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**PARLIAMENTARY SCRUTINY OF THE EU'S  
COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY  
POLICY: A COMPARISON OF ESTONIAN  
RIIGIKOGU AND FINNISH EDUSKUNTA**

Master's Thesis

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I have written this Master's thesis independently. All viewpoints of other authors, literary sources and data from elsewhere used for writing this paper have been referenced.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of the European Union (EU) is considered to be an intergovernmental policy at the European level and a domain of the executive at the national level. Yet, despite the prerogative of the executive, there is still parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP, but it has received little academic attention, although there is a growing debate about the democratic deficit of the policy that the Lisbon Treaty attempted to alleviate. This research offers insight into how national parliaments scrutinise CFSP by comparing the Foreign Affairs Committees of the Estonian Riigikogu and Finnish Eduskunta. Usually both are considered by the scholarly literature strong scrutinisers and both have similar formal powers and mandating-systems of CFSP scrutiny. Yet, similarities in the formal setup notwithstanding, there still seems to be a difference in how the two parliaments engage in CFSP scrutiny with Riigikogu described as a rubber stamp and Eduskunta an active policy shaper.

This discrepancy can be explained by the fact that the literature on parliamentary scrutiny of EU affairs has focused mostly on the formal powers that the parliaments have. In contrast this study concentrates not only on the legal rights and capabilities, but emphasises the role of the informal factors that affect the level of scrutiny of CFSP. It argues that as CFSP is a EU policy with less automatic parliamentary scrutiny than other policy fields, informal factors such as attitude and willingness of the parliamentarians to engage in CFSP scrutiny and motivational factors play a more important role. Through expert interviews and the analytical framework developed by Born and Hänggi that takes into account authority, ability and attitude, this research concludes that attitude and the willingness of parliamentarians to engage in CFSP scrutiny explains the difference of the levels of scrutiny of CFSP of Riigikogu and Eduskunta. These findings support the new institutionalist theory of sociological institutionalism that emphasises the role of culture, role perception and institutional identity as determining the level of parliamentary scrutiny.

**Keywords:** Common Foreign and Security Policy, parliamentary scrutiny, Foreign Affairs Committee, Riigikogu, Eduskunta, authority, ability, attitude

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

CFSP- Common Foreign and Security Policy

CSDP- Common Security and Defence Policy

EAC- European Union Affairs Committee

EEAS- European External Action Service

EP- European Parliament

EU- European Union

FAC- Foreign Affairs Council

HR- The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

MP- Member of Parliament

NATO- North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

OPAL- Observatory of Parliaments after the Lisbon Treaty

OSCE- Organisation for security and Co-operation in Europe

TEU- Treaty on European Union

TFEU- Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

## INTRODUCTION

According to Holzacker “parliamentary scrutiny is the exercise of power by the legislative branch to control, influence, or monitor government policy-making” (Holzacker, 2008, p. 143). It provides democratic accountability to the decisions and actions of the executive. Research on the role of national parliaments in the European Union (EU) policy-making has received more attention because of the democratic deficit debate about the accountability problem of EU decisions that the Lisbon Treaty that gave parliaments more instruments and control-mechanisms, was supposed to address. National parliaments have been labelled losers or victims of EU integration in the process of Europeanisation and as “latecomers” to adapting to the policy-making of the EU (Maurer & Wessels, 2001; Moravcsik, 1995). Others argue that national parliaments have responded to the empowerment of the EU and there has been a “parliamentary turn” or potential “parliamentarisation”, as national parliaments have improved their powers in their own political systems and also through parliamentary cooperation (Herranz-Surrals, 2014; O’Brennan, 2007).

The main function of national parliaments in the EU policy-making is to control their executives through parliamentary oversight and scrutiny of the government members who represent member states in the meetings of the Council of the European Union (Council) and thereby to assure democratic legitimacy. As Hänggi put it “Scrutiny or oversight of the government is one of the most meaningful functions of parliament in modern democracies. It enables parliament to hold the government accountable for its activities, thereby helping to improve the quality of governance” (Born & Hänggi, 2004, p. 14). Riigikogu and Eduskunta both have the “mandating-model of scrutiny” with the involvement of specialised committees in EU policy scrutiny and policy-making (Buzogany, 2010, p. 4). In the case of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) the executive is represented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs who presents the government’s positions at the meetings of the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) that deals with EU’ external action and foreign policy and implements CFSP (Council of the European Union, 2017). Both Foreign Affairs Committees usually support the position of the government when giving a mandate for the Minister of Foreign Affairs before the FAC meetings.

The Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union is in many ways an exceptional EU policy with its “multifaceted” and “multilevel” nature. This means that it comprises a broad range of areas and entails both national and European levels (Keukeleire & Delreux, 2014, p. 1). CFSP is one of those facets that is considered to be intergovernmental in nature and the domain of the executive and therefore has less parliamentary control. This means that decisions are taken and negotiations held at the government level between the Ministers of Foreign Affairs at FAC meetings and national parliaments and European institutions representing the Community side are not that involved and it is considered to be a policy-field of high member state involvement at EU level. Furthermore, the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty that introduced additional scrutiny mechanisms for national parliaments, generally do not apply to CFSP and research in that area offers an insight into how parliaments scrutinise non-legislative aspects of EU policy where scrutiny mechanisms are also usually less institutionalised (Huff, 2015, p. 396). This has raised a discussion about the democratic legitimacy and accountability of this policy as it is also influenced by supranational actors like the European External Action Service (EEAS) (Sjursen, 2011a). There is no formal scrutiny mechanism for national parliaments to oversee the actions of the EEAS and its non-transparent organisational structure makes effective scrutiny difficult (Huff, 2013, p. 6). According to Huff this calls into question the ability of even the parliaments with strong formal powers and mandating systems to hold their ministers accountable for FAC decisions (Huff, 2013, p. 7).

Moreover, the European Parliament’s powers are limited in CFSP, which means that democratic scrutiny is exercised primarily by national parliaments through monitoring their government. Sjursen has even questioned the intergovernmental nature of that policy because of the expanding “transnational bureaucracy” that are making decisions beyond the reach of national parliaments (Sjursen, 2011b, p. 1072). She argues that terms like “supranational intergovernmentalism”, “Brussel-based intergovernmentalism” and “deliberative intergovernmentalism” clearly demonstrate that move away from the intergovernmental model, where governments are accountable to national parliaments (Sjursen, 2011a, p. 1081). Sjursen further discusses that in order for the CFSP to fit the audit democracy model, the role of national parliaments should be strengthened and integration scaled down (Sjursen, 2013, p. 149). Similarly, Christopher Lord claims that

even if the CFSP would be intergovernmental, there would still be more need for direct legitimation at the EU level (Lord, 2011, p. 1142). Born and Hänggi have also written about the “double democratic deficit” in CFSP because of weak parliamentary control at the national level and lack of transparency and accountability at the EU level (Born & Hänggi, 2004). As there is structurally less parliamentary scrutiny in CFSP as in other EU policies, the legislative-executive relations in this policy field have according to some scholars received remarkably little attention (Huff, 2015, p. 396; Raunio, 2016a). This is despite the fact that for many parliaments, including the European Parliament (EP), CFSP is an important policy and they are actively looking for ways to influence and scrutinise it, which means that it merits more academic attention. Raube has demonstrated that the EP has been empowered despite incomplete treaties and it has tried to increase the accountability of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR) and the EEAS (Raube, 2015, p. 153). This study is therefore going to investigate factors that affect levels of scrutiny of CFSP. Despite these structural obstacles working against parliamentary scrutiny in this policy area, it does take place, especially in mandating system of parliamentary scrutiny of EU affairs. Although Huff and Born and Hänggi have observed that levels of parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP vary greatly among the EU member states (Born & Hänggi, 2005; Huff, 2013). In order to understand this phenomenon, and to be able to recommend ways to close the democratic gap, it is necessary to look into the factors that produce such variation and this is what this study is going to do.

So far the literature on parliamentary scrutiny of EU affairs has focused on formal parliamentary rights and emphasised the importance of mandating rights, availability of information and resources available (Bergman, 1997; Pahre, 1997; Winzen, 2012). Yet, recently there has been a shift of focus in research about parliamentary scrutiny in EU policies from formal rules to informal factors that influence scrutiny strength. Auel shows that the presence of formal powers does not necessarily relate to actual parliamentary activity and there is a stark contrast between legal rights and how they are used in practice. She argues that “formal mandating rights are usually incompatible with the overall logic of parliamentary systems, which explains why most national parliaments make very little use of them” (Auel, 2007, p. 487). Born and Hänggi took this even further by claiming that while looking at parliamentary scrutiny in defence policy and parliamentary



accountability three factors should be taken into account: authority, ability and attitude (Born & Hänggi, 2004, pp. 11–15). Huff has taken this approach even further and employed these interlinked three concepts also in the context of CFSP. She criticises that too much attention has been paid on the formal powers in the research about parliamentary scrutiny and too little attention on how these powers are used in practise (Huff, 2013, p. 4). In her most recent research she argues using the analytical framework of “authority, ability and attitude” that attitude is the most important factor in explaining the variation in the strength of parliamentary scrutiny in CFSP (Huff, 2015, p. 396). I am going to follow up on the assertion and look at the role of informal factors in determining the level of engagement in CFSP parliamentary scrutiny.

As foreign policy is usually decided behind closed doors and is more secretive than other policy fields, the parliamentary scrutiny in this field has also been less researched. In fact comparative research in the parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP has almost exclusively looked at only the parliamentary “war powers” (Raunio, 2016a, p. 315). This is also a policy field characterised by information asymmetry, as parliaments do not have the access to information that government members have who also attend Council meetings and this can affect the scrutiny of government and further complicates research (Kesgin & Kaarbo, 2010, p. 21). Taking this as the point of departure, I am going to follow up on this research, which suggests that in addition to formal powers and abilities, the willingness of parliamentarians to scrutinise is also an important factor in determining the engagement of parliamentarians in CFSP scrutiny. I am investigating this by looking at the cases of Estonian Riigikogu and Finnish Eduskunta that are similar in formal structure of parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP.

In the literature on Nordic parliaments, especially Denmark, Finland and Sweden are considered to have the strongest scrutiny powers in EU policies because of their mandating system (Keukeleire & Delreux, 2014, p. 119; Neuhold, Heffler, Rozenberg, & Smith, 2016, p. 670). This is also one of the reasons why Riigikogu, the Parliament of Estonia, took Eduskunta, the Parliament of Finland, as an example when creating its parliamentary scrutiny model of EU affairs after joining the European Union in 2004 (Möttus, Ernits, & Oja, 2012, p. 460). As a consequence of modelling the Estonian institutional setup after the Finnish model, Riigikogu and Eduskunta have very similar

strong formal scrutiny powers in EU policies including in the area of CFSP.<sup>1</sup> As a result, not only the broad context factors are relatively similar, they are both small states in EU level, generally considered to be pro-integration with a tradition of consensual foreign policy, but also at the institutional level, both have specialised committees involved in EU scrutiny with the Foreign Affairs Committees responsible for parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP.

Both countries, Estonia and Finland also officially support a strong Common Foreign and Security Policy and have “working parliaments”, which means that emphasis is on work carried out in parliamentary committees. According to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, the EU must be an active global player and strong CFSP is a key instrument of that and a channel for Finland to exert its influence (The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, 2015). According to the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the context of CFSP “Estonia’s objective is a strong and united European Union. The increasing integration of the EU strengthens the feeling of togetherness and allows to be better protected against security threats. Internally integrated European Union is also more capable and influential in its external activities” (Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2017). Estonia’s support for a strong and united CFSP was also evident when sanctions were imposed on Russia in 2014 over its military intervention in Ukraine. Although Estonia is one of the countries that is worst affected by the decrease of trade with Russia, it is one of the most ardent supporters of a united EU response and maintaining the sanctions until Minsk agreement is fulfilled or even strengthening them if necessary (Estonian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, 2017). Estonia and Finland also have very similar political systems. Although Finland has a semi-presidential system and foreign policy leadership is shared between the President and government, EU affairs including CFSP is the responsibility of the government like in Estonia. Both countries also have a tradition of majority coalition governments and the nature of the opposition

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<sup>1</sup> When developing a system of scrutiny of EU affairs, Estonia took Denmark and Finland as models because of their strong parliamentary oversight mechanisms. There was also close cooperation and information exchange between the civil servants of the Riigikogu and Eduskunta during the time of accession. A distinctive characteristic of the system of Eduskunta is the involvement of specialised committees in scrutiny of EU affairs and it is more flexible than the Danish system where there is also a tradition of minority governments. While in Folketinget the European Affairs Committee is also responsible for the scrutiny of CFSP, Riigikogu took over the system of Eduskunta where the Foreign Affairs Committee scrutinises CFSP.

has been quite fragmented, which would assume that it is also easier for the government to push through its will in the parliament. Although Estonia is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and Finland is not, it should not make a crucial difference in CFSP scrutiny as both countries as small states are supporters of deepening and strengthening cooperation in foreign policy issues between the EU member states.

While these institutional factors suggest similarity in terms of scrutiny, in practice, this is not the case. For example, the Palgrave Handbook of National Parliaments and the European Union studied comprehensively all EU national parliaments and in the country reports Riigikogu was described as “a watchdog that does not bark” and the Finnish parliament was found to be a government watchdog and a policy shaper (Neuhold et al., 2016, pp. 423, 527). Riigikogu has often been described as a “rubber stamp” in the eyes of the government and in Estonian media and by politician themselves that just seals decision made by the government (Ehin, 2015, p. 526; Karnau, 2011; The Foundation Estonian Cooperation Assembly, 2015). The latter claim of the Estonian parliament being more passive in the use of its scrutinising powers, is also echoed in the literature on the EU scrutiny practice of the Riigikogu in general. Riigikogu is one of the least active parliaments in the EU to use the instruments of subsidiarity and the political Dialogue (Ehin, 2015, p. 523). On the other hand, according to Raunio, the Finnish government emphasises the role of Eduskunta in providing democratic legitimacy to EU policy-making (Raunio, 2015, p. 407). The Eduskunta has also argued that the position approved by the parliament is the only Finnish position at the EU level (Raunio, 2015, p. 417). In the light of similar institutional settings, but pronounced difference with regard to scrutiny in practice, this raises the question of factors that influence the strength of parliamentary scrutiny if all formal powers to exercise it are present and relatively similar.

This research is important also in the wider context of the debate on the deepening and widening of the EU foreign and security policy and the role of member states and national parliaments in CFSP as an intergovernmental policy field. The objective of my research is to identify what factors influence and shape levels of parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP. For this purpose, this study seeks to answer the question comparing the cases of Riigikogu and Eduskunta as “most similar” cases given that both have similar strong formal scrutiny powers and parliamentary setup for scrutinising CFSP. Also, research of parliamentary scrutiny in EU policies has up to now concentrated on investigating the variations in

parliamentary scrutiny models of different EU member states, but there is no research on comparing the differences between strong scrutinisers with strong formal powers and the differences in scrutiny practice. The comparison of two cases, which are similar in their formal setting allows me to identify informal factors, most importantly attitude. I will be especially concentrating on the motives of the Members of the Foreign Affairs Committees of the Riigikogu and the Eduskunta to scrutinise or not and how the politicians see their role and the role of their parliament in CFSP. For this purpose, I conducted extensive semi-structured interviews with former and current Members of the Foreign Affairs Committees of both countries. The sample includes both members of the opposition and members of the coalition and a member of the Committee staff. I will particularly focus on the importance of attitude in impacting parliamentary scrutiny in CFSP relying on the frameworks developed by Born and Hänggi (2004) and Huff (2013) and drawing on, broadly, a sociological institutionalist approach. My aim is to see whether attitude and/or willingness of the Members of Parliament (MP) to scrutinise influences the level of parliamentary scrutiny in CFSP and how parliamentarians actually perceive the quality and effectiveness of their own scrutiny efforts. Following their account of parliamentary scrutiny, and the emphasis on the role of informal factors/attitude (awareness and willingness) in particular, two hypotheses are put forward in order to test the influence of attitude on levels of scrutiny:

H1: The more parliamentarians conceive of their role as giving effect to parliamentary control, the higher levels of parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP affairs.

H2: The higher the willingness of parliamentarians to exert parliamentary control, the higher levels of scrutiny of CFSP affairs.

Everything else being equal (formal factors), parliaments with higher attitude as well as higher levels of willingness will exercise higher levels of parliamentary scrutiny in CFSP affairs. The time frame of my research is post-Lisbon Treaty (December 2009-) as this established the current framework of CFSP and mechanisms of parliamentary scrutiny.

It is also the first comparative study of Riigikogu and Eduskunta and their scrutiny of CFSP. As it is a policy area with weaker scrutiny mechanisms than other EU policy areas and generally the scrutiny procedures available for the EU legislation do not apply for CFSP, it is especially important to research what are the factors that motivate the MPs to

scrutinise it. Also in the CFSP the intergovernmental nature has remained, which means that parliaments with mandating systems should have a direct way of influencing the actions of the government in CFSP. However, informal factors like attitude and willingness are very difficult to measure and research, which from the outset is understood to pose a limitation of my investigation. I circumvent this problem by relying on interviews, which provide the information from practice and from personal perceptions of politicians and longtime staff members of the Foreign Affairs Committee. Another obstacle in investigating this policy field is that foreign and security issues are usually considered sensitive information and the Foreign Affairs Committee meetings of Eduskunta and Riigikogu also take place behind closed doors, so it is difficult to get information and get politicians to agree to an in-depth interview. Another limitation could be that Estonian members had the advantage of giving an interview in their mother language, but as the interviews with the Finnish MPs were held in English, they might have had more difficulties in expressing their ideas clearly in a foreign language.

In the following section I will give an overview of the Europeanisation, parliamentarisation and deparliamentarisation as more specific contributions to the debate on the role of national parliaments in EU affairs. Thereafter, I will look into the debate on the democratic deficit of CFSP at the European level and will give an overview of the academic debate on the formal and informal factors that influence the level of parliamentary scrutiny. I will embed this discussion into the wider debate on the new institutionalist theories and their explanations of parliamentary scrutiny as they emphasise the role of institutions, culture and role perception in determining the levels of parliamentary scrutiny and thus emphasise the informal factors that affect parliamentary scrutiny. Then I am going to use the analytical framework of “authority, ability and attitude” developed by Born and Hänggi and use the comparative method of “most similar systems” to compare the formal and informal practices of parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP of the Foreign Affairs Committees of Riigikogu and Eduskunta.

## **THEORIES OF PARLIAMENTARY SCRUTINY**

### **Europeanisation, deparliamentarisation and parliamentarisation**

The approaches of Europeanisation, de-parliamentarisation or parliamentarisation look at the wider context of the role of national parliaments in the EU policy-making and thus offer insights into the debate about parliamentary scrutiny and motivation factors to scrutinise. Europeanisation in the context on parliamentary scrutiny means national adaptation to the EU level and institutionalisation of European norms and values and pursuing foreign policy on EU level. In the context of parliamentary scrutiny, it diminishes the role and impact of national parliaments as Europeanisation is claimed to have decreased the role of parliaments as more decisions are made at EU level and they are the passive victims of integration (O'Brennan, 2007). This has also led to the deparliamentarisation thesis that also argues that parliaments are increasingly marginalised in the EU policy-process as they have had to give powers away to the EU level that were previously under their jurisdiction (O'Brennan, 2007, p. 4). This has also led to loss of power from the legislative to the executive as government members are in a more dominant position and have more interaction with the EU level (O'Brennan, 2007, p. 6). Kassim has further observed that in the context of parliamentary scrutiny this means that parliaments have very little opportunity to scrutinise EU proposals, influence the content or direct the actions of their governments (Kassim, 2000, p. 258). In the context of parliamentary scrutiny is also important that there has been a transfer of decision-making authority from the legislative to the executive through decisions made at the Council of Ministers (Holzhacker, 2008, p. 142). These approaches downplay the impact of parliaments and the importance of parliamentary scrutiny in the EU political system.

On the other hand, there are scholars who argue for parliamentarisation that actually especially after the Lisbon Treaty the scrutiny possibilities of national parliaments have increased and they are influential players in the EU policy-making process. According to them, national parliaments have learned to fight back and have gained greater participation rights in EU policy-making (Auel, Tacea, & Rozenberg, 2015). Parliaments have adapted to new scrutiny models to better control EU policies and oversee the government actions and have reformed their rules of procedure accordingly (Strom, Müller, & Bergman, 2003). O'Brennan and Raunio argue that parliaments have also

increased interparliamentary cooperation in EU policies and in general MPs value more the importance of EU affairs (O'Brennan, 2007, p. 26). This approach sees the parliaments gaining power in the EU context because of the democratic deficit debate and accountability problems that have shifted the focus back on the role of national parliaments. My research gives an insight into how parliamentarians themselves see the role of national parliaments and their impact on EU policies and if they perceive the existence of democratic deficit in CFSP. As I will look into how the two parliaments engage in scrutiny of CFSP, the findings should also indicate if in the context of Riigikogu and Eduskunta we can talk about their marginalisation or parliamentarisation.

### **The democratic deficit of the Common Foreign and Security Policy at the European level**

In addition to the national level where foreign policy is considered the domain of the executive, the democratic deficit debate is also raised at the European level because of the small role of the European Parliament in CFSP. EP only really has the budgetary power and according to the Article 36 of the Treaty on European Union the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy has to “regularly consult” the EP on CFSP issues and “ensure that the views of the European Parliament are duly taken into consideration” (European Union, 2007). According to Huff this democratic deficit could only be overcome through more effective interparliamentary cooperation between national parliaments and the European Parliament, although any attempt made by the EP to gain power in CFSP is seen as a threat by national parliaments to the intergovernmental nature of the policy (Huff, 2013, pp. 20–21). Raube tackles the question of democratic deficit of CFSP on EU level and demonstrated that the EEAS is subjected to parliamentary scrutiny by the EP, although it might not be adequate oversight due the limited powers given to the EP in EU treaties (Raube, 2015). The EP has gained co-legislation rights in the financing and staffing of EEAS and consultation right on the organisation and functioning of EEAS. However, it has managed to gain more powers and influence than given to it by the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), CFSP still remains largely beyond parliamentary control (Raube, 2015, p. 145). This is why Huff also emphasises the importance of researching the factors that influence the MP's willingness to scrutinise

CFSP as there also seems to be no direct correlation between parliament's formal powers and willingness to use these powers (Huff, 2013, p. 21). She argues that the case of the European Parliament illustrates the importance of attitude in parliamentary scrutiny, which can even lead to more authority and ability, as the EP is very interested in CFSP scrutiny despite its lack of formal powers, which has led to more involvement in CFSP (Huff, 2013, p. 19).

### **Formal and informal factors that influence parliamentary scrutiny**

There are different theoretical approaches to studying the levels of parliamentary scrutiny in EU policy-making and the factors that influence it. The most common one is the principal-agent theory that is based on the process of delegation and accountability and looks at the delegation of power from the principal (parliament) to the agent (government). According to that theory there is information asymmetry between the two actors in favour of the agent and the latter will always try to maximise his interest instead of that of the principal. In the context of parliamentary scrutiny it focuses on the institutional control mechanisms and formal powers of the parliament in order to control the government and on the possible agency loss (Sanchez de Dios, 2014, pp. 12–13). Martin and Vanberg argue in that framework that coalition government parties use parliamentary scrutiny to avoid that the certain minister pursues policies favoured by their own party at the expense of coalition partners (Martin & Vanberg, 2004, p. 13). Parliamentary scrutiny can also be studied through the game theory that focuses on the competition between different actors and how coalition formation affects scrutiny levels (Sanchez de Dios, 2014, p. 11). The formalistic approach concentrates on the importance of formal and structural powers in determining the level of parliamentary scrutiny (Sanchez de Dios, 2014, p. 2). Constructivists emphasise the importance of ideas, values and identity and thus focus on the informal factors like roles and the social setting (Keukeleire & Delreux, 2014, p. 326). In the context of CFSP in addition to the formal structural powers, they would look at the strength of European and institutional identity.

Maurer and Wessels conducted the first comprehensive comparative research on how the role of national parliaments was impacted by the EU integration in the EU-15 and emphasised the institutional structure and formal powers (Maurer & Wessels, 2001). As a result, it received criticism for its unilateral approach that ignores how these formal



powers are used and other informal factors that influence scrutiny strength. Neo-institutionalist approach emphasises the importance of willingness of using the formal powers in determining the level of scrutiny (Auel, 2005). In some cases, willingness by the parliament to scrutinise the government is even more important than formal powers (Auel & Benz, 2005). According to Auel, Rozenberg and Tacea “national parliaments are complex institutions, made up of individuals faced with a number of different opportunities, constraints and incentives. Institutional capacities are thus not necessarily automatically translated into behaviour” (Auel, Rozenberg, & Tacea, 2015, p. 283). Bono’s findings also show that the formal powers of parliaments cannot fully account for the practice of scrutiny (Bono, 2005, p. 220). MacCarthaigh emphasises the importance of domestic political culture in influencing the level of scrutiny in practice. Rozenberg argues that emotional incentives and role perceptions of MPs are also important factors in influencing parliamentary involvement in EU affairs (Auel, Tacea, et al., 2015, p. 65). O’Brennan and Raunio also admit that although different treaties have enhanced the powers of national parliaments, it still depends on the national MPs themselves how and to what extent they wish to scrutinise EU affairs (O’Brennan, 2007, pp. 32–33).

### **Neo-institutionalism and its approaches to parliamentary scrutiny**

The three neo-institutionalist schools of thought – historical institutionalism, rational choice institutionalism and sociological institutionalism developed in response to behavioural perspectives and seek to demonstrate the role of institutions in determining social and political outcomes. Rational choice institutionalists emphasise the importance of formal structures in determining engagement in parliamentary scrutiny, historical institutionalists emphasise the role of institutions themselves with formal and informal factors and sociological institutionalists stress the importance of informal factors. Paradoxically these three schools of thought developed independently from each other. According to Hall and Taylor historical institutionalism emphasises the importance of formal institutions and their power to structure collective behaviour and influence distinctive outcomes. Much of their research concentrates on the way political institutions structure relations among different actors like the legislative, executive, interest groups and the electorate. They define institutions through their formal and informal rules and norms and they tend to see institutional development as path dependent. According to this

view institutions affect the identities and preferences of actors and the individual is seen as “an entity deeply embedded in a world of institutions, composed of symbols, scripts and routines, which provide the filters for interpretation, of both the situation and oneself, out of which a course of action is constructed”. It has devoted less attention than other branches of new institutionalism to developing an explanation of how exactly institutions affect the behaviour of actors (Hall & Taylor, 1996, pp. 936–942). Its criticism is that historical institutionalists have not managed to add their findings into systemic theories about processes involved in institutional creation and change (Hall & Taylor, 1996, p. 955).

Rational choice institutionalism grew out from a study of American congressional behaviour and the role of the Congress as an institution in Congressional outcomes. It looked at theories of agency in explaining how the Congress structures its relations with its committees and regulatory agencies. Rational choice institutionalists presume that actors will behave in a strategic manner that maximises their interests. They see institutions as structuring interactions and leading actors towards a particular outcome by limiting choices and providing mechanisms for action (Hall & Taylor, 1996, pp. 942–946). Rational choice institutionalists have also demonstrated the importance of information and strategic interaction between actors for power relations and political outcomes (Hall & Taylor, 1996, p. 951). Although this approach has a precise conception for explaining how institutions affect individuals, it has been criticised for being too simplistic in describing human motivation (Hall & Taylor, 1996, p. 951). It does not also explain the causes of inefficiency of some institutions and it tends to assume that the process of institutional creation and its effects are under the control of actors (Hall & Taylor, 1996, p. 952).

Sociological institutionalism grew out of organisational theory in the 1970s and was a counter reaction to the emphasis on the formal and rational side of institutions that concentrate on efficiency. Sociologists see institutions more broadly than political scientists and view culture and factors associated with it like morals and symbol systems as important elements in how institutions affect actors. According to Hall and Taylor sociological institutions argue that “many of these forms and practices should be seen as culturally-specific practices, akin to the myths and ceremonies devised by many societies, and assimilated into organizations, not necessarily to enhance their formal means-ends

efficiency, but as a result of the kind of processes associated with the transmission of cultural practices more generally". They see institutions as influencing not only the behaviour of actors but also their preferences and identities. Moreover, individuals internalise their institutional roles and the norms associated with it and institutions determine also the possible course of action for the actors and make them behave in socially appropriate ways. Sociological institutionalism does not deny that actors can be rational but they argue that this is socially constituted what rational choice institutionalists take as given and institutions can affect the preferences or identities of actors (Hall & Taylor, 1996, pp. 946–950). It explains the best way out of new institutionalists theories the existence of inefficiencies in institutions (Hall & Taylor, 1996, p. 953). At the same time, it can ignore the importance of power relations in determining individual behaviour or institutional change (Hall & Taylor, 1996, p. 954).

Three neo-institutional theories: rational choice, historical and sociological institutionalism, have their own explanations of parliamentary scrutiny. Rational choice institutionalism emphasises the importance of government type, party splits and bargaining power in determining the strength and ability to scrutinise. According to this view conflicts within the parliament influence government type and the higher the level of conflict, the stronger the level of scrutiny (Buzogany, 2010, p. 9). This approach also looks at the bargaining powers of member states at Council meetings and claims that as small countries generally have weaker bargaining powers, they develop better parliamentary scrutiny mechanisms so that their governments have more influence on the European level by being able to block decisions (Buzogany, 2010, p. 10). Rationalist explanation to parliamentary scrutiny is also that parliamentarians have limited time resources in their hands and have to consider the costs and benefits of spending time on EU affairs (Auel, Tacea, et al., 2015, p. 65). Moreover MPs are rational and they are more willing to scrutinise EU affairs, if they have the institutional means for it (Auel, Rozenberg, et al., 2015, p. 300). Historical institutionalism concentrates on parliamentary and committee strength and accession timing as the most important factors influencing parliamentary scrutiny strength. This approach sees the parliament's ability to scrutinise on EU level as dependent on the ability to scrutinise on domestic level (Buzogany, 2010, p. 10). Sociological institutionalist approach looks at political culture, salience of European issues and public opinion towards the EU as determining the level of

parliamentary scrutiny (Buzogany, 2010, p. 10). Raunio emphasises the importance of Eurosceptic public opinion, which usually leads to stronger scrutiny mechanisms by the parliament to control the government more effectively (Raunio, 2005).

Auel and Christiansen found based on neo-institutionalist approaches that institutional capacities and political motivation explain best parliamentary involvement in EU affairs. They find that “to explain the nature, direction and intensity of parliamentary involvement, the motivation of individual Members of Parliament and parliamentary party groups to become involved needs to be studied, and the preferences, incentives and driving forces that guide their actions ought to be examined” (Auel & Christiansen, 2015, p. 264). According to them parliamentarians are rational actors and institutions provide a context for what is deemed as appropriate behaviour. Thus, parliamentary behaviour is affected by the formal and informal rules and norms and parliamentary culture. (Auel & Christiansen, 2015, p. 265). MPs are motivated by electoral benefits and possible policy impact and public opinion on EU issues can provide an incentive for scrutiny (Auel & Christiansen, 2015, p. 270). In addition to domestic level, also institutional environment at the EU level should be studied.

The sociological institutionalism looks at the role of norms and values in motivating parliamentarians to engage in scrutiny. An important factor is parliamentary and political culture and how EU scrutiny is influenced by general parliamentary traditions. These parliamentary norms can determine what is considered appropriate behaviour and whether there is a cooperative or confrontational culture between the executive and the legislative influences the way scrutiny is exercised. (Auel & Christiansen, 2015, p. 271). Sprungk argues that a confrontation with the executive might not be considered appropriate behaviour in the parliamentary culture where there is a cooperative relationship between the government and the parliament and this might hinder intensive scrutiny. She also says that the attitude of the MP towards EU might impact the willingness to exercise EU scrutiny as a party that supports EU integration might consider parliamentary scrutiny as inappropriate and harmful (Sprungk, 2003). Wessels has demonstrated the importance of the perception of MPs about the importance of parliamentary functions, how democratic legitimacy is achieved in the EU and the role of national parliaments in EU policy-making as factors influencing motivation to scrutinise (Wessels, 2005). Blomgren and Rozenberg have looked at “parliamentary roles” that in

addition to individual beliefs and ideas articulate collective norms and values as factors that influence the behaviour of MPs (Rozenberg & Blomgren, 2012, p. 211). What this means is that in the light of the new institutionalism debate, each strand emphasises different kinds of factors. By looking into explanatory role of attitude and willingness, the present study contributes to this debate by showing the importance of role perceptions and institutional culture and identity as determining how actively parliaments engage in CFSP scrutiny.

### **Authority, ability and attitude**

The comparative framework was first developed by Born and Hänggi in the context of defence policy by evaluating parliaments on the basis of three criteria: authority, ability and attitude (Born & Hänggi, 2004). They argue that these three concepts are interlinked and equally important in determining the level of scrutiny. Both formal and informal powers are important as authority is contingent on the ability and on the political will. This framework allows for in-depth comparison of parliamentary scrutiny practices and explains the variation. Huff took this approach further and used it in the context of CFSP and CSDP (Huff, 2013). She also argues that in research ability and attitude have received less systematic attention than authority (Huff, 2013, p. 9). In her more recent research she argues that in this framework attitude, meaning the willingness of the MPs to scrutinise is the most important factor in explaining the variation in the levels of scrutiny of national parliaments specifically in CFSP. Furthermore, Huff argues that the attitude of MPs is especially important in the context of the CFSP, as it is a policy area which is in comparison with other EU policies less institutionalised and less automatic in terms of parliamentary scrutiny. Thus, it also offers an insight into the factors that motivate MPs to scrutinise or not and how parliaments control the activities of government in non-legislative aspects of EU-policy (Huff, 2015, p. 396). She also states that there is almost no empirical or comparative data on how parliaments scrutinise CFSP and especially the questions of sufficient time, resources and the interest of MPs to scrutinise (Huff, 2015, p. 398).

Authority refers to the formal powers that the parliament has to legislate on foreign policy and scrutinise the government. Born and Hänggi look at the legislative, budgetary, elective, representative and scrutiny and oversight functions in determining whether a

parliament has strong or weak powers. They look at parliamentary powers in the context of the use of force under international auspices and look at the ability of the parliaments to give a binding mandate (*ex ante*), troop dispatch (*ex ante*), *post hoc* questioning/inquiry, budget veto over individual missions and ability to amend or veto overall foreign policy budget (Born & Hänggi, 2004, p. 12). According to Huff who applied Born and Hänggi's framework to CFSP, the ability to give a mandate to ministers before Council meetings is the most potent instrument for parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP (Huff, 2015, p. 401). Parliaments with a mandate system have a higher level of formal authority as their governments are obliged to stick to the mandate and are accountable to the parliament.

In Born and Hänggi's framework ability means whether the parliament is capable of exercising their formal powers. They believe that a prerequisite of effective parliamentary scrutiny in the field of security policy is the involvement of a specialised committee that demonstrates the institutionalisation of parliamentary oversight in that policy field and increase the ability of the parliament to influence the government. Also important is that this specialised committee has administrative and expert support, as well as access to information and the timing of that information (Born & Hänggi, 2005, pp. 5–9). They argue that formal powers are not enough for effective parliamentary scrutiny, unless they are accompanied by sufficient resources, staff support and expertise (Born & Hänggi, 2004, p. 14). Parliaments have various ways to fulfil their oversight function like questioning, interpellation, debates, hearings and inquiries, but effective oversight is not possible without full and accurate information (Born & Hänggi, 2004, p. 14). Another important indicator regarding information rights is access to information by the members of the opposition. The last one is especially important because of the closed nature of foreign and security policy that can exclude the opposition. The size of the committee staff is vital for effective scrutiny but the size of the committee does not have a linear impact on the effectiveness of parliamentary oversight in CFSP (Born & Hänggi, 2005, pp. 9–10).

By attitude Born and Hänggi mean assessing the parliament's attitude towards security policy scrutiny (Born & Hänggi, 2005, p. 11). They argue that all formal powers and capacities are meaningless without the willingness of parliamentarians to use these powers to scrutinise the government. They also admit that attitude is very difficult to

evaluate and it requires extensive qualitative analysis (Born & Hänggi, 2005, p. 11). Huff also agrees and admits that this is also the reason why this concept has received almost no academic attention and no attempt has been made to develop a systematic approach towards how attitude can be applied to CFSP and CSDP (Huff, 2013, p. 15). In assessing attitude Born and Hänggi emphasise the broader context of the perception of parliament about its role in relation to the government (Born & Hänggi, 2005, p. 11). According to Huff empirical evidence suggests that MPs who do not see themselves as scrutinisers of the foreign and security policy and see it as the domain of the executive, are also less likely to put effort into scrutinising CFSP (Huff, 2015, p. 406). Born and Hänggi also emphasise the political salience of security issues as determining the engagement in parliamentary scrutiny (Born & Hänggi, 2005, p. 11). Huff argues that more systematically attitude can be viewed as the attitude of parliaments towards CFSP scrutiny in the context of their approach to EU affairs in general. (Huff, 2013, p. 9). It is in the end up to the individual parliaments and politicians how they choose to use the formal powers and capabilities available for them in CFSP scrutiny and whether to invest time and resources into CFSP scrutiny and if they see it as an important policy field.

Born and Hänggi see as a limiting factor of parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP the fact that security issues do not generally figure high on the public agenda and are not viewed as of great importance from electoral point of view (Born & Hänggi, 2004, p. 15). Literature on CFSP parliamentary scrutiny also says that domestic issues usually matter more for voters than foreign policy, which could impact the willingness of parliamentarians to scrutinise or the quality of scrutiny (Kesgin & Kaarbo, 2010, p. 21). Born and Hänggi emphasise the demand by public opinion as determining the level of parliamentary scrutiny in security issues. (Born & Hänggi, 2005, p. 11). According to the sociological institutionalist approach the strength of parliamentary scrutiny depends on the public opinion about the EU. Raunio argues that a more Eurosceptic public will result in tighter parliamentary scrutiny as the MPs as representatives of the electorate have a stronger incentive to control the actions of the government (Auel, Rozenberg, et al., 2015, p. 287).

## **METHODOLOGY**

The comparative method was chosen for this research, as Eduskunta and Riigikogu are both strong scrutinisers and with similar formal powers, yet there seems to be a difference in their scrutiny strength in practice and the ability to influence EU policies. So, the form of comparative explanation chosen is the “most similar systems” research design proposed by Przeworski and Teune where cases with many similar features are chosen, which then cannot be accountable for causing the differences between the cases (Hopkin, 2010, p. 292). The cases of Estonia and Finland were chosen for their similarity of the formal parliamentary scrutiny powers in CFSP, which should better demonstrate the influence of informal factors in determining the difference of the level of parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP. This is the reason I did not choose to compare a weak and a strong scrutiniser, but two strong scrutinisers with similar formal powers and to see if there is a difference in how they use these powers in practice. A limitation of the “most similar systems” comparison design in my research is the “too many variables, too few countries” problem as it is difficult to find countries that are so similar in their scrutiny design that they could be compared for differences and there are still many variables that could account for the difference (Hopkin, 2010, p. 293).

In order to initially establish overall levels of EU scrutiny, I am relying on the data of the Observatory of Parliaments after the Lisbon Treaty (OPAL) research on the overall scrutiny of EU affairs in Eduskunta and Riigikogu, their scores of institutional strength and activity in EU affairs and country reports. OPAL is a joint project dedicated to the research on the role of national parliaments after the Lisbon Treaty came into effect and is the most comprehensive and in-depth qualitative research of the EU parliaments in EU scrutiny. One of the priorities of the project was also to create a ranking that would not only focus on institutional provisions and formal rules. I go beyond that, by looking at scrutiny in practice and more specifically how informal factors such as attitude and willingness influence the practice of parliamentary scrutiny.

In comparing Eduskunta’s and Riigikogu’s engagement in CFSP scrutiny the analytical framework developed by Born and Hänggi that they used for comparing the parliamentary accountability of the use of force under international auspices will be used. They believe that the parliamentary scrutiny depends on its powers, capacity and willingness to hold



the government accountable. Bruce George, a Member of the British House of Commons and former President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) used in this context the important factors of authority, ability and attitude that Born and Hänggi adopted for their comparative framework (Born & Hänggi, 2005, pp. 3–4). There is little research on the parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP and few attempts made at comparing different countries have used this framework (Huff 2013), because it is a comprehensive analytical framework that looks at both formal and informal factors and offers comparable data. It also accounts for each legislature's unique institutional arrangements and culture (Born & Hänggi, 2005, p. 5). A disadvantage is that this framework best explains variation among the different models of scrutiny applied by the EU member states, but has not been used before to compare two strong scrutinisers with the same mandating systems.

### **Post-Lisbon Treaty time frame**

The time frame of this research is post-Lisbon Treaty that entered into force 1 December 2009. The main focus is on the last two parliamentary terms, as there were parliamentary elections in both Estonia and Finland in the spring of 2011 and 2015. Some MPs interviewed and the Estonian staff member were already working at the Foreign Affairs Committee also in 2009, when the Lisbon Treaty took effect. The Lisbon Treaty was an attempt to create a more democratic approach towards EU decision-making and intended to increase the role of national parliaments and introduced the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. The Lisbon Treaty established the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) as one of the configurations of the Council of the EU by separating it from the General Affairs and External Relations Council and confirmed the intergovernmental character of CFSP. It also changed the institutional framework of CFSP as the position of the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the European External Action Service were created (Official website of the European Union, 2016). Moreover, a new format of interparliamentary scrutiny of CFSP was put in place — the Interparliamentary Conference on the CFSP and CSDP. National parliaments also gained better and earlier access to information and documentation from the Commission, draft European legislative acts and agendas and the outcome of meetings of the Council (Official Journal of the European Union EUR-Lex, 2012). The role of national parliaments in the EU

policy-making and the impact of the Lisbon Treaty on EU scrutiny has also been in the centre of researchers' attention. So, the reason for choosing the post-Lisbon Treaty as a time frame of this study is that it established the current EU institutional framework and parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP.

### **Semi-structured expert interviews**

Interviews were conducted to get insight into the factors that motivate parliamentarians to scrutinise CFSP, how important are the issues for Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee and their electorate and how do they see their role as scrutinisers. There is actually no previous such detailed research on what factors influence and motivate the parliamentarians to engage in parliamentary scrutiny of specifically CFSP. Only through interviews informal factors are accessible and levels of scrutiny in practice established. In the interviews, I will also look at motivational and attitude indicators that have not been looked at before like the attitude of the Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee towards the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the attitude of the Minister towards the Committee. I will also look at how important the MPs consider EU affairs in general, before asking about the importance of CFSP issues for the Foreign Affairs Committee and their electorate. I will also look at the role perception of MPs how they see the role of national parliaments in EU policy-making and how democratic legitimacy is achieved. I also have specific questions about ability like access to information and if MPs feel the information asymmetry with the government and if there are any factors that hinder the Foreign Affairs Committee members to exercise parliamentary scrutiny.

In choosing the interviewees both members of opposition and coalition were interviewed (Riigikogu: Estonian Centre Party, Estonian Reform Party, Social Democratic Party, Conservative People's Party of Estonia, Pro Patria and Res Publica Union; Eduskunta: Centre Party, Green League, Social Democratic Party of Finland, The Finns Party, National Coalition Party) and politicians who are longtime members of the Committee (who have served more than one legislative term), new members (who are serving their first legislative term) and some members who are previous Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee and who have had different positions in the Committee (Member, Vice-Chairman, Chairman). In addition to MPs also longtime Heads of Secretariats of the Foreign Affairs Committees of both parliaments were interviewed (Riigikogu since 2001;

Eduskunta 2001-2007, 2010-2015). As foreign policy is a policy area where sensitive information is handled and committee discussions and decisions take place behind closed doors and both politicians and civil servants are careful in their sayings, confidentiality was agreed upon. Although the list of interviewees is public and included in the bibliography and Appendix 1 provides more specific information about the positions, political affiliation and experience in the Foreign Affairs Committee, in order to allow the respondents to speak freely and honestly, no one is cited by name. Numbers or any other codes of differentiation are also not used in citing the interviewees as the sample number is small enough and to avoid the possibility of recognition and to guarantee the confidentiality of interviewees. Moreover, in the analysis the general impressions and comparisons about the Foreign Affairs Committees of both countries are more important in the context of this research than quotes by specific people. The interviews lasted from 45 minutes to an hour and a half. In total 14 people were interviewed, seven from Riigikogu and seven from Eduskunta. Interviews with Estonian MPs and a staff member were conducted in Estonian (Appendix 3) and with Finnish MPs and a staff member in English (Appendix 2).

Semi-structured interviews were chosen as a data collecting method, as they provide comparable data and are recommended, when the respondents are busy, high-status people and the research topic deals with sensitive information (Mahoney, 1997). They are also used when the research topic is complex and very detailed information is needed and also allow for extra questions that raise during the interviews. An advantage of semi-structured interviews is that the interviewer does not have to follow a rigid form, free and open responses are encouraged and respondents' perceptions can be captured in their own words (Mahoney, 1997). One form of semi-structured interviews are expert interviews with people who have special knowledge that is related to their profession. Expert interviews give access to information that would be difficult to obtain by other methods and it allows for a thorough understanding of the topic and to investigate the causes (Bogner, Littig, & Menz, 2009, p. 2). According to Littig an expert is among other things a person who is responsible for the implementation or control of policies and who has access to information about decision processes. Expert interviews are about a person's special knowledge and experiences, which result from a status within an institution (Littig, 2013). If the expertise in a particular occupational or professional field is central

to the area of research, then the interview can be regarded as an expert interview (Bogner & Menz, 2005, p. 46). MPs also belong to the elite that are a special group of experts but according to Littig elite and expert interview forms overlap and it seems that the variance lies in differing social and political sciences research traditions and interests (Littig, 2009, p. 98).

The questionnaire starts with a general introductory question and consists of three blocks: the role of national parliaments in EU policy-making, parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP and academic literature and other actors in CFSP. In compiling the questions, it was taken into account that the questions move from more general ones about the perception of the role of national parliaments in EU policy-making and the importance of EU issues to the Foreign Affairs Committee to specific questions about parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP. A principle was followed that the questions should be clear, open and non-leading. The questions about parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP concentrated on finding out the motivational factors and getting an overview of the legal powers, abilities and factors that motivate MPs to scrutinize CFSP or hinder it. Emphasis is on the Foreign Affairs Committee meetings when a mandate is given to the Minister of Foreign Affairs for FAC meetings. The last block looks at the perceptions of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the issues raised in the academic debate about parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP and other actors that affect the country's positions on CFSP in addition to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Foreign Affairs Committee of the parliament.

Disadvantage of semi-structured interviews compared to structured interviews is that it is more difficult to analyse the data because there is so much information. Moreover, in-depth interviews are very time-consuming and it is more difficult to get MPs with busy schedules to agree to an interview, find time for it or to establish contact with them. With interviews with politicians, there is also a danger that the respondents may distort information to be politically correct. Although in-depth interviews are best conducted face to face, also phone interviews can be successful (Mahoney, 1997). Four out of 14 interviews were conducted on the phone because it suited best for the respondents with very busy schedules. All of them went smoothly as previous contact was established through e-mails. Six interviews took place in Tallinn, four in Strasbourg and four on the phone. Request for an interview was sent to all respondents via e-mail with an explanation of the objective of the research. Time and place was chosen by the interviewees, so that

they would be able to plan enough time for the in-depth interview and do it in a comfortable environment for them.

As minutes of the Foreign Affairs Committees in both parliaments are very laconic, meetings take place behind closed doors and the issues of foreign policy are more sensitive and secretive than some other policies, then interviews are the only way to get some insight into the parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP. For example, the length of the discussions about the government positions before the FAC meetings is impossible to measure as there are different points in the agenda but the minutes do not show how long does each point last. The minutes also do not reflect the content of the discussions and if there were disagreements. Both Eduskunta and Riigikogu generally support the positions of the government, so interviews are the only way to learn about what is going on behind closed doors and if there is any difference between Estonia and Finland and what accounts for that difference. In addition to interviews, information is obtained from previous academic research on parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP, legislation and documents of Estonia and Finland on parliamentary scrutiny and relevant EU treaties. Below, I introduce how I have measured formal and informal factors, namely by operationalising them according to authority, ability and attitude.

### **Measuring the level of parliamentary scrutiny of the Common Foreign and Security Policy**

Using the framework developed by Born and Hänggi of authority, ability and attitude it will be compared how the Foreign Affairs Committees of Riigikogu and Eduskunta engage in the scrutiny of CFSP. As attitude is the most difficult indicator to measure and as Born and Hänggi's framework was developed for comparison of the use of force under international auspices and the parliamentary powers in that context, also previous literature on CFSP scrutiny will be used to develop indicators of attitude and willingness. Authority or the formal powers of the Foreign Affairs Committees of Eduskunta and Riigikogu will be compared according to the criteria offered by Born and Hänggi (binding mandate *ex ante*, troop dispatch *ex ante*, *post hoc* questioning/inquiry, budget veto over individual missions, amend or veto overall foreign policy budget). The more of these formal rights a parliament has and the more binding the mandate given, the stronger the formal rights to exercise parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP. Based on the criteria developed

by Born and Hänggi to compare the ability, the Foreign Affairs Committees of the Riigikogu and Eduskunta will be compared for their involvement of specialised committees in CFSP scrutiny, size of the committee staff, information rights and the timing of the information and access to information by members of the opposition. The higher the involvement of specialised committees in CFSP scrutiny, the bigger the number of committee staff members, the better the information rights and access to information by opposition and the earlier the timing of the information, the better the conditions for effective CFSP scrutiny.

In the context of attitude Born and Hänggi emphasise the importance of the perception of parliament about its role in relation to the government and the political salience of security issues. As the literature agrees that the power to give a mandate is the strongest tool that a parliament can have to scrutinise the government, the attitude of the Minister of Foreign Affairs towards the Foreign Affairs Committee when he comes to get a mandate from the parliament and the attitude of the Foreign Affairs Committee towards the Minister will be looked at. This should show how aware MPs are of their scrutiny power and how do they see their relationship in relation to the executive. It should also demonstrate if the MPs feel that the Minister takes them as scrutinisers and having the power to impact the position of the government or not. The interviewees will also be asked if it ever happens that the Minister is replaced by a civil servant in presenting the positions of the government to the Foreign Affairs Committee before the FAC meetings and if it bothers the Committee if the Minister does not come himself. It is the Minister who presents the positions of the government in the FAC meetings and who needs a mandate of the parliament for that. If the Minister does not take this obligation of appearing in front of the Foreign Affairs Committee before FAC meetings seriously it shows that the Minister does not see the role of the parliament as a scrutiniser but as automatically approving the positions of the government. The more the MPs see themselves and the Minister of Foreign Affairs sees the Foreign Affairs Committee as a scrutiniser, the higher the probability of engaging in CFSP scrutiny.

Political salience of CFSP issues and attitude towards EU affairs in general will be measured by asking MPs how do they perceive the importance of EU issues for their parliament and more specifically for the Foreign Affairs Committee and then about the importance of CFSP issues for the Foreign Affairs Committee compared to other foreign

policy issues. The higher the importance of EU and CFSP issues for parliamentarians, the higher should be their attitude towards engaging in the scrutiny of this policy. Another aspect of this is how the MPs see the role of national parliaments overall in EU scrutiny and the assumption is that the more important the role of national parliaments is perceived, the higher should be their attitude towards engaging in CFSP scrutiny as parliamentarians feel that they can have an impact.

This research will go deeper into looking behind the factors that determine the willingness of parliamentarians to engage in CFSP scrutiny. Born and Hänggi see as a limiting factor of the willingness to engage in the parliamentary scrutiny of foreign affairs their low importance for the public compared to domestic issues. So, an indicator of this is the interest of the electorate in CFSP issues, which will be measured by how the Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee as experts on these issues sense the importance of these issues for their country's population and their electorate compared to domestic issues from meetings with the public. The assumption is that the higher the interest of the electorate, the higher the willingness to scrutinise CFSP. In the context of CFSP the latest Eurobarometer data will be used to compare the support for a Common Foreign and Security Policy in Finland and in Estonia. The higher the support for CFSP, the less Eurosceptic the public is assumed to be and the less willing the parliament should be to scrutinise CFSP. As research about parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP has raised the problem of democratic deficit, the interviewees were also asked about if they feel that this policy field lacks democratic accountability, which should indicate the sense of alienation by the public from the EU policy. The assumption is that if the national parliament feels that there is democratic deficit and CFSP lacks democratic legitimacy and accountability, then they should be more motivated to use the formal powers they have to scrutinise the positions of the government to reduce this democratic gap as representatives of the electorate.

As the literature agrees that it is very difficult to measure parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP due to its closed nature and this is why there is so little academic research on it compared to scrutiny of other EU policies. This research will also attempt to give new insight into how actively Riigikogu and Eduskunta engage in CFSP scrutiny. One indicator to measure the level of scrutiny would be to look at how long do the agenda points on CFSP issues last on average. However, this is impossible to measure as by looking as the public

agendas and minutes do not show how long does each agenda point last. Instead Members of the Foreign Affairs Committees of both countries were asked how long do the Foreign Affairs Committee Meetings last on average when the Minister of Foreign Affairs comes in front of the Committee to present government positions before FAC meetings to get comparable data. Duration of the Committee meetings before FAC where the Minister presents the government's positions was taken to indicate how actively the Committee discusses the positions. Longer duration suggests more in-depth scrutiny process. The MPs were also asked about the intensity of discussion and disagreements among the Foreign Affairs Committee members about the positions of the government before FAC meetings to get insight into if there is a difference in how actively Riigikogu and Eduskunta engage in scrutinising the positions of the government on CFSP in practice. In this way, by relying on interviews and insights from practitioners, the level of scrutiny in practice will be possible to establish.



## **CASE COMPARISON: ESTONIA AND FINLAND**

### **Level of overall scrutiny of European Union policies**

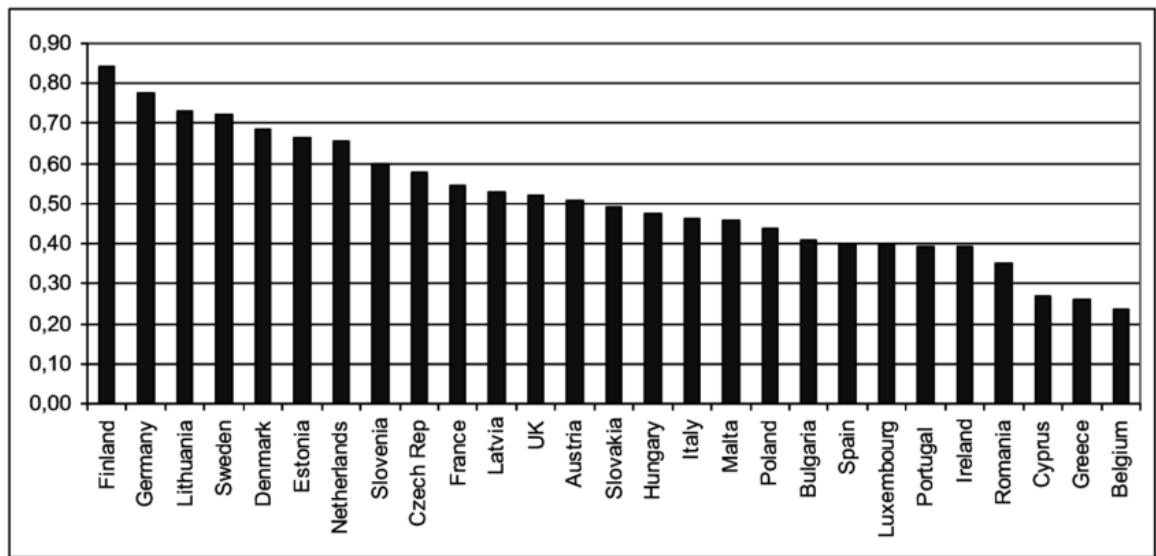
When the effectiveness of parliamentary EU scrutiny mechanisms has been measured, Finland is ranked without exception as one of the strongest parliaments in the European Union and is considered to have one of the strongest level of CFSP involvement (Huff, 2015; Raunio, 2016b, p. 4) According to the country report on Estonia of the OPAL research, Riigikogu has extensive formal scrutiny powers, but this does not translate into rigorous scrutiny and its role does not amount to that of a policy shaper or of a government watchdog (Ehin, 2015, p. 525). Finnish Eduskunta was found to be a government watchdog and policy shaper using the ideal-type framework worked out by Rozenberg and Heftler (Neuhold et al., 2016, p. 678). According to this framework of analysis, government watchdogs control the actions of the government and hold them accountable and policy shapers influence government positions. This also means that either of them is considered to be an expert, public forum or European player parliament (Neuhold et al., 2016, p. 678). In the case of Finland, the research showed that it could also be a European player but chooses not to interact with the European Parliament or engage actively in interparliamentary cooperation (Neuhold et al., 2016, p. 681).

In the OPAL score of institutional strength in EU affairs in general Finland ranks first (0.84) and Estonia sixth (0.67) out of 27 EU member states (Figure 1). It takes into account three indicators: access to information, scrutiny infrastructure and oversight. They looked at the documents that the parliaments have access to and their timing and filtering, the number of EACs and their rights, the involvement of specialist standing committees, legal ability to bind the government, the ability to scrutinise and draft a statement on EU documents or government position and existence of scrutiny reserve (Auel, Tacea, et al., 2015, pp. 67–69). However, on the OPAL activity score that measures parliamentary activities in EU affairs Finland ranks first again with a score of (0.60) that is two times higher than Estonian score (0.30). Activity score was measured by looking at the number of mandates/resolutions, EAC meetings and their average duration, debates, reasoned opinions, Political Dialogue opinions, hearings and percentage of average plenary time spent on EU issues over three years (2010-2012) (Auel, Tacea, et al., 2015,

p. 71). This shows that in the overall scrutiny of EU affairs Eduskunta is institutionally slightly stronger and twice as active as Riigikogu.

Figure 1

OPAL score of formal institutional strength in EU affairs



Source: Auel, K., Rozenberg, O. & Tacea, A. (2015). To Scrutinise or Not to scrutinise? Explaining Variation in EU-Related Activities in National Parliaments, *West European Politics*, 38(2), p. 293.

**Authority: the formal powers to hold the government accountable**

Before Estonia joined the European Union, Riigikogu was looking for the best model of parliamentary scrutiny of European affairs and took the Finnish model of mandating system and strong parliamentary control as an example. In Finland, a new Constitution was adopted in 2000 that increased the powers of the parliament. Although Finland has a semi-presidential system where the President has special powers in foreign affairs, the Prime Minister, who is differently from the President accountable to the parliament, represents the country in the European Council (Raunio & Wiberg, 2008). As Table 1 demonstrates Riigikogu and Eduskunta have the same formal powers in the parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP and CSDP when comparing the criteria offered by Born and Hänggi for authority. They both have the power of a binding mandate, troop dispatch veto, *post hoc* questioning/inquiry and ability to amend or veto overall foreign policy budget. They both do not have the power of budget veto over individual missions. In the context of CFSP

the most powerful instrument that a parliament can have is the right to give a mandate for the government before the FAC meetings and scrutinise the positions of the government. This means that Riigikogu and Eduskunta both have strong formal scrutiny powers of CFSP.

Table 1

Formal powers over CFSP and CSDP

Power	Estonia	Finland
Binding mandating ( <i>ex ante</i> )	✓	✓
Troop dispatch veto ( <i>ex ante</i> )	✓	✓
<i>Post hoc</i> questioning/inquiry	✓	✓
Budget veto over individual missions	—	—
Ability to amend or veto overall foreign policy budget	✓	✓

Source: Mölling, C. & von Voss, A. (2015). The Role of EU National Parliaments in Defence Affairs. A Comparison of Decision-Making Powers across Europe concerning International Troop Deployments and Procurement Processes, German Institute for International and Security Affairs: [https://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/arbeitspapiere/mlg\\_vos\\_WPParliamentaryApproval\\_March2015\\_01.pdf](https://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/arbeitspapiere/mlg_vos_WPParliamentaryApproval_March2015_01.pdf)

The formal powers of Riigikogu in CFSP are laid down in the Riigikogu Rules of Procedure and Internal Rules Act chapter 18<sup>1</sup> on Rules for proceedings regarding European Union matters § 152<sup>4</sup> on Proceedings regarding the draft legislation in the European Union Affairs Committee and the Foreign Affairs Committee:

“(2) Acting in the name of the Riigikogu, the European Union Affairs Committee or the Foreign Affairs Committee takes a position regarding the draft legislation and states the position in the minutes of the sitting of the committee.

(3) The Government of the Republic is obligated to adhere to the opinion of the Riigikogu. If the Government of the Republic has failed to do so, it must at the earliest opportunity explain its reasons to the European Union Affairs Committee or the Foreign Affairs Committee.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Riigikogu. Riigikogu Rules of Procedure and Internal Rules Act – Riigi Teataja (2007). Chapter 18<sup>1</sup>, § 152<sup>4</sup>, section 2,3. Retrieved from <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/518112014003/consolide>

Differently from the Finnish model, Estonia chose not to fix the competences of the parliament in the European affairs in the Constitution. Chapter 8 of the Finnish Constitution on International relations states that “The Government is responsible for the national preparation of the decisions to be made in the European Union, and decides on the concomitant Finnish measures, unless the decision requires the approval of the Parliament. The Parliament participates in the national preparation of decisions to be made in the European Union” (Ministry of Justice, Finland, 1999). The literature also agrees that the ability to issue mandates to ministers before Council meetings is the strongest parliamentary scrutiny tool to influence government decision-making in CFSP (Huff, 2015, p. 401).

In the interviews, also all of the Estonian and Finnish parliamentarians said that the current formal powers are enough to exercise parliamentary scrutiny effectively. One Estonian interviewee said “Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee have all the levers, it is up to them to use them”. Another said that “Estonian parliament could actually use their formal powers more in practice”. A Finnish MP said that “Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee have all the necessary formal powers for controlling the government in CFSP, it is up to them how efficiently they use them.” The mandate of the Foreign Affairs Committees of Riigikogu and Eduskunta is politically binding for the governments. MPs were also asked about how would the Foreign Affairs Committee react when the Minister of Foreign Affairs would deviate from the mandate given to him in discussing CFSP and would there be any consequences. MPs from both countries said that they cannot recall that this has ever happened but there would be very serious consequences. The Minister would have to appear in front of the Committee and explain his actions and this could lead to a vote of confidence against the Minister. In both countries, it has happened that when during the negotiations in the FAC meeting the Minister has had to change the country’s position confirmed by the parliament, the Minister has phoned the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee to get an approval for the new position. In the case of both countries this has actually not been regulated anywhere, but as one Estonian interviewee put it “It is a question of political culture and traditions, it is not possible to regulate everything, but it is also in the interest of the Minister to always have the backing of the parliament for his decisions”. One Finnish interviewee said that “As in parliamentary culture a lot is down to traditions that are not

regulated, but if the Minister would break this trust, then there would be serious consequences”. The interviews showed that Riigikogu and Eduskunta have similar formal scrutiny powers of CFSP.

**Ability: Resources, staff and expertise needed**

According to the framework of analysis of Born and Hänggi on ability, the involvement of specialised parliamentary committees in CFSP scrutiny is the most important factor in determining the effectiveness of scrutiny. One of the reasons why Estonia opted for the Finnish model of parliamentary scrutiny instead of the Danish one, was the involvement of specialised committees in the parliamentary scrutiny of EU policies. Both parliaments have a special committee for EU affairs (European Union Affairs Committee in the Riigikogu and Grand Committee in Eduskunta), but the Foreign Affairs Committees are responsible for the scrutiny of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (Table 2, regulated by Section 96 of the Finnish Constitution and Chapter 4, paragraph 18, Section 3 of the Riigikogu Rules of Procedure and Internal Rules Act). The use of specialised committees in EU-policy parliamentary scrutiny means that the CFSP scrutiny benefits from the foreign policy expertise of the Foreign Affairs Committee and it increases the ability of the parliament to influence the government.

Table 2

Role of Foreign Affairs Committee in CFSP scrutiny

	<b>Estonia</b>	<b>Finland</b>
Level of Foreign Affairs Committee involvement in CFSP scrutiny	High	High

High level involvement of the Foreign Affairs Committee means that these committees have full responsibility in scrutinising CFSP. According to the comments of the Riigikogu Rules of Procedure and Internal Rules Act’s paragraph about the processing of European Union affairs “The Foreign Affairs Committee has an analogical competence with the European Union Affairs Committee only in the field of the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union. In other questions the Foreign Affairs Committee participates in the formation of the position of the Riigikogu like other permanent

committees” (Möttus et al., 2012, Chapter 18<sup>1</sup>, Section 5). The position of the Foreign Affairs Committee is mandatory for the government in CFSP and the Minister of Foreign Affairs needs to stick to it. Section 96 of Chapter 8 on international relations of the Finnish Constitution states that:

“The Parliament considers those proposals for acts, agreements and other measures which are to be decided in the European Union and which otherwise, according to the Constitution, would fall within the competence of the Parliament. The Government shall, for the determination of the position of the Parliament, communicate a proposal referred to in paragraph (1) to the Parliament by a communication of the Government, without delay, after receiving notice of the proposal. The proposal is considered in the Grand Committee and ordinarily in one or more of the other Committees that issue statements to the Grand Committee. However, the Foreign Affairs Committee considers a proposal pertaining to foreign and security policy.”<sup>3</sup>

The Foreign Affairs Committees of both Riigikogu and Eduskunta have exclusive rights in CFSP scrutiny and give a mandate for the Minister of Foreign Affairs before Foreign Affairs Council Meetings and decide the stance of the parliament on this policy. Other research also shows that the use of specialised committees in the parliamentary scrutiny of EU policies leads to stronger government scrutiny, especially committees with jurisdiction paralleling responsible executive departments (Strom & Mattson, 1995, pp. 249–307).

Another important measure of ability is also the resources and expertise available to the Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee. According to Born and Hänggi one indicator is the number of staff members. The Foreign Affairs Committee of the Riigikogu currently has 10 members and 3 staff members (2 advisers and one assistant). The Foreign Affairs Committee of the Eduskunta has 16 members and 5 staff members (2 advisers, 2 assistants and 1 technical assistant shared with the Defence Committee). This means that both Committees have the same ratio of staff per Committee member (0,3). Although Finnish parliamentarians also have the possibility to have a personal assistant or can share one with another MP and Estonian parliament is one of the six parliaments in the EU where parliamentarians do not have a personal assistant, but are assisted by the staff of their political factions at the Riigikogu in their parliamentary work and can also rely on

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<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Justice, Finland. The Constitution of Finland (1999). Chapter 8, Section 96. Retrieved from <http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1999/en19990731.pdf>

the Riigikogu Legal and Research Department (Riigikogu Kantselei õigus- ja analüüsi osakond, 2017). This means that the Riigikogu and Eduskunta have similar opportunities when it comes to staff and expertise available for them to scrutinise CFSP.

Although the Finnish and the Estonian Foreign Affairs Committees both have a small secretariat and the same number of staff members per Committee member, there were some MPs from both countries who said that the small number of staff members/resources is a factor that hinders them in their work as scrutinisers of CFSP. A majority from both parliaments said that all the formal powers, capabilities and resources are enough and it is just up to the will of the MPs to use these powers. One Estonian member said that “It is the own responsibility of the MPs how informed they want to be on CFSP issues and how active they want to be in scrutinising it, all the necessary conditions are created.” One Finnish MP said that “The Finnish system works very well and we have quite good resources. It depends on the initiative and interest of the MPs to use these resources available.”

According to Born and Hänggi another very important indicator of ability is access to information. Finland, has it even written to the Constitution that the parliament has the right to receive any information from the government that is necessary for parliamentary scrutiny and a matter within the competence of the Committee. Section 47 on of Chapter 4 on parliamentary activity states that:

“The Parliament has the right to receive from the Government the information it needs in the consideration of matters. The appropriate Minister shall ensure that Committees and other parliamentary organs receive without delay the necessary documents and other information in the possession of the authorities. A Committee has the right to receive information from the Government or the appropriate Ministry on a matter within its competence. The Committee may issue a statement to the Government or the Ministry on the basis of the information.”<sup>4</sup>

The parliamentary rights to receive information on international affairs are separately regulated in Section 96 of Chapter 8 that states that “The Foreign Affairs Committee of the Parliament shall receive from the Government, upon request and when otherwise necessary, reports of matters pertaining to foreign and security policy” (Ministry of

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<sup>4</sup> Ministry of Justice, Finland. The Constitution of Finland (1999). Chapter 4, Section 47. Retrieved from <http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1999/en19990731.pdf>

Justice, Finland, 1999). According to Chapter 4, Paragraph 22, Section 1 of the Riigikogu Rules of Procedure and Internal Rules Act all the Committees of the Riigikogu have the right to request any information from the government needed for its work and to request the participation of ministers or representatives of government agencies in the Committee meetings to obtain information (Riigikogu, 2007). The Foreign Affairs Committee of the Riigikogu also has the right to demand from the government to give an opinion of the committee on important EU issues that they do not give an opinion on automatically (Riigikogu, 2007, Chapter 18<sup>1</sup>, paragraph 152<sup>1</sup>, Section 2). The literature agrees that information is of key importance for the parliament to exercise scrutiny (O'Brennan, 2007, p. 12). Both Foreign Affairs Committees have very good information rights.

Although differently from Estonia, access to information of Eduskunta is written in the Constitution, it came out from the interviews that Estonian MPs feel that at times they have access to more and better information than their Nordic colleagues. "In cooperation with Nordic colleagues, including Finnish colleagues, I have felt that Estonians are actually better informed because we have regular briefings with our national security organisations" and "Although Estonians have a weaker legal basis for their information access, in practice we get the same information, but Estonians just do not use it." They feel that they can request any information from the government and also have access to EU secrets and can also request access to NATO secrets if they agree to go through the background check. Interestingly two Finnish MPs also mentioned the importance of strong links with their political party groups in the European Parliament where they get additional important information for parliamentary scrutiny. None of the Estonian MPs mentioned cooperation with the European Parliament. Overall Finnish MPs talked more than Estonian MPs about the importance of the cooperation with other national parliaments on sharing information and working together to strengthen the position.

Important is also the timing of the information and access to information by the members of the opposition. The parliamentary control systems of both Riigikogu and Eduskunta emphasise *ex ante* scrutiny. Parliamentarians from both countries mentioned that the information is received from the government automatically, but in the case of the positions of the government at the FAC meetings just a few days before the Committee meeting, which gives little time for effective scrutiny. The Minister comes to the Committee usually a week before the FAC meetings and the Committee members receive



in advance the positions of the government on the topics on the agenda. Estonian and Finnish Foreign Affairs Committee have the same system and the timing of the information is the same that concentrates on *ex ante* scrutiny. In general parliamentarians from both countries also said that there is no difference between access to information by the members of the coalition and opposition in CFSP scrutiny. Some Estonian members admitted that sometimes it might be easier for parliamentarians of the coalition to have direct contact with the Minister and get additional information. Many Estonian members emphasised that it actually depends on the activeness, will and motivation of the parliamentarians to request certain information that they do not have automatic access to. MPs from both countries also mentioned the problem of information overload and the too technical context of EU documents.

When asked about if there is a difference in the scrutiny ability of members of the opposition and members of the coalition, then all the Finnish MPs responded very confidently that there is absolutely no difference as everyone has the same information rights and the atmosphere in the Committee is very collegial. Most of the Estonian parliamentarians also said that there is no difference. Holzacker has focused in his research on the powers of the opposition in the EU policy scrutiny as an important factor affecting democratic legitimacy of the policy. He argues that national parliamentary scrutiny is of crucial value as it is the only way the voice of the opposition can be heard in the scrutiny of EU policies and the only way they can participate in the policy-making as in the Council of Ministers representatives of the government participate and make the decisions (Holzacker, 2008, p. 144).

Regarding information rights, information asymmetry between the minister and parliament is especially a problem in CFSP due to the sensitive information and closed nature of the policy area and governments are better informed. When asked about the existence of information asymmetry all the Finnish members said that they are satisfied with the current scrutiny system and access to information and the Minister of Foreign Affairs is very open and honest about CFSP issues. “Opportunities to get information are enormously wide, we just have to have initiative,” “There is a good dialogue with the Minister and it is evident that Minister wants to give the parliamentarians as much information as possible,” and “We have unrestricted access to all the necessary information. One Finnish MP even admitted that sometimes the parliamentarians are even

better informed if they are well connected on the European party systems and active, then they have all the possibilities for effective scrutiny.” Estonian MPs also felt that they have access to all the information necessary for effective parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP and it is up to the parliamentarians to actively request that information. “If I request something, I get it,” “We are also in the information flow of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and members can get daily information about Estonia in the foreign media” and “Access to information depends also on the fact if MPs are interested in asking for information and also on their contacts.” The comparison of information rights and the interview results showed that parliamentarians from both countries do not feel that there is an information asymmetry and they can have access to any information that they want. According to the criteria offered by Born and Hänggi the Foreign Affairs Committees of Riigikogu and Eduskunta also have similar ability to scrutinise CFSP.

#### **Attitude: the willingness to hold the government accountable**

Attitude was assessed as role perception and awareness of the Foreign Affairs Committee as scrutinisers and the attitude of the Minister of Foreign Affairs towards the parliamentary Committee and the Committee towards the Minister to understand the perception of parliament about its role in relation to the government and *vice versa*. Finnish Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee all stressed the fact that the Minister of Foreign Affairs has a lot of respect towards the Foreign Affairs Committee. One interviewee even said that the Minister comes in front of the Committee to get valuable expert advice from the parliamentarians and new perspectives to the positions of the government at FAC meetings. Another said that “there is expertise in the Committee that the Minister respects and uses the knowledge in negotiations in FAC meetings.” This respectful attitude towards the Foreign Affairs Committee is also reflected in the fact that Pekka Haavisto who is a Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee is also Foreign Minister Timo Soini’s Special Representative on mediation with special focus on Africa. One MP said “The Minister is aware that he must always have the confidence of the parliament and that the parliament is the boss.” About the awareness of the role as scrutinisers of the Committee members, interviewees emphasised the constructive atmosphere, but said that this does not prevent active scrutiny of government positions

and MPs come with the questions prepared and are aware that they are the ones who give a mandate for the Minister.

Estonian interviewees were more divided on the opinion of the process of giving a mandate and some described it as a mere formality because the Minister knows that the parliament will agree with the positions anyway and others said that the Committee is aware of its role as a scrutiniser, but only gets involved when the positions of the government on CFSP are not in line with Estonian foreign policy. An example of this was when the Committee recently toughened the positions of the government about the conflict in Ukraine for the FAC meeting of 6<sup>th</sup> of February 2017 (Riigikogu Press Service, 2017). A few Estonian MPs even described it as “an annoying obligation” for the Minister to appear in front of the Committee “as the mandate is basically automatic anyway”. Another MP described it as a “pure formality for the Minister to appear in front of the Committee” and one even said that sometimes it is felt that the attitude of the Minister towards the Committee is degrading. One Estonian MP saw it as an educating function for the Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee when the Minister comes in front of the Committee, as many members do not have any expertise in foreign affairs. One Estonian MP admitted that the attitude of the Minister towards the Committee is also down to political culture as it is up to the Minister to decide how he will communicate with the parliament and how informed he will keep them, because in the parliamentary culture traditions play an important role and everything is now written down. About the awareness of their role as a scrutiniser of government positions on CFSP one MP answered “an average Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Riigikogu has no idea what is on the agenda before coming to the meeting and the level of preparation is low and is definitely not aware of his or her role as giving a mandate for the Minister.” In the Estonian case, it also came out very clearly that MPs who had been in the parliament and in the Foreign Affairs Committee longer, were also more aware of their role as scrutinisers and especially emphasised the parliament’s role as a government watchdog.

The Finnish interviewees pointed out that in Finland, it is always the Minister of Foreign Affairs who comes to present the positions of the government at the FAC meetings and there have been very rare cases when the Minister is replaced by a civil servant of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and there has to be a justified reason for the absence. Therefore, according to the interviewees, the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Eduskunta

also does not look negatively when the positions are not presented by the Minister as there is usually a serious reason like an illness. One Finnish MP said that if the Minister would not come in front of the Committee and there would not be a serious or meaningful reason for it “there would be a very strong reaction from the Committee.” However, according to the interviews it happens more often in the Riigikogu and the Committee takes it “very negatively” as it is the Minister who should get a mandate from the parliament and who later presents these positions in Brussels. According to the interviews the Committee takes it negatively as it also shows the attitude of the Minister of Foreign Affairs towards the Committee as a mere sealer of the positions of the government not as an active scrutiniser. There have even been cases when the Chairman of the Committee has had to write a letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs to remind him of the obligation and it should be a priority that the Minister himself could come. This suggests that the Minister and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia takes this obligation to appear in front of the Committee more lightly than the Finnish counterpart. At the same time, many Estonian MPs brought it out that although it does happen sometimes that the Minister is replaced by a civil servant without a meaningful reason it definitely happens more often in the European Affairs Committee than in the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Interviews demonstrated that Finnish politicians are more aware of their role as scrutinisers than Estonian MPs and the broader context of the perception of parliament about its role in relation to the government is also different. It also showed that the Finnish MPs are better prepared before the Committee meetings where government positions at the FAC meetings are discussed and the Minister comes to get expert advice and a mandate from the Foreign Affairs Committee. Estonian MPs are less aware of their role as scrutinisers and approve the positions of the government without much discussion. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Finland also seems to take the obligation of appearing himself before the Committee to get a mandate more seriously than in Estonia and has the attitude towards the Committee as scrutinisers, which is less the case in Estonia. This indicates that as the Finnish MPs see themselves more as scrutinisers and the Minister of Foreign Affairs sees the Foreign Affairs Committee more as a scrutiniser, then the Finnish Foreign Affairs Committee is more likely to engage in CFSP scrutiny than the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Riigikogu.

Also looked at in the context of attitude of parliamentarians towards CFSP scrutiny was the perception of the importance of EU issues in general for the parliamentarians and then specifically CFSP issues for the Foreign Affairs Committee compared to other foreign policy issues and how parliamentarians see overall the role of national parliaments in EU policy-making. Finnish interviewees all emphasised the high importance of EU issues for Eduskunta and the Foreign Affairs Committee as the policy outcomes “have a huge influence on Finland”. Finnish MPs also stressed that Finland is active in the development of EU crisis management, which is often discussed in the Foreign Affairs Committee. The Finnish MPs saw their role as being influential in the shaping and formation of the CFSP and are satisfied with the Finnish scrutiny system and the Committee’s parliamentary scrutiny. One respondent said that “The Finnish parliament can most definitely shape and impact the outcome of CFSP” and another said that “CFSP issues are extremely important for the Foreign Affairs Committee and MPs are making the most of their formal powers to scrutinise it.” Many interviewees also mentioned that joining the European Union actually strengthened the role of Eduskunta and its control over government actions, because in national foreign policy there is no mandating.

Estonian MPs were more divided on the importance of EU issues and CFSP issues for the Riigikogu and the Foreign Affairs Committee and the perception of the role of national parliaments in EU policy-making. One said that “EU matters should be important for Members of the Riigikogu and Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee but they are not.” Another said that “CFSP issues are more and more important for the Foreign Affairs Committee, because of global turbulent times.” One Estonian MP also admitted that for him CFSP is not a coherent and strong policy and this is why it is also not important for him. Most of the Estonian MPs see the role of national parliaments as not very influential and important in EU policy-making and especially of small countries like Estonia. “Riigikogu has no role, it is just a formality that it approves the positions of the government and there is no discussion of substance over the positions at the Foreign Affairs Committee.” One MP also said that “Only the parliaments of big member states can influence the outcome of CFSP and we are just followers, but the role of national parliaments should actually be bigger.” Yet another one admitted that the role of national parliaments in EU policy-making is as important as the MPs consider it and it is also up

to the parliamentarians if the parliament plays a role of policy-shaper or just a controller of the government or no role at all.

Interviews showed that Finnish MPs emphasised more the importance of EU affairs and CFSP issues for Eduskunta and the Foreign Affairs Committee and Estonian MPs were more divided on this. Members of Eduskunta also saw the role of national parliaments more influential than the Estonian MPs and saw that they have the power to shape and impact the CFSP, whereas Estonian respondents were more pessimistic about their ability to influence the outcome of CFSP. Results indicate that as the importance of EU and CFSP issues is higher for Finnish MPs, then the higher should be their attitude towards engaging in the scrutiny of CFSP as they value it. Moreover, as the Finnish MPs perceive the role of national parliaments in EU decision-making as more important than the Estonian MPs perceived it, their attitude towards CFSP scrutiny should be higher as they feel more that they can have an impact and influence the outcome of CFSP.

While looking behind the factors that determine the willingness of parliamentarians to engage in CFSP scrutiny the interest of the Finnish and Estonian public in the meaning of the electorate in CFSP issues was also researched. MPs from both countries admitted that although as Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee they are the most informed on these issues, when they have meetings with their electorate their worries and questions are in majority about domestic issues that influence more directly their everyday life. However, members of both parliaments said that the importance of CFSP issues and people's awareness of these issues has grown in the last years due to turbulent times in European and world politics and people are more and more directly influenced by them. As the interest of the Estonian and Finnish population in CFSP is low in general, it can also lower the willingness of MPs to scrutinise CFSP as it is not a policy that seems important for their electorate compared to domestic issues. According to Raunio though the changes in the international system, higher levels of education and a higher variety of sources of information, should contribute to the rise of public interest and debate about foreign policy and should create strong incentives for parliamentary engagement in CFSP and the interviewees from both countries admitted that the interest is growing (Raunio, 2016a, p. 313).

Previous research on parliamentary scrutiny of EU affairs has shown that the higher the presence of Eurosceptic public, the stronger the parliamentary scrutiny of EU affairs, as the MPs as representatives of the electorate have a stronger incentive to control the actions of the government. This will be applied to Estonia and Finland in the context of support for the statement a common foreign policy of all member states of the EU by using the latest Eurobarometer results. The data (Table 3) suggests that the Finnish population is more anti-CSFP and sceptical about the policy than the Estonian population and thus the Finnish MPs should be more willing to scrutinise CFSP to control the actions of the government and represent the interests of their electorate.

Table 3

Support for a Common Foreign and Security Policy in Estonia and Finland, 2016

Country	For (%)	Against (%)	Don't know (%)
Estonia	66	22	12
Finland	57	38	5

Source: European Commission. Public opinion, November 2016: <http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Chart/getChart/themeKy/29/groupKy/184>

The last indicator of willingness to scrutinise CFSP is the perception of MPs about the existence of democratic deficit in CFSP. In the academic literature, there is a lot of talk about the democratic deficit in CFSP as it is a policy field with less parliamentary control mechanisms than other EU policy fields and also supranational institutions like the European Commission and the EEAS play a central role. The willingness of MPs to scrutinise CFSP also has a direct impact on the democratic legitimacy of this policy. When asked about the existence of democratic deficit in CFSP, a majority of Finnish MPs answered that at least in the Finnish system there is no democratic deficit because the parliament has scrutinised all the government decisions in CFSP. One MP said that “It might be the case in other EU countries, but there is definitely no democratic deficit in the Finnish system as the parliament is involved at every step and decision.” Estonian MPs were more certain about lack of democracy in CFSP formation, but many mentioned that the situation is improving as the EU policy-making has become more open and

transparent. One MP also said that “The parliament has all the possibilities to participate in the EU level to solve that problem.” The results show that Estonian MPs feel more than Finnish MPs that there is democratic deficit and CFSP lacks democratic legitimacy and accountability and they should be more motivated to use the formal powers they have to scrutinise the positions of the government to reduce this democratic gap as representatives of the electorate. Overall the results show that at least parliamentarians with strong formal scrutiny powers feel less the democratic deficit than the academic literature emphasises.

Interviews showed that there is a difference in the attitude and willingness of the Members of the Foreign Affairs Committees of Riigikogu and Eduskunta and how they see their role as scrutinisers. The Finnish MPs are more aware of their role as scrutinisers of government activities and the Minister of Foreign Affairs also treats them more as scrutinisers. All of the Finnish interviewees also expressed their satisfaction with the current scrutiny system that gives Eduskunta strong powers and valued more the importance of EU affairs for their parliament and CFSP issues for their Committee than their Estonian colleagues. Finnish MPs also believe more in the power of national parliaments to shape and impact the CFSP than Estonian MPs. Both Finnish and Estonian MPs stated that the importance of CFSP topics for their electorate is relatively low but growing, which means that actively participating in the scrutiny of this policy might have no impact on re-election chances but this might increase as the importance of this policy for the electorate increases. Finnish MPs should be also willing to scrutinise CFSP more, because of the lower support of the Finnish population for this policy compared to Estonia, which should motivate parliamentarians to tighten more the control over the actions of the government in this policy field as anti-CFSP sentiment is stronger among their electorate. However, as Estonian MPs perceived more the existence of a democratic deficit in the policy-making of CFSP, this should increase their willingness to engage in CFSP scrutiny to decrease this lack of democracy and so that their electorate would be better represented at the European level. Overall the results indicate that Finnish Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee should be more willing to scrutinise CFSP than Estonian members and they show more attitude and role perception of a scrutiniser.



## **Level of parliamentary scrutiny of the Common Foreign and Security Policy**

Researchers have agreed that the power to give a mandate is the strongest tool that a parliament can have to scrutinise CFSP. Research on parliamentary scrutiny has also concluded that the actual impact of parliamentary influence is extremely difficult to measure and therefore it is only possible to capture what parliaments do and how actively they engage in scrutiny (Auel, Rozenberg, et al., 2015, p. 284). Yet as the Foreign Affairs Committee meetings are closed and the minutes only reflect the decisions, it is very difficult to measure the level of actual CFSP scrutiny over the government positions before FAC meetings. The decisions are usually the same — to support the positions of the government, because the Minister cannot go the Council meeting without the mandate of the parliament but they do not reflect the content of the discussions and activeness of the Committee to scrutinise. There is a difference if a mandate is given automatically without a long discussion about the positions of the government or after an active discussion and even disagreements where consensus is reached. It is also not known how long do these discussions last because the minutes only reflect the beginning and end time of the meeting not how long each point on the agenda lasts. The level of CFSP scrutiny will be measured based on the data from the interviews about how long do the meetings last on average where a mandate is given for the Minister before FAC meetings and how the discussions and scrutiny of these meetings is described by members of the Committee and longtime staff members.

According to the interviews in the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Eduskunta there is always active discussion about the positions of the government before the FAC meetings that last on average 1-2 hours. One MP said that “The Minister usually does not have a time limit, when he comes in front of the Committee and stays there as long as the members want.” The Finnish MPs described the discussions before FAC meetings as “active scrutiny”, “intense debate” “everyone always asks many questions” and “intellectual discussion.” It was also mentioned that there are often disagreements, but consensus is always found. Based on the interviews the Foreign Affairs Committee meetings of the Riigikogu before the FAC meetings in Brussels last on average 20-45 minutes depending on the issues on the FAC agenda and there is little discussion about the positions of the government. The Estonian MPs described giving the mandate as a

hearing or an informative point on the agenda with little discussion over the positions of the government and only some questions to the Minister. Estonians described it as “listening to the talking points,” “there is no debate of substance,” “questions of MPs are superficial” and “preparation by the members for the meeting is low and there are not many questions.” The results indicate that the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Eduskunta engages more actively in CFSP scrutiny than the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Riigikogu.

Many Members of the Riigikogu felt themselves that the Foreign Affairs Committee is not very active in scrutinising CFSP as there is too little expertise on foreign policy in the Committee as there are many members who have no previous contact with foreign policy issues although there are also members who are previous Ministers. “The quality of members is low,” “MPs are too much in their comfort-zone” and “Most of the Committee members show only mild interest for the issues on the agenda.” This is in stark contrast with the Finnish case as all Eduskunta members emphasised the high level of expertise in foreign policy of the Committee members and there are also many former Ministers. Interviews show that there is a culture of consensus in both Foreign Affairs Committees. It was especially emphasised by the Finnish MPs, but as the results show this does not rule out disagreements or active discussion over the government positions before FAC meetings. The culture of consensus in foreign policy was emphasised by MPs of both countries as a factor that differentiates scrutiny of CFSP from other EU policy areas. It was also brought out in the interviews that it is facilitated by the fact that Ministers of Foreign Affairs are often former Chairmen or Members of the Foreign Affairs Committees and understand the importance of parliament and its role in CFSP scrutiny. In fact, the current Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Finland and Estonia are both former Chairmen of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Research showed that the Foreign Affairs Committees of Riigikogu and Eduskunta have similar formal powers and capabilities, but there is a difference in the attitude and willingness of parliamentarians to scrutinise CFSP, which account for the difference in the scrutiny of CFSP in practice. Finnish MPs are more aware of their role as scrutinisers and also more willing to scrutinise CFSP than the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Riigikogu and also have a higher level of CFSP scrutiny in practice. Although the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Riigikogu has same formal powers, they are less willing to

use them to scrutinise CFSP. Previous research on parliamentary scrutiny also supports that strong powers of the parliament to control their governments do not always convert to active scrutiny due to lack of awareness of those rights (Buzogany, 2010, p. 20). Wessels also found in his cross-country study that role-orientations of individual MPs are a crucial factor in understanding their engagement in EU affairs (Wessels, 2005, pp. 446–465).

Research results are in line with my initial hypotheses that the more parliamentarians conceive of their role as giving effect to parliamentary control, the higher levels of parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP affairs and the higher the willingness of parliamentarians to exert parliamentary control, the higher levels of scrutiny of CFSP affairs. Foreign Affairs Committee of the Eduskunta is more willing to scrutinise CFSP than the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Riigikogu as they are more aware of their role as scrutinisers and also see that national parliaments can have an impact on CFSP and thus also perceive that there is no democratic deficit of that policy. This research indicates that Finnish MPs are more willing to scrutinise CFSP as support for this policy is lower than in Estonia and parliamentarians have more incentive to control the actions of the government and they also perceive EU and CFSP issues as more important for their parliament than Estonia. Although according to earlier research electorate interest should also determine the level of scrutiny, but despite the low interest of the Finnish population, Eduskunta is a strong and willing scrutiniser of CFSP. As Estonian MPs perceived more that there is lack of democracy in the policy-making of CFSP, they should be more willing to scrutinise it, but this research indicates that this factor seems not to affect the willingness to scrutinise.

Interviewees also pointed out other factors that affect the scrutiny of CFSP. Many respondents from both countries stressed that in majority coalition governments there is less motivation for parliamentarians of the coalition parties to criticise the minister from the coalition, especially as pressurising the government and giving a too fixed mandate, could harm the negotiation power of the country and can harm the government's standing abroad. This is also in line with Born and Hänggi who also argue that willingness of parliamentarians to scrutinise CFSP is affected by the fact that parliamentarians belonging to coalition parties are not motivated to openly criticise the actions of their coalition minister and government (Born & Hänggi, 2004, p. 15). The Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Riigikogu is usually always from the coalition, but from

a different political party than the Minister of Foreign Affairs, which gives the coalition parliamentarians less motivation to criticise the actions of their coalition minister. However, it came out from the interviews that it has happened that the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee has criticised the coalition Minister and even publicly. In Finland, the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee can also be from the opposition, which also gives more incentive for parliamentarians to scrutinise the government.

### **Institutional and political culture and new institutionalist approaches**

Sociological institutionalists emphasise the importance of political and parliamentary culture in determining the engagement in parliamentary scrutiny. Even in discussions about formal powers and abilities, the interviewees emphasised that these formal powers do not determine if MPs engage in parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP. Throughout the interviews, MPs and staff members mentioned that in parliamentary cultures there are many unwritten rules and a lot is based on traditions and political culture, even the relationship between the executive and the legislative. The Foreign Affairs Committees of Riigikogu and Eduskunta have the strongest formal power to give a mandate but it is up to the politicians themselves how actively they engage in using this power to scrutinise the government positions on CFSP.

It came out from the interviews that political and parliamentary culture are very important in determining how parliamentarians scrutinise CFSP. MPs from both countries especially emphasised the tradition of the culture of consensus in foreign policy above party lines as a unique factor in influencing the scrutiny of this policy field. Factors that sociological institutionalists emphasise like political culture, role perceptions and the strength of European and institutional identity seem to play a crucial part. The culture of consensus is guaranteed in Finland through active cooperation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs in different formats and informal meetings and communication is also facilitated by the fact that in Finland ministers are also Members of Parliament differently from Estonia. It also came out from the interviews that the disagreement division lines over the positions of the government at FAC meetings are not usually party-based, but normally depend on the topic discussed and also coalition parliamentarians have questioned the government-line. This offers evidence to the research of Martin and Vanberg of coalition partners using parliamentary committees to keep check on the

minister from the coalition party (Martin & Vanberg, 2004). It is also in line with the findings of Raunio about the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Eduskunta that although the approach is consensual, there are active discussions “that also see coalition partners keeping tabs on each other.” (Raunio, 2016c, p. 3). Finnish MPs said that in the Foreign Affairs Committee there is more consensus and cooperation above the party lines compared to the Grand Committee that deals with the scrutiny of other EU policies.

Both in the case of Estonia and Finland the culture of consensus is also facilitated by a tradition of majority governments, which encourages ideological convergence between parties (Raunio, 2015, p. 417). The mandate system of parliamentary scrutiny itself encourages consensus in foreign policy as it is built on close cooperation and consensus building between the legislation and government and keeping the differences behind closed doors to speak with one voice and have better bargaining power at the EU level (Raunio, 2015, p. 420). Raunio also emphasises that the Finnish case demonstrates the importance of establishing a culture of parliamentary involvement in foreign affairs. Finland is one of the EU parliaments with the strongest level of involvement in CFSP and in addition to the formal powers, also important is the systematic approach to parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP (Raunio, 2016c, pp. 2–3).

One Estonian MP also emphasised the importance of the personal relationship between the Minister and Chairman of the Committee as everything is not formally regulated and this adds importance to parliamentary customs and traditions and the political culture. Although the culture of consensus in the Committee was mentioned by MPs of both countries, the Finnish politicians emphasised it more. Finland has a long tradition of consensus in foreign policy with the purpose of maintaining national unity and avoiding expressing publicly differences in party lines. Several Finnish MPs also mentioned in this context the rise to power of the populist and nationalist Finns Party with the last parliamentary elections in 2015, because their rhetoric in the CFSP is different from the consensual Finnish foreign policy. The fact that the current Minister of Foreign Affairs is also from that party prepared the parliament for tougher scrutiny but the MPs admitted that the party has followed the previous consensual line of action in the CFSP. In the context of the political culture one Estonian MP brought out the difference between the two countries as Finland has a longer history of democracy and it also affects the

development of parliamentary culture and how the parliament is perceived by the public, civil servants and the ministers.

Sociological institutionalists explain the best why parliaments engage in the scrutiny of CFSP. As it is a policy area where parliamentary scrutiny is less automatic compared to other policy areas of EU, informal factors are especially important in determining the engagement of parliamentarians in CFSP scrutiny. There is a cooperative culture of consensus in foreign policy in both countries and a tradition of majority governments, where coalition members are generally less motivated to actively and publicly scrutinise the government. This already determines how parliamentarians will engage in CFSP scrutiny, but as the research shows this does not prevent active scrutiny and discussion of government positions in the Foreign Affairs Committee. This study also demonstrates that the general perception of the relationship between the executive and the legislative and role perception of the parliamentarians as scrutinisers is important in determining the engagement in scrutiny of CFSP in practice. Also crucial is the salience of EU issues in general for the parliamentarians and the strength of European identity. Moreover, the perception of MPs about the role of national parliaments in EU policy-making is also a factor that influences the motivation to scrutinise and the presence of Eurosceptic public.

The results of this study have shown that the rational choice institutionalism and the principal-agent theory that is the most used theory in the context of research on parliamentary scrutiny, might not always explain the best parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP as a policy area where party politics do not seem to play such an important role as in other policies. This research has demonstrated that political bargaining and pursuit of interest that rational choice institutionalists emphasise do not determine engagement in parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP. Rationalists also stress the importance of formal structures in determining the engagement in parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP, but this research has shown that although formal powers are important, but informal factors like political and institutionalist culture, role perceptions and European and institutionalist identity influence also how actively parliamentarians engage in CFSP scrutiny.

In the debate about Europeanisation, deparliamentarisation and parliamentarisation in the European Union policy-making, the results indicate that instead of de-parliamentarisation at least in the case of strong scrutinisers like Estonia and Finland, we can talk about

parliamentarisation. Longtime Members of the Finnish parliament also emphasised the fact that Eduskunta benefitted greatly from joining the European Union and actually gained power in that process and after the changes made to the Finnish Constitution, which gave the Eduskunta constitutional authority in foreign affairs. Tapio Raunio and Matti Wiberg have looked specifically at Eduskunta in the context of the de-parliamentarisation thesis and they argue that with the new Constitution of 2000 the competences of Eduskunta in foreign policy were strengthened and membership of the EU further contributed to the parliamentarisation of foreign policy (Raunio & Wiberg, 2008, p. 587). Estonia also took the direction in the very beginning of creating EU policy scrutiny mechanisms that would give Riigikogu strong formal powers. In the case of both countries we can also talk about Europeanisation in the meaning that topics related to the foreign policy and external relations of the European Union are an integral and important part of the work of the Foreign Affairs Committees. Both countries also actively support further developments in the CFSP, which also contributes to the Europeanisation. Finland is active in the crisis management dimension and Estonia supports a unified foreign policy towards Russia and a strong European Neighbourhood Policy (The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, 2015), (Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2017).

## CONCLUSION

Parliamentary scrutiny of EU policies has been in the research focus after the Lisbon Treaty, but the Common Foreign and Security policy has received less attention because of its non-legislative nature, where new scrutiny mechanisms generally do not apply. In Estonia and Finland, the Foreign Affairs Committees of the Riigikogu and the Eduskunta are responsible for scrutinising the Common Foreign and Security Policy. Their main scrutiny power is giving a mandate for the Minister of Foreign Affairs for the FAC meetings in Brussels and scrutinising the positions of the government. Both Foreign Affairs Committees have equal formal legal powers for parliamentary scrutiny in CFSP and similar ability in terms of resources and access to information. This also reflects in overall comparably high levels of parliamentary scrutiny compared to other EU member states. Yet the Finnish parliament uses these powers more effectively, which also amounts to higher ranks in different parliamentary scrutiny studies. This means that in practice, there is still a difference to be found. Explaining this difference in practice is what the present study set out to do.

The purpose of this study was to find out which factors account for the difference, and especially, the relative weight of informal factors (attitude/willingness) in explaining the difference in the scrutiny of CFSP in practice of Riigikogu and Eduskunta. Moreover, using the analytical framework of Born and Hänggi of comparing authority, ability and attitude to see if difference in attitude (willingness of Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee to scrutinise) accounts for the difference in levels of scrutiny between Estonia and Finland as their formal powers (authority and ability) do not differ significantly. My hypotheses were confirmed that the more parliamentarians conceive of their role as giving effect to parliamentary control and the more they are willing to exert parliamentary control, the higher levels of parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP. My research showed that indeed there is a difference in the attitude and willingness of the Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Eduskunta and the Riigikogu to scrutinise CFSP and attitude and willingness is the identified crucial factor accounting for the difference in their levels of scrutiny of CFSP. It is a EU policy area that is considered intergovernmental as opposed to the Community sphere and thus Riigikogu and Eduskunta with a power to give a mandate and scrutinise the positions of the government have formal powers to



influence and shape the outcome of CFSP. My research has shown that in addition to the formal powers and abilities, it is also important to look at informal factors in researching parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP. This research demonstrated that attitude and willingness of MPs influences if and how actively the parliamentarians engage in CFSP scrutiny as the mandate of the Riigikogu is more automatic and the mandate of Eduskunta is preceded by intense debate and active cooperation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Also, my findings support assertions of the sociological institutionalist approach that emphasises the role of values, norms and role perceptions in determining the levels of parliamentary scrutiny. The Finnish members are more aware of their role as scrutinisers and see the role of national parliaments as a more important one in the formation of CFSP than Estonian MPs and are also more active in scrutinising the government positions. There is also a difference in the political culture as Finnish members of the Foreign Affairs Committee and the Minister of Foreign Affairs have a much closer relationship and cooperation than their Estonian counterparts. In this light, it suggests further research into cultural and social variables. One avenue to do this would be to bring in also the third strand of new institutionalism, historical institutionalism with its emphasis on the impact of institutional identity and the impact of institutional culture on parliamentary scrutiny. This could contribute to explaining observed levels of role understandings. Although most of the earlier research on parliamentary scrutiny so far has concentrated on the rational choice institutionalism that sees MPs as rational actors motivated by maximising their interest through political games, this research has further demonstrated the importance of looking at sociological factors that better explain how national parliaments engage in scrutiny of CFSP and how the formal powers are used in practice. As the Foreign Affairs Committees work behind closed doors and there are concerns of democratic deficit, my research has also given insight into how national parliaments scrutinise CFSP.

It also came out from the interviews that CFSP issues are more and more important for parliamentarians and also for their electorate with the conflicts and crises inside and outside Europe affecting directly or indirectly the populations of Estonia and Finland, which should give an incentive for parliamentary scrutiny. Especially considering the fact that the European Parliament has limited powers in this policy field. Although willingness of parliamentarians to engage in scrutiny is especially important in CFSP, also important

are the formal powers and the ability to use these. This is in line with the OPAL research that found a strong positive correlation between the institutional strength and level of activity of parliaments (Auel, Tacea, et al., 2015, p. 78). In the context of CFSP the attitude is especially important as scrutiny in this policy field is less automatic than in other policy fields.

Overall the topic of parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP needs more academic attention as it has been researched less than other EU policy fields, especially in the context of the double democratic deficit debate. Although this research has offered some insight into legislative-executive relations in CFSP, research on this policy field still lacks a systematic approach, especially on informal factors like attitude and willingness. Further studies are also needed on comparing countries with weaker formal powers and abilities and if the informal factors would still play a crucial role in engaging in CFSP scrutiny. As Estonia and Finland are both small countries, it should also be looked at if bigger member states engage differently in parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP. Future research could also look more in depth at the importance of informal factors like attitude and willingness in the parliamentary scrutiny of CFSP and studies are needed with the involvement of more MPs and other countries. Especially as the European Parliament does not officially have much power in CFSP, but is very willing to be involved in its scrutiny and has succeeded in gaining more power informally in scrutinising it. The question that researchers are still working on is how to measure the actual influence or impact of the national parliaments on the decisions of the executive and on the EU policy outcomes. Although Eduskunta and Riigikogu are both considered strong scrutinisers due to their mandating system, it still remains to be researched if they actually have an ability to influence the actions and decisions of the government. This study has indicated that in order to achieve higher levels of scrutiny a change in the role conceptions of Members of Parliament is required.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1

**Table of experts interviewed**

Name	Position	Country	Time and place of the interview
Anttila, Sirkka-Liisa (Centre Party)	Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee 2015-, Deputy Member 1993-1995, 1991-1992	Finland	26 January 2017, Strasbourg
Eesmaa, Enn (Estonian Centre Party)	First Deputy Speaker 2016-, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee 2005-2007, Deputy Chairman 2003-2005, 2007-2016	Estonia	23 February 2017, Tallinn
Haavisto, Pekka (Green League)	Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee 2015-, 1991-1994, 2007-2013, 2014-2015, Deputy Member 1990	Finland	21 February 2017, phone
Hanso, Hannes (Social Democratic Party)	Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee in 2015	Estonia	15 March 2017, Tallinn
Huovinen, Susanna (Social Democratic Party)	Deputy Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee 2017-, 2011-2013, 2015-2016, Member 2016-2017	Finland	24 January 2017, Strasbourg
Keerd-Leppik, Birgit	Adviser/Head of Secretariat of the Foreign Affairs Committee 2001-	Estonia	8 February 2017, Tallinn
Kross, Eerik-Niiles (Estonian Reform Party)	Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee 2015-	Estonia	25 January 2017, Strasbourg

Lahnalampi, Raili	Chief of Cabinet of the Minister for Foreign Affairs 2015-, Adviser of the Foreign Affairs Committee 2001-2007, 2010-2015	Finland	16 February 2017, phone
Mihkelson, Marko (Pro Patria and Res Publica Union)	Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee 2016-, 2011-2015, 2003-2005, Deputy Chairman 2005-2007, Member 2007-2011	Estonia	9 February 2017, Tallinn
Packalén, Tom (The Finns Party)	Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee 2015-2011-2015	Finland	25 January 2017, Strasbourg
Põlluaas, Henn (Conservative People's Party of Estonia)	Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee 2015-	Estonia	14 March 2017, Tallinn
Salolainen, Pertti (National Coalition Party)	Deputy Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee 2015-, 2011-2015, Chairman 2007-2011, Member 1995-1996	Finland	3 March 2017, phone
Šorin Marko (Estonian Centre Party)	Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee 2016-	Estonia	22 March 2017, Tallinn
Tuomioja, Erkki (Social Democratic Party)	Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee 2015-, 1991-1999, 1970-1978, Chairman in 1999, Deputy Member 2007-2011	Finland	2 March 2017, phone

## Semi-structured questions for expert interviews

### General introduction

-How long have you worked at/been a Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee?

-General impression of the work of the Foreign Affairs Committees of the Estonian and Finnish parliaments and similarities and differences.

### I block: The role of national parliaments in EU policy-making

1. What is the role of national parliaments in the EU policy-making and how important is that role?
2. Can national parliaments shape and impact the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union?
  - (a) Can the Foreign Affairs Committee influence the outcome of the CFSP?
3. What is the importance of EU matters for the Riigikogu/Eduskunta?
4. What is the importance of EU matters for the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Riigikogu/Eduskunta?
5. What is the importance of EU matters and especially CFSP issues for the Estonian/Finnish population/electorate?

### II block: Parliamentary scrutiny of the Common Foreign and Security Policy

6. What is the role of the Foreign Affairs Committee regarding EU matters?
  - (a) How do you see your role?
7. How does the Foreign Affairs Committee control the government in CFSP?
8. Estonia/Finland has very strong formal scrutiny powers. Do you feel that the Foreign Affairs Committee is making the most of them in EU affairs and using them effectively?
9. Does the current system have any flaws?
  - (a) Are there any factors that hinder the Foreign Affairs Committee to scrutinise the government in CFSP?
  - (b) Are the current scrutiny powers that your parliament has in CFSP enough?
10. How do you feel that the Minister of Foreign Affairs sees his role in coming in front of the Foreign Affairs Committee before the meetings of the Foreign Affairs Council?

- (a) What is the Minister's attitude towards the Foreign Affairs Committee?
11. What is the attitude of the Foreign Affairs Committee towards the Minister of Foreign Affairs when he comes in front of the Foreign Affairs Committee before the meetings of the Foreign Affairs Council?
  12. Is there a difference in the scrutiny ability for a member of the opposition and a member of the coalition?
  13. How would the Foreign Affairs Committee react when the Minister of Foreign Affairs deviates from the mandate given to him in discussing CFSP?
    - (a) Would there be any consequences?
    - (b) How does the Foreign Affairs Committee control if the Minister has stuck to the mandate?
  14. How thorough are the discussions in the Foreign Affairs Committee before the Foreign Affairs Council meetings?
    - (a) How long do they last on average?
    - (b) Is there a lot of discussion about the positions of the government?
    - (c) Are there often disagreements?
    - (d) What are the division lines?
  15. What topics in CFSP have caused the most disagreement in the Committee?
  16. Does it ever happen that the Minister is replaced by a civil servant in presenting the positions of the government to the Foreign Affairs Committee before Foreign Affairs Council meetings?
    - (a) How often?
    - (b) What does the Foreign Affairs Committee think about it when the Minister does not come?
  17. What do you think is the reason that the parliament gives so much freedom of action to the government in the field of Common Foreign and Security Policy?
    - (a) Has the government itself taken on this position of leading in this field or has the parliament itself given away its powers voluntarily?

### III block: Academic literature and other actors in CFSP

18. In the academic literature, there is a lot of talk about democratic deficit in the Common Foreign and Security Policy because it has less parliamentary control

than other policy fields and supranational institutions play an influential role. Do you agree with it?

19. In the academic literature, there is a lot of talk about information asymmetry between the government and the Members of Parliament. Government members attend the Council meetings and are better informed. Do you feel that there is information asymmetry?
  - (a) Do you feel that the Foreign Affairs Committee has access to all the necessary information in order to exercise parliamentary scrutiny?
  - (b) Does the Foreign Affairs Committee request information actively?
20. Are there any other actors in addition to the Foreign Affairs Committee and the Minister of Foreign Affairs that have an influential role in shaping Estonian/Finnish positions in the CFSP?



## Poolstruktureeritud ekspertintervjuu küsimused

Üldine sissejuhatus

-Kaua olete väliskomisjonis töötanud/liige olnud?

-Üldmulje Eesti ja Soome parlamentide väliskomisjonide tööst ning sarnasustest ja erinevustest

I teemaplokk: Rahvusparlamentide roll Euroopa Liidu otsustusprotsessides

1. Mis on rahvusparlamentide roll Euroopa Liidu otsustusprotsessides ja kui oluline see roll on?
2. Kas rahvusparlamendid saavad kujundada ja mõjutada Euroopa Liidu ühist välis- ja julgeolekupoliitikat?
  - (a) Kas väliskomisjon saab mõjutada ÜVJP tulemust?
3. Kui olulised on Euroopa Liidu asjad Riigikogule/Eduskunnale?
4. Kui olulised on Euroopa Liidu asjad Riigikogu/Eduskunna väliskomisjonile?
5. Kui olulised on Euroopa Liidu asjad ja eriti ÜVJK seotud teemad eesti/soome rahvale/valijatele?

II teemaplokk: Parlamentaarne kontroll Euroopa Liidu ühises välis- ja julgeolekupoliitikas

6. Mis on väliskomisjoni roll Euroopa Liidu asjades?
  - (a) Kuidas näete enda rolli?
7. Kuidas väliskomisjon kontrollib valitsuse tegevust ÜVJP valdkonnas?
8. Eesti/Soome parlamendil on suured õigused parlamentaarse kontrolli teostamiseks, kas tunnete, et väliskomisjon kasutab neid õiguseid EL asjades täiel määral ja tulemuslikult?
9. Kas praegusel süsteemil on puuduseid?
  - (a) Kas on tegureid, mis takistavad väliskomisjonil parlamentaarse kontrolli teostamist ÜVJP-s?
  - (b) Kas praegused õigused on piisavad parlamentaarse kontrolli teostamiseks ÜVJP-s?
10. Kuidas te tunnetate, kuidas välisminister näeb enda rolli väliskomisjoni ette tulles enne välisasjade nõukogu istungeid?

- (a) Milline on tema suhtumine väliskomisjoni?
11. Milline on väliskomisjoni suhtumine välisministriksse, kui ta tuleb komisjoni ette enne välisasjade nõukogu istungeid?
12. Kas opositsiooni liikme ja koalitsiooni liikme võimalused erinevad parlamentaarse kontrolli teostamisel?
13. Kuidas reageeriks väliskomisjon kui välisminister kalduks ÜVJP-s talle antud mandaadist kõrvale?
- (a) Kas sellel oleks tagajärjed?
- (b) Kuidas väliskomisjon kontrollib, kas minister hoiab mandaadist kinni?
14. Kui põhjalikud on väliskomisjonis arutelud valitsuse seisukohtadest enne välisasjade nõukogu istungeid?
- (a) Kui kaua need keskmiselt kestavad?
- (b) Kas valitsuse seisukohtade üle on palju arutelu?
- (c) Kas eriarvamusi esineb sageli?
- (d) Mis alustel poolt- ja vastupositsioonid jagunevad?
15. Mis teemad ÜVJP-s on komisjonis kõige rohkem eriarvamusi tekitanud?
16. Kas tuleb ette, et ministri asemel tuleb komisjonile valitsuse seisukohti esitada enne välisasjade nõukogu istungit ministeeriumi ametnik?
- (a) Kui sageli?
- (b) Kuidas väliskomisjon sellesse suhtub, kui minister ei tule?
17. Mis te arvate on selle põhjuseks, et parlamendid annavad ÜVJP-s valitsusele nii palju tegutsemisvabadust?
- (a) Kas valitsus on ise võtnud juhtpositsiooni või on parlament vabatahtlikult oma võimust loobunud?

### III teemaplokk: Akadeemiline kirjandus ja teised tegurid ÜVJP-s

18. Akadeemilises kirjanduses räägitakse ÜVJP kontekstis palju “demokraatia defitsiidist”, sest selle üle on parlamentaarne kontroll väiksem kui teiste poliitikavaldkondade üle ja riigiülesed institutsioonid mängivad mõjukat rolli. Kas nõustute sellega?
19. Akadeemilises kirjanduses räägitakse palju informatsiooni asümmeetriast valitsuse ja parlamendi vahel. Valitsuse liikmed osalevad Nõukogu istungitel ja

on paremini informeeritud. Kas tunnete, et eksisteerib informatsiooni asümmeetria?

(a) Kas tunnete, et väliskomisjonil on juurdepääs kogu vajalikule informatsioonile parlamentaarse kontrolli teostamiseks?

(b) Kas väliskomisjon küsib informatsiooni aktiivselt?

20. Kas tunnete, et lisaks väliskomisjonile ja välisministrile on veel teisi, kes mõjutavad Eesti/Soome seisukohtade kujundamist ÜVJP-s?

# EUROOPA LIIDU ÜHISE VÄLIS- JA JULGEOLEKUPOLIITIKA PARLAMENTAARNE KONTROLL: EESTI RIIGIKOGU JA SOOME EDUSKUNNA VÕRDLUS

Liisi Vahtramäe

## RESÜMEE

2009. aastal jõustunud Lissaboni lepingu üheks eesmärgiks oli rahvusparlamentide rolli suurendamine Euroopa Liidu (EL) poliitikate kujundamisel ja otsustusprotsessides, et vähendada nii-öelda demokraatia defitsiidi probleemi. Võrreldes teiste Euroopa Liidu poliitikatega on parlamentaarne kontroll Euroopa Liidu ühise välis- ja julgeolekupoliitika (ÜVJP) üle väiksem, kuna Lissaboni lepingus sätestatud uued parlamentaarse kontrolli mehhanismid ei rakendu sellele poliitikale ning selle koostöövorm on valitsustevaheline erinevalt riikideülestest poliitikatest ning liikmesriikide kujundada. Samuti mängivad suurt rolli liiduülesed institutsioonid nagu Euroopa välisteenistus. Kuigi rahvusparlamentide võimalused parlamentaarse kontrolli teostamiseks ELi poliitikate üle erinevad märgatavalt ELi 28 riigi seas, siis mandaadisüsteemiga rahvusparlamentidel on olemas kõik vajalikud instrumendid teostada aktiivselt ÜVJP üle parlamentaarset kontrolli.

Enne Euroopa Liiduga liitumist 2004. aastal võttis Eesti parlament Riigikogu eeskujuks Soome Eduskunna mandaadipõhise parlamentaarse kontrolli süsteemi, kus on rahvusparlamentidel suured formaalsed õigused parlamentaarse kontrolli teostamiseks. Soome süsteemi eripäraks on lisaks Euroopa Liidu asjade komisjonile (Eduskunnas suur komisjon) valdkondlike komisjonide kaasamine ELi poliitikate parlamentaarsesse kontrolli. ÜVJP parlamentaarse kontrolli eest vastutab mõlemas parlamendis väliskomisjon, mille istungid on kinnised ja protokollid lakoonilised. Väliskomisjonid kuuluvad enne välisasjade nõukogu istungeid Brüsselis välisministri ülevaadet valitsuse seisukohtadest ÜVJP teemadel ning annavad ministrile mandaadi. Akadeemiline kirjandus ÜVJP parlamentaarse kontrolli teemal peab mandaadisüsteemi rahvusparlamentide tugevaimaks instrumendiks parlamentaarse kontrolli teostamiseks selle poliitikavaldkonna üle. Samas tundub, et Soome parlament kasutab neid õiguseid tõhusamalt, kuna Eduskunda nimetatakse ELi poliitikate parlamentaarse kontrolli

kontekstis poliitikakujundajaks, kuid Riigikogul on kummitempli maine ning nimetatakse “valvekoeraks, kes ei haugu” (Neuhold et al., 2016, p. 423). Uurimistöö eesmärk on võrrelda, kuidas Riigikogu ja Eduskunna väliskomisjonid teostavad parlamentaarset kontrolli valitsuse tegevuse üle ÜVJPs, pöörates erilist tähelepanu mitteformaalsete tegurite tähtsusele. Kuna selles poliitikavaldkonnas toimuvad arutelud ja otsustamine suletud uste taga, on üheks eesmärgiks ka näidata, kuidas rahvusparlamendid teostavad parlamentaarset kontrolli ÜVJP üle.

Valitud teema on eriti aktuaalne Euroopa Liidu ühise välis- ja julgeolekupoliitika tugevdamise ja laiendamise debati taustal. Samuti on tegemist poliitikavaldkonnaga, mida on vähe uuritud ning mille parlamentaarne kontroll toimub reeglina suletud uste taga. Rahvusparlamentide väiksema kontrolli tõttu selles poliitikavaldkonnas on ka demokraatia defitsiidi oht suurem. Varasemad võrdlevad uuringud parlamentaarse kontrolli teemal on enamasti keskendunud formaalsetele õigustele kontrolli tugevuse hindamisel. Käesolev uurimistöö võrdleb Riigikogu ja Eduskunna väliskomisjoni parlamentaarset kontrolli ÜVJP üle, kasutades Borni ja Hänggi välja töötatud analüütilist raamistikku “pädevus, võimekus ja suhtumine”, mida nad kasutasid parlamentaarse võimu uurimiseks jõe kasutamise kontekstis rahvusvahelise egiidi all. See raamistik uurib lisaks formaalsetele pädevustele ka mitteformaalsete tegurite mõju nagu suhtumine ja valmidus teostada parlamentaarset kontrolli. Töös kasutati kvalitatiivset uurimismeetodit — poolstruktureeritud ekspertintervjuusid Riigikogu ja Eduskunna väliskomisjonide liikmete ja pikaajaste ametnikega, et teada saada, mis motiveerib parlamente teostama kontrolli valitsuse tegevuse üle ÜVJPs.

Uurimistöö tulemused näitasid, et Eduskunna ja Riigikogu väliskomisjonidel on sarnased formaalsed õigused ja võimekus teostada parlamentaarset kontrolli ÜVJP üle, kuid erinevad parlamendiliikmete suhtumise ja valmiduse poolest teostada parlamentaarset kontrolli. See näitab, et parlamentaarset kontrolli selles poliitikavaldkonnas uurides on küll oluline võrrelda formaalseid õiguseid ja võimekusi, kuid sama oluline on vaadata ka mitteformaalseid tegureid. Vaatamata sarnastele formaalsetele õigustele ja võimetele esineb erinevusi Riigikogu ja Eduskunna väliskomisjoni parlamentaarses kontrollis valitsuse tegevuse üle ÜVJPs. Uurimistöö tulemused näitasid, et see erinevus on tingitud Eduskunna liikmete paremast teadlikkusest oma rollist valitsuse kontrollijana ning nad tähtsustavad ka rohkem Euroopa Liidu poliitikaid ning rahvusparlamentide rolli Euroopa

Liidu otsustusprotsessis. Seetõttu on Eduskunna väliskomisjon ka aktiivsem parlamentaarse kontrolli teostamisel ÜVJP üle kui Riigikogu väliskomisjon. Istungid, kus arutatakse välisministriga valitusse seisukohti väliasjade istungil ja antakse mandaat, kestavad Eduskunnas rohkem kui poole kauem ning liikmete sõnul on tegemist aktiivse parlamentaarse kontrolli ja intensiivse debatiga. Riigikogu liikmed kirjeldasid mandaadi andmist, kui jutupunktide kuulamist ja enamus nentis, et sisulist arutelu ei toimu.

Teoreetiliseks raamistikuks on uus-institutsionalismi teooriad. Varasemates parlamentaarse kontrolli uuringutes on kõige rohkem kasutatud ratsionaalse valiku institutsionalismi printsipaal-agent teooriat. See näeb parlamente ja parlamendi liikmeid parlamentaarset kontrolli teostamas ratsionaalsetel motiividel, kui see on nende huvides ning poliitiliselt kasulik. Ajalooline institutsionalism vaatab parlamentaarset kontrolli institutsiooni tugevuse kontekstis ning peab määravaks institutsiooni formaalseid ja mitteformaalseid faktoreid parlamentaarse kontrolli teostamiseks. Sotsioloogiline institutsionalism rõhutab poliitilise ja institutsionaalse kultuuri, rolli mõistmise ja institutsionaalse identiteedi tähtsust parlamentaarse kontrolli tugevuse määramisel. Käesolev uuring näitas, et ÜVJP parlamentaarse kontrolli kontekstis, mis erineb teistest ELi poliitikatest rahvusparlamentide väiksema rolli poolest ja kus ei mängi nii suurt rolli erakondade vahelised erinevused, on eriti oluline pöörata tähelepanu mitteformaaletele faktoritele. Sotsioloogiline institutsionalism selgitab kõige paremini käesoleva uuringu tulemusi keskendudes parlamendiliikmete rolli tajumisele, institutsionaalsele kultuurile ning Euroopa ja institutsionaalse identiteedi tugevusele. Samuti on see poliitikavaldkond, kus Euroopa Parlamendil on ametlikult piiratud õigused parlamentaarseks kontrolliks, kuid valmisolek ja huvi parlamentaarseks kontrolliks on suur ning nii on suudetud suurendada mitteformaalselt oma õiguseid.

Käesolev uuring on esimene Riigikogu ja Eduskunna ÜVJP parlamentaarset kontrolli võrdlev töö ning panustab laiemasse debatti mitteformaalsete faktorite uurimise olulisuse üle ÜVJP parlamentaarse kontrolli kontekstis. Rahvusparlamentide roll selles ELi poliitikvaldkonnas väärib rohkem akadeemilist tähelepanu ja süstemaatilist lähenemist, eriti demokraatia defitsiidi debati kontekstis. Samuti on varasemad uuringud parlamentaarse kontrolli teemal keskendunud erinevustele liikmesriikide institutsionaalsete võimete vahel, kuid uurida tuleks ka, kuidas mõõta rahvusparlamentide reaalselt panust või mõju Euroopa Liidu poliitikate tulemustele. Kuigi Riigikogu ja

Eduskunda peetakse mõlemal mandaadipõhise süsteemi tõttu tugevateks valitsuse tegevuse kontrollijateks, on endiselt teadmata, kas nad ka tegelikult mõjutavad Eesti ja Soome valitsuste käitumist ja otsuseid ÜVJP valdkonnas.

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