the EBCG Standing Corps implementation.	Mandate of EBCG will be further developed.  Renewed migration crisis.  Poor implementation by MS to ensure Schengen.  Shift of shared responsibility towards federal level.	Establishing centralised "EBCG 4.0" structure, capabilities and operations.
<b><u>Conclusions:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation secondary, political reality doesn't require it to be operationally successful: "if there is sufficient European ambition and will, then there will be a federal way".</li> <li>• Federal development is not necessary for MS. Can we really change what happens in Greece by federal means?</li> <li>• EU Treaties have been updated in 2010. The structure and thinking from those ages are still present. The world has changed drastically from those times. It will be necessary to change the treaties to enable this federal actor change.</li> </ul>		

Table 3. The “Disarray”-scenario

<b>Scenario: “Disarray”</b> <b>“The EU disintegrates AND operational functions decentralise (from current levels)”</b>		
<b>2023-2027</b>	<b>2027-2030</b>	<b>2030-2035</b>
<p>Complete fiasco of EBCG Standing Corps roll-out → loss of trust among EU/MS.</p> <p>EU political scandals and corruption.</p>	<p>EBCG standing corps unsuitable for deployment.</p> <p>Replacement of current mandate, towards pre-2019 operational levels.</p> <p>Waning EU support, strengthening parallel national systems.</p>	<p>Consistent migratory pressure.</p> <p>The “final death of Schengen”.</p> <p>EU power is practically limited.</p>
<b><u>Conclusions:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU political scandals and corruption, may also be visible in EU agencies. Loss of trust throughout the system. MB guidance and steering may have been too weak to allow these scandals to occur.</li> <li>• What do we mean by the death of Schengen? Freedom of movement may still continue despite all challenges. Convenient technological control at borders may likely be present despite the lack of a formal agreement/arrangement.</li> <li>• Schengen has a fundamental issue related to returns. Compare the streamlined returns within LUX-DEU-AUT of the 1980's and currently now between FIN-BLR or FIN-RUS.</li> </ul>		

Table 4. The “Operational Coordinator”-scenario

<b>Scenario: “Operational Coordinator”</b> <b>“The EU disintegrates AND operational functions centralise (from current levels)”</b>		
<b>2023-2027</b>	<b>2027-2030</b>	<b>2030-2035</b>
<p>Operational effectiveness of EBCG/SC assessed as positive.</p> <p>Persisting limited national resources. Cooperation is seen as positive (cost-effective) and maintains willingness.</p>	<p>Contradictions between EBCG operational outcomes and EU/national legislation interpretation.</p> <p>Willingness to keep national integrity/autonomy high.</p> <p>Mandate of Frontex will remain or roll-back to role of coordinator.</p> <p>Frontex can be seen as an operational actor, but its main role will be to coordinate.</p>	<p>Financing of operations will remain, mechanisms may change.</p> <p>Focus on cooperation and operational support.</p>
<b><u>Conclusions:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National sovereignty interests (e.g. in interpreting international law) will remain high.</li> <li>• The benefits of EU-wide cooperation are recognised among national authorities.</li> <li>• Despite potential EU budget cuts, national funding or other arrangements will likely endure.</li> <li>• EBCG Standing Corps may develop into a focused operational support element. For example, it may be oriented towards contingency situations (?).</li> </ul>		

**ASSESSMENT**

A brief assessment of the scenarios was conducted according to four criteria:

1. *Plausibility* (we can imagine the scenario occurring)
2. *Relevance* (the scenario is oriented towards challenges/important issues)
3. *Insightful* (the scenario offers new ideas about the future)
4. *Distinguishable* (the scenarios differ from one another)

At a general note, the scenarios were deemed to fulfil the above criteria. However, it remained inconclusive if they were truly relevant.

The different scenarios will likely imply different financial mechanism outcomes that enable the respective scenario. In short, the absolute amount of money matters even if the source and process differ.

The different scenarios have different outcome roles for the EBCG at large and Frontex. These are visible in particular in the “Paper Tiger” and “Operational Coordinator” scenarios. Respectively, the centre of gravity for Frontex operational functions may shift to third countries simultaneously when national authorities’ centre of gravity remains in national issues. The scenarios did not fully consider external developments as changes in the operational environment, which likely have a large, driver-like impact on systemic change. For example, the eventual outcome of the current Russian-Ukrainian war will likely be evident in 2035 and similarly influence the EBCG within this timeframe.

The level of EU integration appears difficult to simplify and judge what its outcome will be for the EBCG. The scenarios do not consider the necessary ideological shifts that enable this change. The open question: “what do we want the EU to be in the future?” is relevant for this. One comment on this issue was brought up that the EU appears to act as a sovereign nation-state, but in reality, is still not.

## CONCLUSIONS

The workshop concluded with the following questions for discussion:

- *How would you describe the strategic culture in each future scenario?*
- *How does strategic culture influence the developments and scenarios?*
- *Are there clear scenario preferences for the FBG? If yes, why?*
- *What other remarks do you have about the scenarios?*

The discussion yielded a fundamental question of cause and effect (e.g. egg and chicken problem): will the system influence the strategic culture or the other way around? From this comment however, it is clear that there is an interaction and potentially this interaction has a great effect.

Two separate participants commented on the Finnish preference for the scenario outcome. In the “Federal Actor”-scenario, the Finnish Border Guard may be dismantled as an independent authority and its tasks may be rearranged among other Finnish authorities. Thus, it is an existential question and not likely supported.

Despite the future of the EU remaining somewhat unclear, a few developments are foreseen. Firstly, the democratic approach demonstrated in the qualified majority voting system will endure. As it appears now, the EU may enlarge to the Balkan region next and thus the relative position of Finland and MS's with similar interests will diminish. Secondly, strategic culture may be a generational phenomenon demonstrated in key managers at a time. In the future, it is likely that all key managers will have personal experience from Frontex-related participation or cooperation activities. If the EBCG system remains somewhat cohesive for a considerable time, experience in these matters amongst these managers will become a certain norm among this group.