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**Strategic Change and Capability Development in
the Finnish Defence Forces' Personnel Strategies**

School of Management
Master's thesis in Strategic
Business Development

Vaasa 2026

Vaasan Yliopisto**Johtamisen yksikkö**

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|-------------------------|---|-------------------|----|
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| Tutkielman nimi: | Strategic Change and Capability Development in the Finnish Defence Forces' Personnel Strategies | | |
| Tutkinto: | Kauppateiden maisteri | | |
| Koulutusohjelma: | Strategic Business Development | | |
| Työn ohjaaja: | Tuomas Huikkola | | |
| Valmistusvuosi: | 2026 | Sivumäärä: | 75 |

TIIVISTELMÄ:

Suomen puolustusvoimat on organisaatio, joka toimii nopeasti muuttuvassa ympäristössä. Viime vuosien muutokset, kuten Suomen NATO-jäsenyys, yleinen teknologinen kehitys ja erilaiset uhat ovat muovanneet puolustusvoimien henkilöstöstrategiaa. Tässä tutkielmassa tarkastellaan ensisijaisesti kysymystä: ”Miten puolustusvoimien henkilöstöstrategia on kehittynyt ja miten tämä kehitys heijastaa strategisen liiketoiminnan kehittämisen ja strategisen muutosjohtamisen periaatteita?”. Toissijainen tutkimuskysymys on: ”Miten puolustusvoimien strateginen mukauttaminen asettuu muutosjohtamisen viitekehyksiin?” Tutkielman teoreettinen viitekehys pohjaa ajatukseen, jonka mukaan henkilöstöstrategia on kyvykkyyjärjestelmä, joka koostuu neljästä eri osa-alueesta. Nämä ovat kyvyn johtaminen, rekrytoinnin optimoiminen, pätevyyden kehittäminen ja työnantajakuvan rakentaminen.

Näiden teemojen kautta tutkielmassa havainnollistetaan, mitä muutoksia kahden eri puolustusvoimien henkilöstöstrategian välillä on tehty. Tutkimus on toteutettu kvalitatiivisena tapaustutkimuksena, jossa hyödynnetään kolmivaiheista laadullista sisällönanalyysia. Kolme vaihetta ovat reduktio, ryhmittely sekä käsitteellistäminen. Kolme analyysissa löytynyttä pääteemaa ovat: 1: Kansallisesta vakaudesta kohti liittoumaperustaista strategista kyvykkyyttä, 2: Sisäisestä kouluttamisesta kohti laajempaa osaajien hankintaa myös organisaation ulkopuolelta ja 3: Fyysisestä kyvykkyydestä kohti kokonaisvaltaista hyvinvointia ja resilienssiä.

Analyysin aineistona työssä on käytetty puolustusvoimien henkilöstöstrategioita vuosilta 2015 ja 2024. Muut hyödynnetyt aineistot ovat esimerkiksi puolustusvoimien henkilöstöselonteot, julkaisut sekä tieteellinen kirjallisuus henkilöjohtamisen, strategiseen toiminnankehittämisen ja muutosjohtamisen aloilta. Tutkimustulokset kuvaavat, että henkilöstöstrategia toimii pitkän aikavälin kyvykkyyksien rakentamisen välineenä eikä pelkästään hallinnollisena HR-dokumenttina. Vuoden 2024 strategia näyttäytyy selvästi dynaamisempaan ja ulospäin suuntautuneempaan kuin vuoden 2015 sisäisesti painottunut strategia. Puolustusvoimien henkilöstöstrategia on siis muuttunut reaktiivisesta proaktiiviseksi, mikä heijastaa strategisen liiketoiminnan kehittämisen logiikkaa. Strateginen muutos tukee pitkän aikavälin suorituskykyä, resilienssiä ja kykyä toimia epävarmassa turvallisuusympäristössä. Tutkimuksessa kävi myös ilmi, että henkilöstö on puolustusvoimien tärkein strateginen resurssi ja sen kehittäminen on keskeinen osa Suomen puolustuskykyä, ja että liiketoiminnan strategiset viitekehykset ovat täysin sovellettavissa myös puolustusorganisaatioon ja Suomen puolustusvoimat toimii enenevässä määrin niiden mukaisesti.

AVAINSANAT: resilienssi, henkilöstöstrategiat, muutosjohtaminen, kyvykkyys, puolustusvoimat, sotilashenkilöstö, sotilasliitot

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Title of thesis: Strategic Change and Capability Development in the Finnish Defence Forces' Personnel Strategies

Degree: Master of Economics

Degree Programme: Strategic Business Development

Supervisor: Tuomas Huikkola

Year: 2026 **Pages:** 75

ABSTRACT:

The Finnish Defence Forces (FDF) is an organization that functions in a quickly changing environment. The changes in recent years, for example Finland joining NATO, the general development of technology and new types of threats, have caused the need for the development of the FDF's personnel strategy. In this thesis the main research question is "How has the personnel strategy of the Finnish Defence Forces developed over time and how does this development reflect principles of strategic business development and strategic change management?". The secondary research question is "how does the FDF's strategic adaptation compare to strategic change management frameworks?". The theoretical framework of this thesis is based on the idea that personnel strategy is a capability system, that is built from four different areas. These are talent management, recruitment optimization, competency development and employer branding.

In this study, these themes will be used to visualize what changes have been made between the two personnel strategies of the FDF. The research has been conducted as a qualitative case study, through a three-stage qualitative content analysis. These three stages are reduction, grouping and abstracting. The three main themes found through analysis are: 1: From national stability to alliance focused strategic ability, 2: From internal training to recruiting new personnel from outside the organization and 3: From physical training to focus on mental well-being and resilience.

The data of the analysis in this study are the FDF's personnel strategies from 2015 and 2024. Other materials include the FDF's personnel reports, different academic publications and literature on human resource management, strategic capability development and change management. The results of this thesis show that the personnel strategies work as a tool for long-term capability building rather than only as an administrative HR-document. The strategy from 2024 is clearly more dynamic and outward-orientated rather than the inward-oriented strategy from 2015. The FDF's personnel strategy has developed from reactive to proactive, which reflects the general logic of strategic business development. Strategic change supports long-term capability, resilience and ability to function in uncertain security environments. The study also shows that personnel is the FDF's most important resource and its development is an essential part of Finland's defence ability. It also shows that the strategic framework of business development is directly applicable to defence organisations and that the FDF is working increasingly according to them.

KEYWORDS: resilience, personnel strategies, change management, capability, defence forces, military personnel, military alliances

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1 Introduction

The strategy of this war of aggression is this. You go. You get shot. You run without looking and the enemy gets you. *No*, you look for cover, you look where the shooter lies, you be fast but not hasty. You aim first, aim very accurately, and you shoot first. A second's head start's enough. That's how it be.

- Antero Rokka in *Tuntematon sotilas* by Väinö Linna, 1954, p. 147, translated to English by author

The Finnish Defence Forces have gone through significant changes throughout the decades of independence, but even today the organization's way of work resembles the values reflected in the Finnish classic by Väinö Linna, *The Unknown Soldier* (*Tuntematon sotilas*). The work isn't about heroics or ripping oneself apart trying to carry the whole load alone, but about sure, self-reliant, firm and forward performing. The strategies of the defence forces are built on a century of work that has been done to ensure an easier future. The Finnish Defence Forces' strategies are created to build leaders and employees who are able to recognize changes in society and work sufficiently toward overcoming troubles. In its core, the Finnish defence institution is simple leadership and thoughtful strategy, and to paraphrase Antero Rokka, being one step ahead.

Defence organizations face unique challenges such as motivating new generations to work in the context of, and responding to, technological and social challenges. This is why research of change and a cross examination of personnel strategies and their development in the context of the Finnish Defence Forces (FDF) is crucial. This underlines the meaning of developing strategies in organizations to meet a fast-changing environment's needs. This study highlights the changes and pace with which the FDF has met the requirements of the field of the organization, like responding to Finland's NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) membership (Puolustusvoimat, n.d.-c) and emphasizing sufficient numbers of personnel and their commitment to a changing and stressful environment in an age of war in Europe. This study also aims to highlight how the strategies tackle commitment in a military environment and respond to societal changes like war and NATO. It aims to conceptualize personnel strategies as strategic resource

planning processes and look into how military human resource management integrates, for example, talent management, recruitment optimization, competency development and employer branding as strategic assets.

Personnel strategies are a core component of defence effectiveness as defence forces depend on human capabilities as critical assets (Buijs & Olsthoorn, 2024, p. 21-22). Because of this, it is important to research further how the strategies work and how they can be made to work as efficiently as possible. In military human resource management (HRM), it is important to align strategic goals with HRM to ensure that an organization can succeed in its plans (Buijs & Olsthoorn, 2024, p. 11). Therefore, military-type organizations need a working HRM strategy that supports its strategic goals to possibly achieve the said goals. In military contexts, military HRM isn't only administrative but strategic and guiding of long-term workforce capability and organizational adaptability, which helps the organization to succeed in long-term strategies and plans. Though previous literature has studied commitment, job satisfaction and transformational leadership in the personnel of the FDF (Kähkönen, 2024; Numminen, 2022), most existing literature also focuses on private sector firms rather than military contexts (Siswanto & Indah, 2022; Virtanen, 2021). By comparing the FDF's previous and current personnel strategies, this research aims to reveal how the FDF integrates personnel outcomes and results with broader strategic objectives. This study contributes to bridging public sector HRM strategy and strategic business development theory together.

Though HRM has been recognized as critical in military organizations, for example because of changing security environments and workforce diversity, most research focuses on general HRM challenges like motivation, job satisfaction or organizational culture, rather than into comparing strategic development over time, though these too are studied less in the Finnish context (Kähkönen, 2024; Dagher et al, 2024). Yet, there is a persisting need for deeper investigation into strategic alignment with organizational goals and capability planning in this area and especially in the FDF. This study underlines how strategic HRM aligns with broader organizational goals and strategic business

development logic. Foundational challenges are generally well documented, but comparisons of personnel strategies with analytical frameworks drawn from strategic business haven't been done. Military often isn't studied as a business development endeavour, though in this age of security threats militaries, in fact, seem to be business endeavours in their successes and losses. Existing studies do not aim to engage with how personnel strategy frameworks evolve through responding to changes, like NATO accession or demographic shifts, and they don't engage with organizational strategy evolution. The comparative change on the organizational level is not addressed in previous literature.

The purpose of this study is tap into this research opportunity by answering the following research questions:

How has the personnel strategy of the Finnish Defence Forces developed over time and how does this development reflect principles of strategic business development and strategic change management?

Secondarily, how does the FDF's strategic adaptation compare to strategic change management frameworks?

This will be studied through a three-stage qualitative content analysis method, where first the content is reduced, then clustered and then abstracted. During this process, guiding sub-questions such as how the FDF has developed its relationship with the defence industry as a whole and how this shows in the personnel strategy, as well as what the core objectives of the previous and current strategies are, are used to structure the research. This study uses the personnel strategies as well as the personnel statements from the FDF to analyse the evolution. The framework of strategic business development is used to offer a structured path.

This study contributes to literature on human resource management and personnel strategy in military and defence organisations by providing a study of change of the

personnel strategy evolution in relation to strategic business development and long-term capability development. It extends existing strategic HRM and business development research by applying these frameworks to a defence organization context. This study aims to demonstrate how business-oriented strategic frameworks can also be meaningfully applied to military institutions. It also contributes to Finnish and Nordic defence studies with offering an analysis of significant structural changes, including the NATO membership and geopolitical shifts. Recent research has focused on human resource management's challenges and trends in military organizations (Buijs & Olsthoorn, 2024) as well as the FDF a place of work, with a focus on job satisfaction or in relation to remote work (Byman-Vornanen, 2025; Kähkönen 2025). There are, however, no existing studies of strategic personnel policy evolutions of the FDF, if one doesn't consider my own previous bachelor's thesis, where I explored the usage of the Transformational Leadership's Four I's theory of leadership in the FDF's personnel strategies.

The Finnish Defence Forces' personnel strategy affects the defence forces employees' and conscripts' action and how the defence forces aim to change their strategy for them to be able to react to changing situations in the world, through ensuring that the FDF has enough personnel that acquire required skills and are committed to their jobs (Puolustusvoimat, 2024). The world is currently, in the year 2026, in a state of transition and wars, for example between Ukraine and Russia and between middle east and USA, which in turn will have an effect in a wider sense to military infrastructure and to society (United nations, n.d; Pathak, 2024). Because of this infrastructure, and Finland's new NATO membership these wars will affect FDF and therefore the personnel strategy. During these changes the FDF needs to be steady and ready to work even under new pressures. The FDF needs to focus on employee and conscript motivation and well-being, so that all necessary tasks can be completed successfully in an even more quickly changing world.

This topic is important to study so that the development of personnel strategy is clear and understandable. It is also important to realize how much the different changes in the world affect the FDF's personnel strategy and what is needed to develop for the organization to keep its standard of readiness stable. As already stated, the world is changing rapidly and therefore it is important for the FDF to change their strategies to adapt to the changes. In addition to NATO and ongoing wars, also new technology and the development of AI affect the military field as a whole and causes the society around the FDF change, which once again directly affects how the FDF's strategy needs to be developed for optimal readiness.

The majorities of militaries that are part of NATO use more than third of their budget in personnel (Goldenberg, 2022, p. 3). Personnel strategy is not only used as managerial, but as a process that develops strategic capabilities that support the organization (Ulrich et al, 2024, p. 2). Military HRM also integrates talent management, recruitment optimization, competency development and employer branding as strategic assets (Yu et al, 2022, p. 2, 3, 5). These four elements will be used as a framework to analyse the changes that have happened between the two strategies, from 2015 and 2024. The subject of the FDF's personnel strategy through the lens of capability development and with that developing the organisations strategy is not an area that has been researched a lot, so there is a clear research gap.

The structure of this thesis goes as follows: The following second chapter focuses on the background and existing literature on military human resource management, strategic human resource management and strategic business development, for example long-term capability planning. The third chapter dives into the context of the FDF and will also explain the structure and contents of the personnel strategies used as data. Fourth chapter explains the methodology and sources used. The fifth chapter is the main qualitative content analysis and comparison between the personnel strategies. The sixth chapter applies existing literature and theoretical frameworks to the analysis conducted and

places the study into a broader research field. The last chapter is the conclusions, contributions, practical implications and questions for further research.

2 Theory and Background

2.1 Military Human Resource Management

Military human resource management (human resource management, HRM for short) is an important context for this study, as understanding what kinds of changes have been made to the FDF's personnel strategy for the FDF to be ready to complete any task, is highly connected to military HRM (Půček et al, 2025, p. 3). Well-being in the military and the way that organizational stress impacts the satisfaction of the personnel is crucial for military HRM (Půček et al, 2025, p. 3). As in any job, the balance between personal life and work also in the military needs to be balanced for the personnel's mental health and well-being. Making sure that all the personnel is doing well can have a big effect on their performance in their tasks which touch on subjects such as destruction, war and death (Půček et al, 2025, p. 2). Personnel is the most valuable asset of an organization and therefore it is important to make sure that the personnel are doing well and are ready to commit to the organization and its goals (Dagher et al, 2024, p. 5).

Strategic HRM as a framework can help any organization in gaining long-term capability. Developing long-term capability is exceedingly important for an organization like the FDF, because it is not only defending Finland anymore, but rather is also a part of bigger alliances (Puolustusministeriö, n.d.). This means that being prepared for quite literally any conflict is not only a demand by the state of Finland, but rather a transnational endeavour considering, for example, the NATO membership (Puolustusministeriö, n.d.). These demands have a huge impact on the everyday life of their personnel, simply as in that the FDF is required to send personnel to peacetime missions with NATO and be on the ready to defend other countries that are part of NATO (Puolustusministeriö, n.d.-. Because of these types of explicit changes, strategic HRM is vital to ensure that the FDF and its personnel are ready for these changes and able to work with new conditions. Strategic HRM also helps to develop the organization's strategy in a way that the FDF's personnel are ready to work in new conditions on a sufficient level (Dumitru, 2023, p. 55). Strategic

HRM also helps bridge strategic business development's (SBD) logic with FDF's strategy in a way that makes the organization ready and able to complete all the needed tasks.

Military leaders are held to a high standard, and they are expected to lead their subordinates with example (Dumitru, 2023, p. 55). Military leaders need to be able to make decisions quickly while adapting to changing environments. The leaders are also responsible for motivating and inspiring their subordinates (Dumitru, 2023, p. 55), which makes the training of leaders also a high priority in the military HRM strategy.

Van Maanen and Shein describe a strategy where employees are required to accept specific norms and ways of working to obey their superiors and this can be done by using employees as guidance and example for other employees (Schmeisser et al, 2013, p. 248). The negative side of this strategy was that the employees had reduced sensitivity to the new changes that are caused by the environment (Schmeisser et al, 2013, p. 248). This type of strategy is not optimal for creative markets, but in case of military this tactic is effective, as it lowers the risk of misinformation-based decisions and makes coordinating easier and simpler (Schmeisser et al, 2013, p. 248-249). This strategy can work in areas that have a high priority on honesty and trustworthiness (Schmeisser et al, 2013, p. 248-249). In military HRM easy coordination and trustworthiness are very important trades to have to gain the best degree of readiness in both short- and long-term.

In study that was done in the USA showed that society and civilians are related in multiple different ways and therefore changes can affect how the military and society work together (Pákozdi & Bárdos, 2022, p. 5). The study showed that changes in society affected for example how many people enlisted and how many of the new recruits were females (Pákozdi & Bárdos, 2022, p. 5). This is of course different in the FDF because Finland has a mandatory conscript period for males and voluntary for females, but it is possible that the changes in society does affect the motivation and willingness to serve also in the FDF.

Another structure that is fit to be used in the military is the mechanistic structure. Mechanistic structure means that there is a strong centralization or the standardization of processes (Schmeisser et al, 2013, p. 254). Typical qualities that the mechanistic structure has are obedience, carefulness, traditions and comfort of the employees, this means that mechanistic structure is used to create stability and predictability inside the organization (Schmeisser et al, 2013, p. 254). This means that the mechanistic structure can be used in the basis of military HRM, to help create organizations that can use its personnel in the best way even when confronting new and different situations.

Salary is usually considered to be the most important compensation for work (Dagher et al, 2024, p. 21), but in the case of FDF there is also need for the personnel to be committed to doing the work even if the stakes rise a lot but the salary doesn't, for example in a case of war (Pääesikunnan henkilöstösasto, 2024, p. 9). The FDF needs to build its HRM strategy in a way that ensures that if needed, the personnel are going to do what is required of them even if the Finland is going to be in war (Dagher et al, 2024, p. 5). In the case of FDF's personnel strategy conscripts and employee commitment in the FDF, it is extremely important and there are multiple changes that have happened to the new personnel strategy with the changing global situation (Pääesikunnan henkilöstösasto, 2015, p. 14-17). Making sure that every person that has a part in the FDF is happy and committed, helps ensure that the FDF as organization is prepared to complete their tasks (Ruuskanen, 2024). The FDF's personnel strategy needs to be developed in a way that the organization would not have any problems in case of war or other crisis that would require the FDF (Ruuskanen, 2024). Developing the personnel strategy can help ensure that the short- and long-term readiness and capability are both adequate (Puolustusvoimat, 2024).

Military leadership has multiple different functions that it needs to fulfil to maintain the degree of capability. For example, actions that are desirable from military leaders are influence, guiding, commanding and enforcing the military rules and goals (Da Costa & Rouco, 2023, p. 7). Leaders and personnel in the military have to deal with different

challenges, for example high stress situations, fast-changing environment, violence and life risking situations (Da Costa & Rouco, 2023, p. 1). These situations have a huge impact on the personnels mental and physical health, which both in turn affect and cause the need for clear communication between the personnel and the leaders (Da Costa & Rouco, 2023, p. 1). This causes the characteristics of the leaders and the personnel have an effect on the leadership styles that are used in the military around the world (Da Costa & Rouco, 2023, p. 1).

2.2 Strategic Human Resource Management

As the world is constantly changing, organizations like the FDF need to be ready to develop their strategy to fit the situation (Boiță et al, 2024, p. 359). The style of leadership has a great effect on how the organization can react to changes and develop their strategy accordingly (Boiță et al, 2024, p. 359). Developing HRM helps organizations increase the effectiveness of themselves the degree of skill that the employees have. This has a straightforward effect on the state of preparedness the organization has immediately and in the long-term (Sekhri, 2010, p. 201). Human resources are used to improve material and service resources to ensure the best way of working in the eyes of the organization and its customers (Terziovski, 2004, p. 394). This means that using human resources strategically enhances the organization's readiness and capabilities to complete the obligatory tasks without problems.

Because organizational changes can happen for example ins strategy, technology, organization and culture (Boiță et al, 2024, p. 360), means that for the strategic HRM point of view there is a lot of area that needs to be covered to ensure that the personnel are committed and happy in the employment of the FDF (Boiță et al, 2024, p. 360). How the changes are done and how effectively the strategy is developed is usually dependant on the leadership inside of the organization (Boiță et al, 2024, p. 360). In what way and how quickly does organization react to the changes can be crucial, but in the

case of the FDF the readiness in short- and long-term are extremely important, because the changes can also be threats to not only to the organization, but also to the civilians and the country.

Learning inside the organization is important for the development of HRM, because development of skills and continuous learning are increasingly more wanted from the workplace (Akdere & Egan, 2020, p. 400). The higher involvement that the organization has in HRM in their strategy affects the effectiveness of HRM and decision making (Sekhri, 2010, p. 15). Human resource development (HRD) focuses mostly on developing the skills, knowledge and attitudes of the employees through learning (Gruyter, 1990, p. 51). Developing, for example, the employees' skills, enables the employees to succeed in their tasks now and helps develop the readiness for the organization in long-term (Gruyter, 1990, p. 51). HRD has a meaningful part in improving the performance of the organization. For example, HRD affects straight to the commitment that the personnel have for the organization performance, which supports the improvement and learning (Akdere & Egan, 2020, p. 400). When the organization is facing new changes internally or externally the need for HRD grows for the employees to be able to complete every task (Akdere & Egan, 2020, p. 400). For example, new technologies and development of AI creates a need for the employees to be aware on how to work with these new technologies and tools in a way that helps the organization to complete the wanted tasks on the level wished (Akdere & Egan, 2020, p. 400). This means that support from the organization and the leaders for learning and developing skills are crucial for the HRD and the overall HRM strategy, to ensure that everything is done in a suitable level (Akdere & Egan, 2020, p. 401).

Human resources management is also extremely important for the sake of the culture inside the FDF, because culture as a concept usually works with learning and improving performance in all levels of the organization (Akdere & Egan, 2020, p. 401). The organization's environment for the personnel is highly affected by the employees, leaders and the culture (Sekhri, 2010, p. 118). Even though some parts of the organization and the

culture affect directly only leaders, the leadership style and HRM strategy has a straight effect on all the personnel (Sekhri, 2010, p. 118). It is also important to note that the feedback from the personnel is important for the organization to be able to develop and HRM culture (Akdere & Egan, 2020, p. 400). HRD explains culture as important for outcomes, functions and programs are part of organizations that rely strongly on personnel (Akdere & Egan, 2020, p. 400).

An organization's culture can be considered as a subject that comes from four components, that are values, heroes, rites and social networks inside the organization (Sekhri, 2010, p. 120). Values are the beliefs that contribute to the success of individuals inside the organization. Heroes are the individuals that reflect the organization's values and attitudes and serve as a role model for other personnel in the organization (Sekhri, 2010, p. 120-121). Rites are routines that the organization does to recognize well performing employees. Lastly social network is the informal communication that happens inside the organization (Sekhri, 2010, p. 120-121). The culture shows what is the true tone of the organization and how the employees are affected by it (Sekhri, 2010, p. 121). Organizations culture affects a lot on the personnel's willingness to work and commit to the organization. Therefore, developing the organization's culture is important part of strategy development and HRM in general to ensure that the FDF has personnel that are prepared to help the organization in any way.

Developing how the organization leads and works with the personnel is extremely important in the case of the FDF, because it can help the personnel be ready and willing to do everything necessary to complete the tasks needed (Akdere & Egan, 2020, p. 394). Because of the different changes and how quickly they can happen, make the importance of strategic HRM stand out even more, because the FDF's capabilities rely strongly on the personnel and the skills that they have.

2.3 Strategic Change Management

Both change management and transformational management aim to successful organizational change, there are differences in scope, strategic orientation, timing and the impact the change will have on the organization (Putanu, 2026, p.61). Transformational management requires learning, flexibility and replacement into the organization's routines and strategy (Putanu, 2026, p. 63). Change management instead is more about being reactive and focused on certain processes or structures to maintain the efficiency of the organization (Putanu, 2026, p. 63). Even though they focus on the same subject, but in different scale and approach, in this thesis the main point is on the personnel strategy and how it as process needs to be changed. This means that the focus is going to be in change management, because it focuses more on one part that needs to change and in this thesis that part is the FDF's personnel strategy, instead of the FDF's strategy as a whole.

Change management and transformational leadership have been associated with crisis, but nowadays it is more proactive and continuous process that gives the organizations the possibility to react and shape the change (Putanu, 2026, p. 61). For the change to be successful it needs both technical change and cognitive change in the employees. Transformation is repetitive and adaptive and require organization to react and expect change and use the resources accordingly (Putanu, 2026, p. 61). Successful transformation is dependent on the strategy, management, culture and employee capabilities (Putanu, 2026, p. 61). Organizations culture is a significant part of the strategy that leads to the outcomes. Organization cultures that encourage capability development and openness supports change, when control orientated environments usually support resistance against change. Resistance to change is usually grounded by uncertainty (Putanu, 2026, p. 61-62). Open communication and participation can support change and support against resistance (Putanu, 2026, p. 61-62). Change management has been described as a mindset that binds individuals to a certain action that is necessary for the success of the change. This means that individuals can feel a sense of duty that supports change or

even feel that they have something to lose if they do not support the wanted change (Johnson, 2026, p. 3).

The changes in economic, technologic and social areas reshapes how organizations should operate and compete in its own markets (Putanu, 2026, p. 60). For example, globalisation and digital transformation has a great effect in organizations working environment and therefore has a great effect on the ways that need development in the strategy so that the organization can react and success in the requisite level (Putanu, 2026, p. 60). Change management helps organization to go through structural, strategic and cultural change (Putanu, 2026, p. 61). Even though change offers the organization opportunities, innovation, development and long-term sustainability, it also causes uncertainty and resistance that can be challenging for basic leadership methods. Change is essential, especially when the environments are affected by new technology development (Putanu, 2026, p. 61). This means that the organizations cannot trust only the old methods and strategy but rather need to continue to develop and change the strategies, resources and capabilities to be able to react to everything as well as possible (Putanu, 2026, p. 61).

The biggest goals that change management has are developing the organizations capabilities in a way that the organization stays competitive and able to complete all the needed tasks (Gošnik & Jerman, 2026, p. 23). Change often causes disturbance in the existing processes, need a lot of effort and resources and project management approach for the change (Gošnik & Jerman, 2026, p. 23). Usually, organizational change is thought to be urgent, but still it is claimed that organizational change fails in about 70 % of the efforts, this claim does not have empirical evidence (Johnsen, 2026, p. 2). Even though the claim itself does not have enough evidence to be considered an absolute truth it is true that radical change in large organizations is usually risky and uncertain. This is because in that large of a scale organization can easily face resistance to change (Johnsen, 2026, p. 2). Success in change management is usually dependent on success factors. Success factors guide the things that need to be done so that the organization can keep its

competitive foot hold (Gošnik & Jerman, 2026, p. 24). Success factors include, for example employee commitment, participation, communication, managerial involvement and employee education (Gošnik & Jerman, 2026, p. 25).

Strategic change management means the approach that uses processes to change form, quality or situation of the organization. Change management as a strategy can usually be divided into two categories, which are “hard” strategy and “soft” strategy (Johnsen, 2026, p. 2). Hard strategy is more planned and result orientated, while soft strategy is more emergent, organizational development focused (Johnsen, 2026, p. 2). The hard strategy is way more result orientated and usually uses financial ways, like cuts and layoffs (Johnsen, 2026, p. 4). In the hard strategy usually owners and stakeholders are the main consideration and employees are slowing the change. Usually, the success is measured by financial goals, for example turnover and reduction of costs (Johnsen, 2026, p. 4). The soft strategy on the other hand is pretty much the opposite of the hard strategy. In the soft strategy focuses on developing organizations capabilities, by focusing on the people and the organizations culture. The soft strategy has an interactive and experiential strategy and the success is measured in the organizations ability to develop is capabilities through experience (Johnsen, 2026, p. 4). The usage of these strategies might vary during the change process, but the hard strategy is more used in the final stages of the change process (Johnsen, 2026, p. 19).

Strategic change management can also be thought through four key factors that help characterize the leadership. These four are Idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration (Eaton et al, 2024). Idealized influence works with the way leaders work and whatever the personnel want to be identified with the leaders. Inspirational motivation is the goals and standards that the leaders set for the personnel and the organization in general (Eaton et al, 2024). Intellectual stimulation is about how the personnel question and challenge the leaders and how it can be used to create the best outcomes. Lastly, individual consideration is about how the leaders work and treat each person individually (Eaton et al, 2024).

In 2019 there was introduced collaborative change management (CCM) as a counter point to the traditional change management (Talevich, 2026, p. 41). The point of CCM is that it is an achievement of agreed goal through the experience sharing between at least two people. Power in CCM is distributed between the people that are going to be affected by the change (Talevich, 2026, p. 41). This supports the idea of involving employees in the collection of data about the organization's situation for the organization to be able to do the best start in CCM (Talevich, 2026, p. 41). In CCM it would be ideal that employees would be involved in decision making throughout the change process (Talevich, 2026, p. 41). Because CCM acquires two or more people for individuals to be effectively working together towards the wanted goal, they need to be affected by three different areas, which are direction, alignment and commitment (Talevich, 2026, p. 41). Direction means agreement on goals, alignment means the clarity of how the goal fits to the larger plan and commitment is how the employee feels responsible for the success of the tasks (Talevich, 2026, p. 41). The goal of the CCM is to get everyone working together understand what the needs of the different parts of the organization are and develop their skills in organizational change (Talevich, 2026, p. 43). CCM can also help develop the management skills through the involvement of the employees (Talevich, 2026, p. 43).

It is extremely important to note that there are multiple different strategies and models in change management, but the main point in all of them is to develop the organization in a way that it can reach the wanted goals. Strategic change management includes multiple elements that support the research questions, for example the development of society, culture, AI, worlds situation, economy and joining Nato. With strategic change management it is possible to look at thoroughly how the organization reacts to internal and external pressure and how the strategic choices change in time. This is important, because all the mentioned ways mentioned before cause pressure for the FDF, which forces the FDF to develop their personnel strategy and its structure so that the

organization will in the future be able to act in a way that the FDF is able to achieve the wanted goals.

2.4 Strategic Military HRM as a Capability System

The organization's talent management is crucial for the organization to achieve the best outcomes because skilled workforce is responsible for the organization's success (Ulrich et al, 2024, p. 4). Managing the talents of personnel is important for organization to be able to apply their skills in different and changing situations (Boga, 2023, p. 6). The personnel joining the military, usually go through a training period, where the necessary skills are acquired (Boga, 2023, p. 7). For talent management, an important part is also ensuring that the leaders have the necessary skills to lead the personnel and to ensure that the personnel can complete the tasks (Boga, 2023, p. 7). Talent as a resource is recognized in the strategy as control, learning, crisis prevention and resource integration, which means that talents need to be managed carefully and by attentive and knowledgeable leaders (Yu et al, 2022, p. 2).

Optimizing recruitment supports the organizations capabilities to get the wanted amount of personnel in the new changing environment (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 10). The different changes that affect the relations between the military and civilians directly affect recruitment and how efficiently it can be done (Goldenberg, 2022, p. 13). Militaries also have in a growing scope of focus on how the recruits will fit into the organization, and less in how much in their sets of skills and capabilities. This is because military finding recruits with essential skills is quite hard (Boga, 2023, p. 7). In the case of FDF, the recruiting process is different, as the whole age group is invited to being drafted and therefore in the recruitment process the possible personnel cannot be valued based on their already existing skills. The period of mandatory army service also is built to invite interested youth to apply for a paid position. By optimizing this recruitment process the FDF can ensure that the organisation has enough personnel.

Competency development offers the personnel the skills to complete tasks, which also affects the amount of stress of the personnel (Boga, 2022, p. 6). Personnel can complete their tasks according to the demanded standard when their capabilities and skills are developed to the hoped-for level which give the personnel the required competence (Yu et al, 2022, p. 5). The amount of HR flexibility is dependent on the level of competency that the personnel have (Ulrich, 2024, p. 6). HR flexibility supports organizational outcomes, for example customer outcomes (Ulrich et al, 2024, p. 6). Customer outcomes are not the most important part of the FDF's goals, but the effectiveness of HR flexibility also support the organizations' ability to react and complete critical tasks (Ulrich et al, 2024, p. 6). Emotional competence is found as a key factor between strategic HRM and organizational resilience (Yu et al, 2022, p. 2). Learning, reacting to crisis and early warning are the three most important competences in organizations resilience (Yu et al, 2022, p. 2). Developing the competencies supports the organization's ability to react and the level of resilience that the organization has. Developing this area is an important part of organization strategy to ensure that the organization to be able to work well in short- and long-term.

Employer branding as a concept means that the organization uses the brand they have as an employer to gain more competence and capable personnel, who are ready to commit to the organization (Reis et al, 2021, p. 2-3). Employer brand is formed to get the most skilled and capable employees who are fit to the organization (Reis et al, 2021, p. 18). The status as an employer also helps the organization to gain better foothold in the employee market, the FDF tries to have and positive brand as an employer, so that they can acquire personnel with the looked-for skills (Pääsikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 17-18). Strong employer brand supports the organizations goals, by attracting capable employees and helping the employees to commit to the organization (Reis et al, 2021, p. 14).

These four enable long-term capability development because they systematically build, sustain and renew the organization's personnel amount and capabilities. Talent

management ensures that the organization has leaders and personnel capable of learning, adapting and reacting to crises in short- and long-term (Yu et al, 2022, p. 2; Ulrich et al, 2024, p. 6). Recruitment optimization focuses on ensuring the amount of personnel, even during changes and possible crisis (Boga, 2023, p. 4). Competency development strengthens organizations' resilience by improving learning, crisis response and early warning capabilities (Yu et al, 2022, p. 2). Lastly, employer branding attracts skilled personnel, ensuring the long-term supply of competence required by the organization (Reis et al, 2021, p. 14). Together, these four areas can help the organization to create a working capability system that maintains readiness, adaptability and resilience.

From a strategic business development point of view, these four HRM areas function as strategic assets that help to shape the organization's ability to create value and execute strategy. Talent management aligns human capabilities with strategic goals, ensuring that the organization can change and find new solutions (Boga, 2023, p. 6). Recruitment optimization supports strategic growth by securing the amount and type of personnel fit for the planned future (Pääsesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 10). Competency development increases HR flexibility, enabling the organization to shift resources, adopt new tasks and improve the performance of the organization (Ulrich et al, 2024, p. 6). Lastly, employer branding strengthens the organization's competitive position in the employee market, improving its ability to attract skilled and capable personnel (Reis et al, 2021, p. 14). In strategic business development terms, these four work to enhance value creation, strategic adaptability and long-term organizational performance.

In a military organization such as the FDF, the four HRM elements operate differently compared to other organizations and strategic demands. Talent management focuses on developing leaders who are able to command, maintain discipline and ensure mission execution in high-risk environments (Boga, 2023, p. 5-6). Recruitment optimization is shaped by conscription and civilian and military relations, with the goal of securing sufficient amounts of personnel, because finding personnel with already existing skills has proven in earlier studies to be rather difficult (Boga, 2023, p. 7). Competency

development is critical in developing training, operational readiness and reducing stress to increase resilience in crisis situations (Boga, 2022, p. 6; Yu et al, 2022, p. 5). The FDF's employer branding supports voluntary service, recruitment and long-term commitment by positioning the organization as a credible and attractive employer (Reis et al, 2021, p. 2 and 18). In the military scene, and therefore also in the FDF, these four areas collectively ensure readiness, resilience and the ability to operate effectively in both normal situations and crisis conditions.

3 Finnish Defence Forces and Personnel Strategies

3.1 Finnish Defence Forces as a Research Context

As a great part of the political and societal build of it, the FDF as an organization affects the whole country of Finland. It is not only responsible for defending Finland in case of war, but it is also required to support other authorities and in other ways ensure peace in Finland and in other countries through NATO and peacekeeping (Puolustusvoimat, n.d.-d). The FDF plays a meaningful role in upholding global alliances and as part of the Finnish border system, shares a long border with Russia (Peltonen, 2017), a country, that is in 2026 in active war. This highlights the importance of the FDF and Finland in general to the alliances, like the European Union and NATO (Peltonen, 2017). It is important to note that sharing border with Russia is in no way the only asset that Finland offers to the other countries within the alliances (Puolustusministeriö, 2025). Finland's NATO membership offers the alliance much better reach to the north and to The Baltic Sea. The importance and quality of the FDF is also reflected there, and the professionalism of the FDF is recognized (Peltonen, 2017; Puolustusministeriö, 2025). Making changes in the FDF's personnel strategy is important when considering transnational relations and alliances and to hold an adequate and relevant standard for the FDF's infrastructure, so it can best meet the demands of Finland and the allied nations.

It is also important to understand how joining NATO is affecting the FDF and the strategy that it is implementing. Joining NATO, geopolitical shifts and overview of data affect the FDF in number of different ways and therefore forces the FDF to change their strategy to adapt sought-for qualities to be ready to complete all the obligatory tasks on a desired level (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 5). Therefore, it is necessary to understand why and how these situations affect and change the FDF's personnel strategy (Ruuskanen, 2024).

The simplified organizational structure of the FDF is that the president of Finland is the Commander-in-chief (Turvallisuuspoliitikan tietopankki, 2025). The FDF is led by the Commander of the Finnish Defence Forces and they are supported by the Chief of the Defence Command, the Commander of the Army, the Commander of the Navy, the Commander of the Air Force and the Rector of the National Defence University (Turvallisuuspoliitikan tietopankki, 2025).

The FDF employs around 13000 people to fulfil around a thousand different tasks. All the employees need to have Finnish citizenship and speak Finnish fluently (Puolustusvoimat, 2020). The FDF employs around 4500 civilians and from the 4500, half have an academic degree. Also from the 4500 civilians about half are female (Puolustusvoimat, n.d.-a). Officers make up around a half of the FDF's personnel. Officers' work includes leading, planning and training. Job rotation and extensive training are a relevant part of the officers' work, as, for example, they must complete a physical test to be qualified to work as a soldier in the FDF (Puolustusvoimat, n.d.-a).

The FDF has been studied a lot, especially at the National Defence University of Finland. The studies have had multiple different topics, for example functional ability, cyberspace, NATO and Russia's development and its society effect on Russia's military (Puolustusvoimat, n.d.-b). Even though there is quite a lot of research already conducted, there was a clear gap in research on this topic.

3.2 Personnel Strategies as Data

As previously described, the main point in the FDF's personnel strategy is to ensure that FDF has enough personnel that has the skills, motivation and commitment that is required (Ruuskanen, 2024). These are required so the FDF can react quickly enough and complete all the defence-related tasks in Finland and in allied countries (Ruuskanen, 2024). The personnel strategy showcases in what ways the FDF is adapting to the new

changes and challenges that are happening because of this new erratically changing environment (Ruuskanen, 2024). In both the past and current strategy, the FDF explains what needs to be changed and how these changes are, in the end, going to be implemented immediately and in long-term (Ruuskanen, 2024).

3.2.1 Personnel Strategy of 2015

The beginning of the FDF's personnel strategy from the year 2015 includes a speech from the then current FDF commander, general manager Jarmo Lindberg (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 5). Lindberg highlights that everyone in the personnel needs to be ready to confront new challenges, even the ones that have not appeared yet (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 5). He also notes that during times of peace, the personnel in the FDF creates the basis of Finland's defence and during war the reserve is the main force of the FDF, therefore the training, voluntary work and improving individuals' readiness is important, because it affects these areas (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p.5). In the speech the general also states that the FDF is a good spirited and well together working organization, that holds openness, valuing each other, trust and communication as its core strengths (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 5). Trust between personnel and helping each other support success and communication makes it possible to develop personnel throughout feedback (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 5).

After the speech the strategy highlights different changes that happen in society that also affects the FDF (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 6). These include international dependency between countries, Finland's weakened economical state that affects for example how much can be paid to the personnel and how much can be used for training, population and its development, societies polarisation and working together with authorities (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 6). The strategy also goes through how the values of youth and society has changed and how it affects the FDF

(Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 7-8). Also, the development of technology affects how wars are going to be fought and how it affects the jobs that the FDF can offer. Lastly on this chapter there is noted how learning and skill development has changed with the new type of jobs (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 7-8).

The strategy also talks about what are the wanted states and strategical goals that the FDF has. The strategy also goes through how these are going to be achieved and what is essential for it to be successful (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 10-13). Also, the strategy goes through what are its main values and what are the values that are expected from the personnel (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 10-13). In chapter four the number of personnel and its structure is shown. After that the different ways that the personnel are going to be acquired and gotten to commit to the FDF and its goals is explained (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 14-17). The strategy also dabbles in the personnels skills and functional capabilities and how they are going to be developed, as well as in how management and working is going to be done (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 14-17).

This old strategy explains how the FDF plans to get the best and most skilled personnel in the future (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 20-22). It goes systematically through how the personnel structure is created and how it is planned (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 20-22). Then it goes to show how the recruiting process works and how job rotation is used to teach and develop personnel and their skills to the desired level (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 20-22). After that it is shown how the hired personnel are trained to ensure that they can complete their tasks (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 27-30). The strategy also goes through how the personnel's functional capability is developed and how the morale of the personnel is kept high (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 27-30).

3.2.2 Personnel Strategy of 2024 (2030+)

The personnel strategy in many a way resembles the old strategy, as the model and aim is the same. The new strategy from the year 2024 shows clear goals and development plan, so that the FDF is going to be able to have enough personnel with sought-for skills and commitment in short- and long-term in a similar manner as the previous strategy (Puolustusvoimat, 2024). The change in environment and society, challenges the FDF to continuously judge and proactively develop its personnel and its training plan (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 7). The personnel strategy is made towards conscripts and employees, meaning the whole personnel (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 7).

The beginning of the strategy the commander of the FDF, as in the previous one, general Timo Kivinen makes a small speech where he mentions that the safety situation in Europe and Finland is hard to predict and it is not probable that the safety situation is going to quickly change for the better (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 5). Kivinen also talks about how joining NATO and the development of society affects the mission of the FDF and the personnel (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 5). He also states that the point of the personnel strategy is to map the important changes that influence the development of the personnel and target state (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 5). The strategy gives the idea that the FDF is going to be a strong and united organization in the future as well (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 5).

In the first chapter, change factors in the environment are elaborated upon and it's explained how they affect the FDF's work (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 8). Especially it highlights that the line between conflicts and normal life has been diminished and predicting problems and conflicts is more difficult (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 8). The changes affect the whole society's ability to deal with crisis, which means that the FDF needs to be able to work well together with other authorities (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 8). Making an alliance with NATO causes the FDF and its

personnel to work in international field more than before (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 8). Also, joining NATO causes the FDF to have some new responsibilities and tasks that need to be completed on a certain level (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 8). The FDF needs personnel with different skills and are willing to serve the FDF. The development of women's voluntary conscription and acquiring more women into the personnel serves this exact need (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 9). The growingly multicultural environment affects the leadership styles and how the individuals need to be treated (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 9). Development of technology, for example AI and robotics change the need for personnel. Also, information is easier to acquire, which also affects decision making and management (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 10). Lastly the growing standard of skill needed causes more need to training and developing the personnel. The polarisation of the population makes it more difficult for the FDF to recruit the top people for the jobs (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 10).

In the second chapter, the strategy goes to explain what the basis of the personnel strategy is (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p.12-13). Firstly the point is in the values that are expected of the personnel and the from the FDF, for example patriotism, professional competence, righteousness, responsibility, trustworthiness and co-operation (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p.12-13). After that the focus is on the target state and how it can be accomplished. The main points of it are the quantity, quality and commitment of the personnel (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p.12-13). Last part of this chapter goes through the things that needs to be developed (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 13-14).

The last chapter is about policies in the personnel strategy, like how the amount of personnel and structure can be developed to ensure the capability to complete tasks. Next the strategy talks about how the availability of the personnel and how personnel can be acquired (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 16-17). The strategy also focuses on how to make the jobs and conscription as comfortable as possible for all the personnel

(Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 16-17). The last parts are about how the FDF can get the personnel to commit more to values and missions, how the skills and capabilities can be developed and lastly how to maximize the functional capacity (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 19-21).

3.3 Differences Between the FDF and Civilian Organizations

The FDF notices how society and the values in it change and how it affects personnel and recruiting new personnel (Ruuskanen, 2024). As mentioned before the personnel strategy also changes its ways to better acknowledge individuals' values and preferences (Ruuskanen, 2024). The FDF has general service regulations that is based in Finish law. The regulation gives the conscripts clear guidelines how they need to act during the conscription period and when they need to be present (Puolustusvoimat, 2017, p. 7). This is different from civilian organization, because they are not bound by law to be present on certain days (Rosado et al, 2019, p.130). The FDF can focus more on the recruited personnel that comes from the conscription period, because the conscripts have been evaluated during that period and therefore when hiring them, the FDF can ensure that they have similar values, for example patriotism and resilience (Ruuskanen, 2024). The most important resource that organizations have are the personnel (Rosado et al, 2019, p.130). This influences military and civilian organizations and the FDF, because all the organizations need personnel to be able to function on the wanted level.

Employee loyalty is extremely important for the organizations success and therefore making personnel stay committed and happy inside the organization should be a high priority (Nadeak & Naibaho, 2020, p. 261). The market for good employees is very competitive and that's why organisations need to try to make employees motivated and feel valued (Nadeak & Naibaho, 2020, p. 273). The loyalty of the employees is the best asset to organizations and the best way to develop their performance (Nadeak & Naibaho, 2020, p. 273). For the FDF conscripts are mandated by law to be committed for maximum

of one year and professional soldiers do not have as many possibilities for other places to work, so creating loyalty is not as hard for the FDF in these situations. Anyhow the civilian personnel and recruiting new professional soldiers for the FDF requires more effort to make the FDF seem like a good place to work.

Leadership is important in situations where team or personnel is lead to situations where information, time or other resource are limited or enemy soldiers causing pressure (Sylwestrzak, 2024, p. 541). This means that leaders are not always able to make the best decision (Sylwestrzak, 2024, p. 541). This is different from civilian organization, because their consequences from making the wrong decision, won't have a dire consequence (Sylwestrzak, 2024, p. 532). Soldiers and authorities have faced new challenges that are based on the purpose of their service and responsibility (Sylwestrzak, 2024, p. 532). Commanding is a way of using personnel as a resource and should be considered as a form of management where the individuals actions affect lot more people and subordinates (Sylwestrzak, 2024, p. 534). In civilian organization individuals' choices can have a great impact, but in military situation leaders' decisions, carry a lot more pressure.

The FDF also trains leaders form the conscripts so there are capable military leaders in the reserve. Because there are leaders and other personnel in the reserve maintaining their capabilities and ability to function is extremely important for the FDF in long-term (Ruuskanen, 2024). This is something that civilian organization do not have to consider at least in the same scale. Training reservist so former personnel is not realistic for many organizations, because when civilian stops working the organization does not usually train or maintain their capabilities.

The area in which an organization works doesn't matter, as attracting and recruiting employees with the wanted skills is the main issue (Rosado et al, 2019, p. 139). Talent management is a long process that starts when an employee is hired and ends when the employee exits the organization (Rosado et al, 2019, p. 139). This is very important especially in military organizations, because the career and working conditions in military

both mean pretty much full commitment and loyalty (Rosado et al, 2019, p. 139). In the FDF this does not affect conscripts in a similar standard as professional soldiers. Conscripts have to be committed for maximum of year and as reservist during extra training. This is different compared civilian organization, where the commitment is not on the same level and there are multiple different organizations that similar skills of the individual can be used. This does also mean that the civilian personnel in the FDF are able to change the organization easily, compared to conscripts and professional soldiers.

The FDF has published a book called "leaders handbook" (fin. Johtajan käsikirja), which goes through how management should be handled in different situations (Puolustusvoimat, 2021, p. 9). The point of the book is guiding the leading of personnel and the work environment while offering support to the conscripts that are going through the leadership courses (Puolustusvoimat, 2021, p. 9). In the first part of the book the tells what management is as a phenomenon (Puolustusvoimat, 2021, p. 9). The second part goes through how people can be lead through with transformational leadership (Puolustusvoimat, 2021, p. 9). Third part talks about how leadership should be done in the state of emergency and what is important in those scenarios (Puolustusvoimat, 2021, p. 9). In the last part work environment management and the responsibilities of the managers is gone through (Puolustusvoimat, 2021, p. 9). Management and leadership are common in most of organizations but teaching leadership inside the organization is rare, which makes the FDF different in this case form the civilian organizations.

4 Methodology

For the research approach and data collection in this thesis, I am going to use a qualitative method. The thesis is a qualitative case study into understanding how the personnel strategy has evolved in a specific organization, in this case the FDF, from the point of view of, for example, long-term capability development. Qualitative content analysis is a highly systematic way of examining meaning in text. It asks the researcher to focus on selected aspects of meaning that relate to the research question (Schreier, 2013). Qualitative content analysis has been described as a three-stage process, where first the content is reduced meaning simplified, second the content is clustered and third it is abstracted. In the first stage, reducing, everything unnecessary is removed from the data and relevant phrases are sought in the material. Then the collected content is clustered to form in groups and similarities as well as differences are combined to form larger groups. This forms the basis of the study. After this, the collected content is abstracted, where the data relevant to the thesis is formed into theoretical concepts. (Tuominen & Sarajärvi, 2018, chapter 4.4.3).

The thesis will be written from the theoretical point of view of Strategic Business Development with the understanding of human resource management. Qualitative content analysis is generally suitable for complex phenomena. Here, strategic change in the military context is an institutional and singular case. Doing a systematic comparison between two strategic periods in relation to societal change is most useful through content analysis and the three-stage method is the clearest in this case. The materials and data are open documents, found in search engines and from the FDF own publications page. The data about the different strategies that help develop the organizations efficiency are going to be straight from the publications of the Defence Forces as well as guiding theories, openly accessed and peer-reviewed, from the field of SBD. Data collection is going to be done by analysing already existing data. This means that in this study there will not be interviews or surveys conducted.

The sources will be openly accessible information. The sources that are published by the FDF are all public and there will not be any sources that would require this thesis to be encrypted or hidden from the public. This thesis aims to find how strategic human resource management concepts and strategic business development perspectives fit together in the field of defence. Long-term capability development and strategic alignment are especially topics the thesis aims to explore. In the context of capability, in this thesis I sometimes refer to a “needed” or “required” level. This stands to mean an optimal situation where even in surprising or difficult situations, the FDF can complete all required tasks in time. For example, if there is a situation the FDF needs to deploy armed forces and personnel to meet requirements of a military operation or other security tasks, the needed or required level means that the FDF has enough capable personnel to handle everything without unnecessary harm to other ongoing operations.

4.1 Qualitative Case Study

Qualitative method is going to offer the study clear information about the best ways to deal with the change and how do they affect the FDF personnel strategy and strategy. In a qualitative study there is a lot of data about the different changes that are happening in the world.

Using a qualitative method in this study offers the possibility to figure out reasons why and how the FDF needs to change their personnel strategy. The different changes in society that are talked about in this thesis are easier to understand through data and already existing research. These topics are also quite difficult to quantify because of the subject follows human actions and how it can be used to gain the greatest outcomes and reach the wanted goals. The research follows a deductive-inductive hybrid approach. While the analysis is guided by existing theoretical frameworks in SBD and

HRM, the qualitative content analysis allows for new themes to emerge directly from the FDF's strategic documents.

The qualitative method offers a way to explain how changes can create better outcomes in the future and offer the FDF better long-term capability. There is also quite a lot of data that has already been researched that works with different changes and how does these changes affect society. Understanding how the changes affect society creates the possibility to work with the data to understand how these methods can be used to optimize and develop the FDF's personnel strategy in the short and long-term.

In the first stage, the strategies were systematically read through, simplified and content was focused on the things relevant for the research questions. This reduction produced a table of comparison across different similarities, noticeable differences and repetitive dimensions mentioned, such as personnel volume, competence, leadership, societal changes, well-being, talent-management and international alliances. These quotes were then in the second stage clustered into groups by the thematics already mentioned. In the third stage these quotes, and thematic words were grouped into thematic groups of similarities and differences between the two strategies. The main themes that were formed from the comparisons were:

- 1) From national stability to alliances and strategic agility
- 2) From workforce management to strategic talent competition and
- 3) From physical training to holistic, future oriented capability building.

4.2 Data

The data used in this paper consists of already existing and public data. The most used singular data source is the FDF's published personnel strategies and other public documents that deal with the strategy and changes in it. The specific descriptions of the

personnel strategies and their structures as well as contents is presented in chapters 3.2.1 and 3.2.2. All the data used has been accessed in the year 2026 and retrieved from the FDF's own website.

The contents of the data that are analysed further in chapter 5 were selected with the scope of what is important and how well it answers to the research questions presented in chapter 1. The data is readily accessible for the public. For this study, no interviews, questionnaires or otherwise newly created data was gathered. There were no limitations, for example incomplete data or noticeable biases. The sources aside from the publications of the FDF, was academic and included multiple already conducted academic studies.

4.2.1 Ethical Considerations and Data Accessibility

All the data used in this thesis is public and open to anyone. Some of the sources are from the university of Vaasa or the University of Helsinki online library, which might cause the need for student ID, but the data itself is still accessible from other sources publicly. In this study there aren't any interviews or other participation from people, nor does it investigate the inner workings or strategies of the FDF, so there aren't ethical problems with consent, anonymity or confidentiality. None of the used material used in this study have any personal information or other information that would need to be noted separately. I've consulted the FDF by sending them an email concerning research permits. Sometimes, the FDF requires for researchers to seek research permits, but as this research data is public FDF publications and the thesis does not study restricted materials in any way, there are no supposed problems.

5 Analysis of the FDF's Personnel Strategies

The theoretical framework from chapter 2.4 helps to conceptualize strategic HRM in military situations as a capability system that has four areas, which are talent management, recruitment optimization, competency development and employer branding. These four areas are the basis for short- and long-term capability development and work as a framework for this analysis as the lens that the FDF's personnel strategies are going to be looked through.

Using this framework makes it possible to compare how the strategy from 2015 differs from the strategy from the 2025 and how these strategies have developed their ways of working and capability to react to change. The analysis focuses mostly on how each of the strategies uses the four elements of the framework, when looked at the three subjects' areas that the analysis has been thematically sorted into after reducing, clustering and abstracting the findings.

5.1 From National Stability to Alliance Focused Strategic Agility

In the old strategy it is stated that safety environment, crisis diversity and changes in global scale and society require the FDF to change and develop (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 5), meanwhile the new strategy states that even though Finland is part of NATO, it does not change the fact that the main objective of the FDF is to defend Finland (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 5). The main goal of the FDF has remained the same in both strategies, but maintaining the level of security has become more complicated. This is, according to the new strategy, because of the new changing global security environment and NATO membership. Because of the changes that have happened, the FDF needs to ensure that their strategy can be used in a way that supports their goals of maintaining stability and resilience of the state of Finland, and that they have good enough capabilities to be able to work in the required level as long as possible.

The strategic change reflects capability development and improved recruiting process, with which the FDF can support these essential changes (Yu et al, 2022, p. 5; Goldenberg, 2022, p. 13). This means that even though there have been multiple systemic changes such as joining NATO, it does not change the main mission that FDF has.

The main goal of the FDF is in all the situations to ensure citizen safety and governments freedom (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 13). The new strategy focuses on the fact that the FDF has the conditions to have the same basic reasons for armed forces as in the older strategy, but is also affected by largely different political, diplomatic, economic and information- and cyber-affects. This creates the need for capability to prevent, act and if needed defend in different environments (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 8). The new strategy also mentions that the FDF is prepared to defend all the countries in the alliance with the other countries (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 5). Defending other countries is not highlighted in the old strategy like this, as Finland was not part of the alliance then, but the point of Finland needing to be able to answer for the safety of other countries addition to Finland is one of the greatest changes that show in the strategy. The need for skilled personnel for the FDF is thus more talked about in the new strategy, as the growing amount of change in the environment and the alliance with NATO. For the FDF to be able to acquire desired skills and an adequate amount of personnel to answer to the systemic changes, they need to implement all the areas of the framework inside their strategy. With this the FDF can develop their organization's ability to function in all situations.

The need for better recruiting processes and a stronger employer brand is growing because of the similarly growing need for personnel, and these supports the organization to get the best employees (Reis et al, 2021, p. 1). The need for skilled personnel grows more now that Finland joined the military alliance NATO, which is the strongest military alliance in the world (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 5). Being dependent for other countries is now more common as well, as economical and energy networking between countries is growing (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 6). Even though

the old strategy also talks about how Finland is, in a way, dependent on other countries, the NATO membership creates a new different way of being so. The FDF's ability to defend Finland is not reliant on the alliance, but the change of also being responsible to help other countries inside the alliance creates new needs that the old strategy did not have to consider. The alliance with NATO causes the FDF to work even more closely with other countries and therefore joining NATO makes internationalization faster (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 8). Because of the NATO membership the FDF needs to work more closely with other militaries and therefore develop their strategy in a way that enables it. The amount of different responsibilities NATO membership brought causes the need to develop the personnel strategy even more from the old strategy.

Working with other countries makes it more difficult for the personnel to complete all their mandatory tasks, which means that capability development is important to ensure the looked-for skills that can ensure capable working with the other countries (Yu et al, 2022, p. 3). The need for the skilled personnel also relies a lot on the ability to recruit the said personnel to the work assignments (Goldberg, 2022, p. 13). With quicker internationalization, the economical and energy networking dependency is an even more apparent problem for Finland and the FDF. Because of the new added responsibilities that the new strategy needs to work with also directly grows the need for new personnel compared to the old strategy.

Developing the employer brand is the basis for gaining new skilled personnel, as it supports the organizations ability to seem like a worthy place to work (Reis et al, 2021, p. 1-2) and therefore essential part of the FDF's strategy, because new responsibilities require more personnel, communication skills and capability to work in multinational environments (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 8) The growing amount of multinational military cooperation require the personnel to have good communication skills and understanding multicultural environment (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 6). Because of the growing need for personnel, mostly because of the new skills and personnel, the FDF need to focus on the recruitment process and how to use it to gain more skilled

personnel (Goldberg, 2022, p. 13). As mentioned before, Finland joining NATO has caused the need for these to be of even higher priority. The growing number of multinational cooperation that was mentioned in the old strategy has grown even higher now that Finland is part of NATO and therefore the need for developing the employer brand and recruitment process is growing. This means that even though the multinational cooperation was something that had to be considered in the old strategy, it is more important part of the new strategy.

For the FDF to be able to create personnel that can perform in the desired level, they need to take part in multinational exercises and crisis management operations (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 11). Taking part in multinational exercises and other operations is easier now that Finland is part of the alliance, but at the same time the need for the skilled personnel that can work in multicultural environment grows. Therefore, hired personnel needs to have all the essential skills for international missions (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 5). This means that growing multinational environment affects the FDF's ways of work and limits the possible scope of new skilled personnel (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 10). In the planning of the amount of personnel, need is counted by adding together the personnel needed for training, planning, readiness tasks and for NATO (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 16), as well as the amount of temporary personnel is going to be regulated with the standards that NATO has given (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 16). The NATO membership causes the need for the personnel in a whole new way, so the strategy has needed to change for it to offer the possibilities to acquire the required personnel. Both strategies were considering the amount of personnel, but the new strategy has a clearer requirement for personnel they need, because of the NATO regulations.

The planning for the amount of personnel is difficult and there are clearly multiple things that need to be factored in. As mentioned before, the need for personnel is affected by the multinational environment and even more now that Finland is part of NATO. As the new strategy states, joining the alliance offers more job opportunities and even requires

people to work internationally (Pääsikunnan henkilöstösasto, 2024, p. 9). Different capabilities are desired from the personnel now that there is more work internationally and cooperation with other countries. This means that for the FDF to have possibilities to complete the tasks the capabilities and psychological capacities of the personnel need to be developed (Goldenberg, 2022, p. 12-13).

5.2 From Internal Training of Personnel to Scouting Personnel from Outside of The Organization

The personnel hired in the organization is the basis of safety in peace times (Pääsikunnan henkilöstösasto, 2015, p. 5). The old strategy states that hired personnel's skills is ensured by making it feasible to learn in the job, and through work rotation, continuous training and pre-planned tasks (Pääsikunnan henkilöstösasto, 2015, p. 12). Supporting the recruiting and developing the skills of the personnel is important for these reasons. For the FDF to ensure the safety of personnel requires the leaders inside the organization to be able to also manage the personnel in a way that enables the personnel to work in a way that increases the organizations capacity to react to risks (Yu et al, 2022, p. 4). Reacting to risks is an especially important theme in a military context. This in turn shows in that the old strategy focuses on the skills of personnel and tries to ensure that the capabilities of the personnel is on the needed level. From the perspective of talent management, this means that the FDF supports the development of the skills and capabilities of the personnel in a way that makes it achievable for the organization to use the talent in a way that supports its goals (Yu et al, 2022, p. 14).

The current main goal of the FDF is to ensure that there is enough skilled and committed personnel and that they can complete all required tasks in Finland and internationally (Pääsikunnan henkilöstösasto, 2024, p. 5). Unlike the old strategy the new one notes that the Finnish population structure is not build in a way that personnel can all the time be actively increased (Pääsikunnan henkilöstösasto, 2024, p. 5). This creates a

challenge for the FDF to get enough skilled personnel. For the FDF to get adequate amounts of workers, they need focus on the recruitment process and how the organizations look like in the employee markets (Goldberg, 2022, p. 13). The point that the population structure does not able the FDF to increase the amounts constantly, shows that the new strategy faces problems that the old strategy did not face.

Urbanization causes inequality and these together affect the availability of workforce outside growth and regional centres (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 9). The old strategy on the other hand says that the amount of money that is available to use for personnel is not enough, which affects the competitiveness in the job markets for skilled civilian personnel (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 6). These two problems create more need for talent management and for ensuring that the personnel have strong enough mental capacity for them to be able to function adequately (Goldeberg, 2022, p. 6). As in HRM, ensuring that the personnel are able keep their functioning capability is important but relies heavily on management and the skills of the personnel that are hired (Reis et al, 2021, p. 2). The new strategy states that the personnel that work to maintain and develop ability to function are going to be added (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 22). So, in the new strategy the need for personnel that can help personnel work better and have the capability to function is valued. This supports the idea that in the new strategy developing the personnel is taken more seriously compared to the old strategy. It also means that the new strategy includes a stronger focus for recruitment optimization and talent management, and without these, the FDF's personnel needs could not be achievable.

There are multiple ways of developing the capacity and talent of the personnel. The old strategy states that transmitting the required skills to personnel means that the FDF needs to train all the personnel in training exercises (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 11). The new strategy notes that the capabilities of the personnel need to be developed for FDF to be able to complete all the required, mandatory tasks (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 10).

Soldier and civilian recruiting ensure that the FDF has enough skilled personnel (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 14), while the new strategy also shows that the quality of the personnel in the target state is developed continuously to achieve sufficient capabilities and commitment (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 13). Talent management offers the organization the possibility to optimize the usage of the talent and therefore, be ready to complete the required tasks (Yu et al, 2022, p. 15). The personnel also need to have the skills and willingness to be able to deal with all the technology and wanted tasks successfully (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 13). Both strategies agree that the personnel need to be trained and their skills developed to get to the level of capability. In the optimal state, the FDF has enough personnel with good capabilities and willingness that all the tasks during peace or crisis can be completed without any problems (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 10; Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 13). For the skills and capacity of the personnel to be in an adequate state, the HRM needs to focus on the possibility to develop the skills and offer change to strengthen the mentality of the personnel. This means that the wanted state of the FDF personnel is the same in both strategies and it requires the FDF to focus on developing their strategy in a way that supports individuals' skills and mental strength.

From the perspective of the optimizing recruitment there is multiple reasons why it is important, for example, the amount of personnel needed for exceptional times is correlated with the threat, also the amount of hired personnel is scaled to ensure that the exceptional times personnel can meet the needs (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 13). The importance of employer talent and recruitment is high in this situation, because without those the FDF would not be able to get enough personnel for all the tasks that support the main goal of facilitating stability. This means that the amount of personnel of the FDF to be on the wanted level is high, so conscription is one of the only ways to get the numbers wished for (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 6). As the new strategy states conscription stays as the basis for Finland's defence solution and offers precondition to having enough personnel during potential war. It also creates good

place for the FDF to recruit new professional soldiers and civilian employees (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 8). The old strategy notes that the main group for recruiting is the conscripts, because during the period they are given a lot of information about the FDF's different jobs both in civilian and professional soldier positions (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 21). Because conscription is critical for recruitment, at least according to the strategies, means that optimizing it is extremely important for the FDF. For the FDF to create as positive a picture as conceivable of the organization as an employer the employer brand also needs to be developed (Reis et al, 2021, p. 3). With recruitment optimization and a positive employer brand, the FDF can acquire more skilled personnel after individuals' conscription period.

Most of the conscripts find the service positive and confidence inducing (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 7), but at the same time individuals will, for own interest, challenge the conscription, because in a society not completing conscription is seen more acceptable (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 7). In the quickly changing environment individuals' continuous self-development is highlighted and the FDF personnel systems agility need to be increased (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 5). By self-development and the agility of the personnel system the conscription period can be more inviting for young adults. Also, because the reconciliation of family, work and free time is going to be developed to ensure that families do not suffer because of the work (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 20). This can also be developed through employer brand and how the FDF seems to potential employees/conscripts. The willingness to work in the FDF grows for the conscripts that are soon joining the reserve. The FDF also, creates possibilities for individuals to develop their personal capabilities and readiness, for example with the physical health is supported by offering the equipment and economical bonuses towards movement (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 22). By focusing on the individual's health, the FDF once again grows the attractiveness in the job markets. This means that by focusing on employer brand and recruitment optimization the FDF can find more capable personnel that are willing to commit to the organization.

Developing the employer brand can be done in multiple ways and it can support the FDF's plan of recruiting from the individuals whose conscription period has ended (Reis et al, 2021, p. 13-14). Conscription makes soldiers that are aware of the reasoning of the defence forces and they can make ethical decisions (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 19). Recruiting the new personnel from conscripts is smart, because at the end of their service they have quite a lot of knowledge and offering clear career paths at that point can motivate them to apply. For the conscripts to be willing to apply to work in the FDF after the conscription is highly connected to the employer brand that has been created during the conscription period.

The new strategy talks about developing the voluntary conscription of women and getting more women to join the conscription, supports the goal for different skills and insights inside the FDF (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 9). The old strategy states that the FDF gives women information before the draft to make it easier for them to apply to the conscription (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 18). So, the number of women in conscription is hoped to grow (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 16). For the FDF to get more women to contribute to the conscription period the employer brand is important and optimizing the amount of information that the women get before the draft. Focusing more on the women as conscripts is smart and offers the FDF change to gain more skilled and capable personnel. Also, by getting more women to join the service the FDF grows the amount of reservist that they have, therefore gaining a better situation to potential war or other crisis scenario.

The multiculturalism, globalization and the possibility to work abroad is said to weaken the appreciation towards the country (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 7). Multiculturalism also influences the FDF's religion and food restrictions. The conscription period is a good way to integrate immigrants to the society and countries values (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 7). This means that focusing on the potential food restrictions and religions the FDF can make the conscription period more inviting

and even helpful for the immigrants. Even though the FDF can take steps in creating more inviting environment, the weakened appreciation towards Finland affects the commitment and willingness of the conscripts and other personnel, which means that it can also affect negatively on the FDF capability to get the skilled personnel to work for them. The new strategy focuses on how to use conscription period to integrate the immigrants to Finnish society, which is something that the old strategy does not mention. The old strategy focused more on the problems that multiculturalism brings to the FDF, instead of focusing on how to use it as a strength like the new strategy.

The new strategy highlights the importance of the capabilities of the reservists and how they need to be used for it the FDF work as efficiently and flexibly as they can (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 5). On the other hand, the old strategy mentions that the reservist skills are based on conscription periods training and voluntary work (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 5). With talent management the FDF can support the development of skills of the personnel and ensure that the reservist is used in the most effective way (Reis et al, 2021, p. 2). As the old strategy states reservists are crucial for the potential war time. For the reservist to be ready and capable to work in the organization, enough people are needed in reserve and in review exercises (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 14). Both strategies highlight the need of the reservists and how they play a big part in managing tasks in crisis situations. Also, the usage of the reservist and how it should be developed and improved for the FDF to enhance their skills and be in functional condition, is clearly talked about in both strategies. With the usage of the capacity development and talent management the usage of the reservist can be optimized.

New technology affects the need for skilled personnel, which means that the FDF needs to compete for the employees that have certain capabilities (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 7). The development of technology and social media creates more skills to young people and can be used in development in the teaching and learning (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 8). As the new strategy states the development

of technology offers new opportunities for communication and interactions (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 9). Both strategies react to the need of skilled personnel that can work with the new technology, but with fast-developing technology and AI, the new strategy does need to focus on it more than the old strategy. With technology the personnel can be trained different ways, but it also means that the personnel need to have certain capabilities that weren't necessary before. To ensure that the personnel is skilled enough, the development of skills is important and the management of the talent that already exists in the organization (Yu et al, 2022, p. 2).

The person's ability to function and capabilities are the most important criteria to get the operative requirements (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 15). The ability to work in different environments acquire more personnel with the necessary skill sets (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 8). Developing the personnel structure makes it possible to have the skilled personnel (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 14). The new strategy notes that the FDF needs personnel with different skills, capabilities and insights that are united with willingness to fight for Finland and, when required, other countries as a part of the alliance (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 9). To get the specific personnel the FDF needs to focus on the recruitment process and how the organization looks as an employer.

The new strategy states that permanent job and reasonable living is not enough to ensure committed and skilled personnel (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 9). The old strategy mentions that the FDF can offer long-term employment periods, that also has the opportunity to work from abroad (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 7), as well as the new strategy that says that the development of technology and digitalization has created opportunities to work more freely not dependent on time or place (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 9). The fact that both strategies circle the fact that working can be done remotely is interesting, because the ability to work remotely has been growing more in the past few years. The old strategy talks about that the willingness to move because of work is lower than before and therefore the FDF needs to

focus on work cycle and develop terms of employment (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 6). This means that employees value more the ability to develop oneself in the work life, which is a good possibility to for the FDF to commit the personnel to the organization (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 8).

Because the society's values are more diverse and individualism is growing, people are more likely to find jobs that are personally fit for them, so that they can use their skills and feel that they are valued (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 9). As the new strategy states, ability to develop, different tasks and good working environment are more important when looking for an employer (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 9). Because of ability to develop and good working environment are growing priority for employees the FDF needs to focus more on the employer brand, because it supports these and makes the FDF seem like a good place to work (Reis et al, 2021, p. 1-2). Routine jobs can be disappearing, because of technology and AI, but at the same time more jobs are created because of these developments (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 10), which means that the technology causes new jobs, but those jobs require different sets of skills that the jobs that the technology took away did. The commitment of the personnel is more important, because of the higher level of competition for capable employees between organizations (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 10). The new strategy says that the FDF is going to focus on three areas when trying to hire capable personnel. These are ensuring that the work and conscription are inviting, that the FDF gives a positive picture as an employer and that suitable employees are hired (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 17-18). These three ideas work well with the idea of developing employee brand and support the FDF in trying to find enough skilled personnel to complete all tasks and also relate to current studies on long-term capability development.

The fast change in the environment causes the need for quick adapting and learning. Learning needs to happen cost-efficiently, safely and in realistic conditions (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 10). The new strategy focuses more on the changes that

are happening in the environment and globally, compared to the old strategy. The new strategy also mentions how the changes need to be done, for it not to have negative effect on the personnel. Of course, the old strategy also mentions changes and how the FDF tries to act when they happen, but not as much as the new strategy, because the changes weren't as realistic problem during the making of the old strategy as it was in the making of the new strategy.

For this, the required assets, like simulations, have been acquired so that the personnel can train with them to ensure their development and capabilities (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 20-21). New learning and teaching methods are going to be used in the FDF to ensure the skills and capabilities of the personnel. The training is also created specifically to different groups of personnel (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 21). This supports the idea of developing the personnel's talents and ensuring their ability to function in the future. To demonstrate, in this day and age, skills in data control and AI technology are exceedingly looked for from the personnel (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 10). The capabilities of the personnel are to be developed by reacting to changes, adding more AI-related training, and developing skills in reading data accordingly (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 20). For the FDF to have enough individuals to use the new technology and to learn with the technology it is important to optimize the recruitment process and ensure that there is a working talent management in the organization. With work rotation, the FDF ensures that the organization has the skills and personnel is developing itself professionally (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 14). Individuals' performance needs to be in a state that supports the FDF's current situation (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 5). The old strategy mentions that every FDF worker has a specific task for potential war, which all require specified skills, functional capability and experience (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 14). For this, their capabilities are not developed only for upkeeping activity in the personnel, but also in doing so for reservists. Though both strategies clearly focus on developing the skills of personnel to fit the new tasks, the new strategy has a clear, more detailed plan on how to proceed with the changes. In the making of the new strategy,

technology and AI are stated to be used more effectively, so the need for skilled personnel is therefore higher and focus on also upkeeping activity of the reservists is held up front.

The FDF states also that it will focus on five development areas, which are the amount and structure, availability, commitment, capabilities, ability to function of the personnel (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 14). Also, the new strategy notes that in the coming years the FDF needs to focus on personnels availability, commitment, ensuring capabilities and lastly ensuring individuals ability to function and well-being (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 5). Because of these focuses the FDF can create stronger personnel that are more capable of handling differing situations. The old strategy mentions that civilians need for safety and patriotism, affects the need for developing personnels skills constantly (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 6). The work is in growing amount depended on creativity, independence and readiness to change (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 8), which means that the FDF needs to focus on these areas more, when developing their training and personnel. To ensure these areas the FDF needs to create better competency and talent management. If the FDF focus more on how the individuals feel inside the organisation, the easier it is to get the personnel to commit to the organisation.

The personnel strategy maps changes, which are used to create clear development plan to improve personnel structure and acquiring the wanted state (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 5). Changes are made in a timetable that is both smart and viable for the FDF. Handling the change and adjusting to the changes rely on the personnels commitment (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 5). The strategy shows the FDF answers to the changes in the environment and how the actions are used to ensuring capable personnel (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 7). The quickly changing work tasks and expiring information makes it difficult to predict what skills are needed from the personnel (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 8). The new strategy mentions that in the complicated environment capabilities are the best way to succeed and

the earlier skills are quickly expiring and therefore skills need to be developed constantly (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 10). To ensure that the changes can be made in time and in the wanted level the FDF needs to focus on talent management, because with it they can optimize the working capability of the personnel (Reis et al, 2021, p. 1-2).

One of the points of developing the personnel strategy is to support the work of leaders and their subordinates (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 17). The need for capable leaders stays and they need to be able to plan and lead working even though the amount of self-working grows (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 9). Good talent management supports the different ways that the leaders can help the personnel to function in the highest level viable and use their capabilities to achieve the organizations goals (Yu et al, 2022, p. 4). The new strategy states that the FDF needs to be able to confirm the capabilities in all the levels of personnel (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 10). In the target state the personnel feel like their jobs matter and that they are valued. Willingness to defend Finland is a value of high importance for the personnel. It is stated that the personnel sort of need to agree with the FDF's values as well as treat everyone with respect (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 13). The employer brand also supports these goals, as when focusing on the employer brand's development, the personnel's well-being and ability to develop themselves is high priority (Reis et al, 2021, p. 1-2).

5.3 From Physical Training to a Focus in Mental Well-being and Resilience

There are multiple things that require the personnel have a strong mental capacity and resilience to maintain the ability to function in the most desired way (Yu et al, 2022, p. 3). Uncertainty about environment, energy, knowledge and border security adds to the civilian's need for safety and patriotism (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 6) and thus have an effect on the need for mental strength of personnel of the FDF. The new

strategy focuses more on how Finland's safety environment is full of tension and hard to predict and how the difference between normal environment and military conflict is less clear (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 8). The uncertainty of this new environment causes the need for stable personnel and their talent. Using the existing talent in the most effective way, while maintaining their mental capacity, helps the FDF to complete all tasks as well as possible (Yu et al, 2022, p. 2).

Because the quality of leaders is never ready and needs to be constantly developed (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 5) and the capability of leaders is going to be viewed and ensured (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 20). This means that talents of the leaders need to be developed and maintained and possibly new capable leaders need to be hired, for this to be achievable the FDF needs to focus on talent management and optimizing recruitment (Reis et al, 2021, p. 2; Goldberg, 2022, p. 3). Leaders need to be able to react to problematic situations inside the FDF and they are responsible for intervening even in the hard situations (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 16). These points form the strategies give the impression that the quality of the leaders has changed and now it is more about sustaining the said changes rather than developing new ones, but the main point of the strategies stay the same, regarding the skills of the leaders.

The old strategy also talks about how the FDF need to create a supporting and developing work environment, to have professional personnel they and the FDF need to be seen as a valued employer so skilled individuals want to work in the organization (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 12). This is an important subject that the FDF needs to focus on, because in the new strategy it is stated that individuals' question more how authorities work if they feel like they have been treated wrongfully. Because of this development, personnel are required to have deeper legal understanding (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 10). The fact that individuals focus and notice more the things that are done wrong causes the need for the leaders in FDF to do everything carefully and in a correct manner. This relies strongly on employer brand and how developing it

the FDF's image as an employer can grow (Reis et al, 2021, p. 3-4). As there is clearly more pressure to seem like a good employer during the making of the new strategy, the need for developing employer brand is growing.

The responsibility for the society's safety shows in the FDF value base, which is founded on these values: patriotism, capability, fairness, responsibility, trustworthiness and cooperation (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 13). The values mentioned in the new strategy are the same as in the old strategy (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 12). The value base is measured for everyday work, decisions and solutions. This helps the personnel make ethical and responsible choices (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 13). Responsibility for societies safety is seen also seen in the FDF's value base (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 12). The value base in both strategies affect how the FDF works and how the personnel is treated inside the organization. As mentioned in the new strategy, the value base creates high requirements for the personnel and management (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 12). The fact that the values base has stayed the same in both strategies, means that the FDF values the same things even after multiple changes, throughout decades, in different environments and even after joining NATO. The values are important for the organization, for them to be able how they are willing to act.

Willingness to defend the country is tightly linked with changes in a society's environment and uncertainty (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 6). The societally growing focus on the uncertainty and the exceedingly thinning line between a normal situation and conflict can possibly affect the willingness to defend. Situations like that cause the FDF to focus more on how to ensure working personnel and how to prepare the personnel to deal with the changes that happen quickly. The competency development supports the personnels ability to complete the tasks in to reach the wanted goals (Yu et al, 2022, p. 5).

As the old strategy states the civilians' patriotism, personnels skills and commitment are basis for credible defence force (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 5) and to maintain patriotism conscription and reserve training need to be considered valuable in society (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 7). These are very important parts of the FDF's value basis and affects strongly on the level of commitment that the personnel have. The need and value of patriotism is also mentioned multiple times in the new strategy. For example, the strong patriotism of citizens, commitment of the conscripts and capabilities of the hired personnel, are the basis for the functioning defence system (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 5). This is pretty much the same in both strategies.

In this case, patriotism means putting the country before individuals own interest and having respect for earlier generations sacrifices (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 12). Patriotism is in both strategies highly valued and the effect it has on personnel is needed to ensure working and capable defence forces. Also, as stated in the old strategy, patriotism and conscripts' commitment support the conscription period (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 11). Supporting the conscription period also affects how civilians see the conscription and how inviting the FDF is an employer. For the FDF to be able to keep their personnel patriotic, they need to focus on making the personnel feel valued and that they are doing something that matters.

Capabilities are the skills, attitude and professionalism that can be used to achieve the wanted goals. It is also seen as high morale, control over the tasks and individual development (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 12; Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 13). Fairness means the equal and fair treatment of everyone, without any kind of bullying, discrimination or harassment. Fairness is a part of the FDF everyday activities (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 12; Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 13). Responsibility is seen in personnels commitment and willingness to complete all the given tasks in a wanted level to achieve the goals of the organization (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 12; Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 13). All of these are

pointed out in both strategies and can be developed by focusing on the different competencies and talents of the personnel.

Trustworthiness is seen in how the personnel acts in the working environment and how the individual completes all the given tasks (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 13; Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 13). Cooperation is a precondition to completing tasks and how the personnel support each other. The personnel's cooperation is important also when working together with other authorities and as a part of NATO (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 13; Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 13). Because the FDF works actively as part on multinational exercises and operations, cooperation is extremely important part of the value base and its importance has been highlighted (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 13). As mentioned before the value basis of FDF in both strategies are the same, which means that even after the changes in environment and globally the FDF has still the same priorities regarding their values and what is expected of the personnel. These values are also required to maintain the best level of competency inside the FDF and therefore they need to be developed.

Society's polarization adds to citizens' inequality. Inequality starts at a young age and shows clearly in conscripts, so it needs to be counted in strategy planning (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 6). The new strategy on the other hand says that populations polarization affects the recruiting for the needed tasks (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 10). Both strategies realize that the polarization affects the recruitment of personnel and need to be counted in as a factor. The old strategy states that, to lessen the inequality, the FDF needs to focus more on how to get conscript adapt to the service (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 6). In the new strategy it is stated that diversity creates new challenges for leadership (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 9). Equality and ability to notice diversity are the basis for getting the best use from individuals (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 9). This means that the new strategy highlights the same problem as the old strategy, which is that diversity challenges leadership and management, but as the new strategy says diversity can help the FDF to secure

skilled personnel. Diversity can cause problems for recruitment, but with developing it and the employer brand the FDF can work towards better personnel.

For the FDF to get the personnel to commit the FDF needs to have a good working environment, which can be acquired by open and respectful communication and intervening harassment or other inappropriate action (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 19). The new strategy also highlights that the tasks need to correspond to individuals' values and appreciations (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 9). One of the most important parts of employee happiness is the fact that FDF does not tolerate any kind of bullying or harassment. The basis of the action is equal treatment to everyone (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 19). These subjects are treated in the same way in both strategies and need to be focused on to create the best achievable employer brand, so that other individuals are willing to come and work for the FDF.

As the old strategy states, good working environment and cooperation create the basis for completing the wanted tasks (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 16). The working environment is extremely important for the FDF to have willing and skilful personnel so every task can be completed on the needed level. For the working environment to be on the wanted level, the FDF needs to develop the capabilities and competencies. With these, the personnel feel like they can develop their skills and therefore do something meaningful. The old strategy also mentions that the mental well-being and social function are maintained through ensuring a good working environment (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 29) and with the reward system the FDF motivates and tries to commit the personnel to the organization (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 29). It is smart of the FDF to use a reward system to get the personnel committed to the organization. In the new strategy, rewarding is mentioned, but not at the same level as in the old strategy, which means that it is not as high of priority anymore.

The society's ability to handle crisis requires that the capability from the whole society is used (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 14). In the FDF, every individual inside

the personnel is responsible for the tasks given to them and open communication (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 16). The FDF's HRM main point is to support individuals throughout the service and setbacks. Also, it can strengthen the personnel's ethical functions (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 29). The personnel need to be able to work together with each other and other authorities in different situations (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 8). The new strategy states that the ability to change between working groups and tasks are going to be made more conceivable (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 19). Also, in the future the FDF will be strong and coherent organization, where is a good spirit and positive organization culture (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 5). These changes require a lot of work, because to create positive employer brand all these parts need to be developed. With all these changes the FDF can create more welcoming and inviting work environment for all the personnel.

In changing situations, it is made sure that the personnel are treated fairly and equally. In the change situation currently used form of support, so that the personnel can adapt to the new situation (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 14). The new strategy also says that changes challenge the FDF's personnel- and that's why the training structure needs to be developed and critically analyzed continuously (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 7). The change in the battlefields causes the need for personnel to have stronger physical and mental health (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2015, p. 7). The change in the environment challenges the whole society's crisis resilience (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 8). As the new strategy mentions "to get to the target state and controlling the changes focus on individuals own actions which the FDF tries to support" (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 21). This means that the individuals' responsibility is also ensuring that everything is done well and they can complete all the tasks on the desired standard. The new strategy also says that comprehensive ability to function is supported by safety and risk management (Pääesikunnan henkilöstöosasto, 2024, p. 22). This means that the FDF has prioritized the individuals' capability to function especially mentally in the different situations.

6 Discussion

As reflected in the analysis, the FDF treats personnel strategy as a tool for capability-building and not as an administrative HR document. Both strategies, 2015 and 2024, show that decisions about personnel are made for long-time planning and are aligned with long-term defence planning for Finland. The change from internal training to a more external way of acquiring talents is typical for long-term capability development models. The 2024 strategy highlights unpredictability, hybrid threats and responsibilities that come from joining NATO, which shows that in this strategy the FDF notes capabilities such as adaptiveness, resilience, cooperation and skills of using technology. This aligns quite well with long-term capability theory where capabilities must be developed continuously and according to the changes in the environment.

These different capabilities are created through different plans. In 2015 the capabilities highlighted were foundational training, morale, job rotation and physical readiness. Whereas, in the 2024 plan, the plan is to highlight mental resilience, multicultural leadership, AI and technology and NATO-cooperation. This shows a path of capability where new capabilities are built on the old ones rather than just replacing them. In the context of the FDF, long-term capability planning means ensuring that the future of the organization is secure when it comes to the amount of skilled personnel in different domestic and international scenarios.

6.1 The Four Areas of a Capability System

The four areas of a long-term capability system are talent management, recruitment optimization, competency development and employer branding, which all are all used in both strategies (Boga, 2023, p. 6-7; Reis et al, 2021, p. 2-3; Ulrich et al, 2024, p. 4; Yu et al, 2022, p. 5). These are established to ensure an adequate level of capability and readiness in short- and long-term planning. These support the FDF's goal to be ready to act

in this fast-changing environment and acquire the best talent to the personnel of the organization.

Talent management is used in both strategies as a short-term and a long-term leadership capability. The strategy from 2015 emphasized discipline, readiness and traditional leadership, whereas the strategy from 2024 includes multicultural competence, psychological strength, resilience leadership and cooperation internationally and with other authorities. This shows a strategic change from operational leadership to more strategy-focused and adaptive leadership, which helps long-term capability development. The usage of talent management as a part of the capability development is worthy of notice, as it supports the FDF to ensure that the skills of the personnel are used in the best way to maintain and develop the readiness and capability of the FDF. Talent management supports the leaders in having and upkeeping their skills, so that they can lead the personnel in a good way and at the same time maintain the capabilities of the personnel. Talent management ensures that the FDF has leaders and personnel that can react to changes and deal with problems in the level of quality.

Recruitment optimization as a strategic capability is clearly used in both strategies, but it is more highlighted in the new strategy. In the older strategy from 2015 recruitment logic was based mostly on conscription and internal ways, but in the new strategy from 2024 reacts to the changes in employee market competition, which causes the need for employer branding, attracting women for the conscription and to the FDF, appealing to the more multicultural population of Finland and competing with civilian employers for the employees with the needed capabilities. This means that recruitment becomes a strategic capability, because the ability to secure personnel is itself a part of long-term capability. Optimizing recruitment offers the FDF the possibility to get the needed amount of personnel to work for the FDF. Using the conscription as a way of recruiting new personnel gives the FDF a possibility to find motivated and committed personnel that already have at least some of the required skills. By optimizing the recruitment, the

FDF does ensure that the organization has enough personnel to function in the new changing environment.

Competency development is used as a resilience and flexible capability. In the old strategy, competency development focuses more on physical readiness, training and job rotation, when the new strategy focuses more on competency development that includes AI and technology, information environments, mental resilience and ability to react to crises and other changes. This reflects the long-term capability principle that capabilities must evolve with technology and threat landscapes. Competency development supports the FDF's need for capable and functional personnel. If the personnel are functional and has a good enough mental capacity, the organization is more likely to be able to complete goals in the wanted time frame. The changes between the strategies show that in the new strategy the mental aspect of the personnels capabilities and functional abilities is highlighted. This means that the environment that the FDF works in is more focused on the said mental aspects, therefore the FDF needs to focus on this for them to ensure personnel that are willing and capable of completing their tasks.

Employer branding is used as a strategic positioning capability. In the strategy from 2015 employer branding was implied to be more about how the FDF is a respected national institution, so it relied more on the patriotism of the Finnish population. In the strategy from 2024 employer branding is more explicit and strategic as the FDF is shown as a competitive employer, diverse and modern workplace, that offers career paths and the ability to work from home or in other countries. So, employer branding becomes a capability that offers future talent, not just communication, for the FDF. Employer branding offers the FDF to stand out from other employers. This aspect also supports the FDF's goal to maintain the amount of personnel that are also skilled and willing to work for the organisation. This is important part of the FDF's personnel strategy, because it helps the FDF to maintain their foothold in the employer markets and therefore get skilled personnel to fulfil the job. The need for this has grown a lot between the strategies as noted in the analysis, because the employees' mental health requires more attention and the

organization needs to be able to ensure that families and other personal life is not affected by working in the FDF. The FDF needs to maintain an employer brand that focuses on these situations for them to be able to compete with other organisations for the employees.

This all shows that the FDF need all these four aspects to ensure that their capabilities in short- and long-term. These four together support the personnels well-being inside the organization and the number of employees that are willing and able to work in the FDF. The competition for employees is important to do correctly, because without the number of capable personnel the FDF's functioning capabilities are not on the wanted level.

6.2 Long-Term Capability Development

Long-term capability development is seen in the change between the two strategies from 2015 and 2024. The strategy from 2015 assumed a relatively stable environment for the FDF, when the strategy from 2024 assumes continuous instability, which requires quick adaptation, flexible personnel structure and readiness for tasks that are caused by vastly changing environment. This works together with long-term capability theory, where organizations must build strong capabilities to manage the different challenges caused by the changes (Teece, 2007, p. 1319).

The old strategy focused more on internal capabilities, whereas the new strategy focuses more on external integration of capabilities. In the strategy from 2015 the focus was more on internal training, leadership and channels. The strategy from 2024 on the other hand focuses more on integrating NATO, international tasks, cooperation with other authorities and engagement in the social aspects of society. Long-term capability development requires external sensing and integration, which the FDF in its new strategy uses quite well.

Physical readiness from the old strategy changes towards more comprehensive readiness in the new strategy. In 2015 physical fitness, morale and discipline were highlighted qualities in personnel. In the strategy from 2024 together with the physical points from the old strategy, mental wellness, psychological resilience, social unity and leadership that can lead multicultural personnel, were also highlighted. This reflects the long-term capability principle that personnel systems must be resilient and not just skilled in physical matters.

The FDF's capability development aligns with strategic business development in multiple different ways, for example as value creation. SBD helps the organizations to create long-term value by building different capabilities. The FDF mirrors this by considering the personnel strategy as a method for value-creation. Because of that the FDF includes readiness, resilience, cooperation and societal trust as a part of the new strategy, because with this the FDF can create a better long-term capability and to ensure the best personnel for all situations. These are not dependent fully on finance but still strategically very valuable.

Strategic coherence across both strategies is clear and it supports the alignment between mission, environment and personnel strategy. This is an important part of the SBDs principle, because strategy must be coherent across all organizational layers. According to the strategies the FDF positions itself as a NATO ready force and as a technologically advanced employer and a resilient national institution. Because capability development as strategic positioning helps the organization to position itself in the employee markets these support the FDF's goal to be strong competitor in the said markets.

The FDF's capability development compares to strategic change management frameworks in multiple different ways, for example alignment with the so-called soft change management where the emphasis is on culture, values, communication and well-being. The alignment with hard change management is seen for example in NATO requirements

like the structural changes, required skills and the new readiness levels. These types of changes are hard and planned. These changes are shown clearly from the old strategy to the new strategy and they are important to understand what is demanded by the personnel for them to be able to react to the changes. The alignment with collaborative change management (CCM) has an increasing emphasis on participation, feedback and shared responsibility. This is directly linked to the CCM's direction, alignment and commitment model. With this the FDF can develop their personnel usage in a way that the personnel are willing to give their all to the tasks and commit to the organization.

The FDF's speed of adapting challenges traditional HRM models. For example, the FDF has to adapt quickly due to societal and environmental changes. This resembles more emergent change and not linear change model (Philips & Klein, 2022, p. 189). Military organizations often operate under compact change cycles, which is highlighted in the analysis. This means that also the FDF works under the compact change cycles, which causes more need for personnel capabilities, so that they can complete all the tasks during these changes. These change cycles can happen quite quickly and can be unpredictable, because of the nature of environment that the FDF is working on.

This case about the FDF shows that long-term capability development is a big part of both personnel strategies and the ways of getting to the goal has changed with the environment that the FDF works in. Personnel strategy is a capability system where the four HRM elements form a self-reinforcing loop of capability. This so-called loop helps to strengthen readiness, adaptability and resilience over time. This also supports the FDF's goal of capability in both short- and long-term. The capability development is both proactive and reactive in the FDF. Proactiveness means that the FDF needs to be anticipating NATO requirements, populations willing to join the FDF decreasing and the development of technology. Reactive on the other hand means responding to war in Europe, hybrid threats and societal polarization.

Capability development in the FDF requires cultural and structural change. FDF integrates both culture and structure in its personnel strategy. Culture focuses mostly on values, leadership and well-being, where the structure focuses more on recruitment and training. This duality is required for long-term capability development and for FDF to ensure its readiness in the changes happening now. Military organizations like the FDF can adopt business-development logic to create a better working organization. The case of the FDF demonstrates that SBD frameworks are fully applicable to military contexts, at least regarding the management of personnel. This means that capability development, value creation and strategic positioning are not limited to private firms. So altogether the strategic change in the FDF reflects the idea that strategic military HRM itself works as a capability system and therefore offers the FDF the possibility to develop its strategy in a way that the organization can complete all their tasks also in the future.

7 Conclusions

The purpose of this research has been to examine how the FDF's personnel strategy has changed over time and how these changes show principles of strategic business development, capability development and strategic change management. This was done by comparing the personnel strategy from 2015 with the strategy from 2024 and then analyzing them through the research frameworks. This research shows that the FDF has gone through a clear strategic shift that is caused by, for example, changes in society, multiculturalism and development of technology. These findings show that the FDF's personnel strategy is not only a function of an institution, but also a tool for creating long-term capability and functional readiness.

In this study, there were three main strategic transitions that were identified which are, firstly, that the FDF has moved from only national stability to more alliance and cooperation focused strategic agility. This is a shift shaped by NATO membership and a fast-changing security environment. Second, the FDF has changed from internal training to broader talent acquirement. The strategy from 2015 emphasizes internal training and long-term employment, but the strategy from 2024 integrates more external recruitment, employer branding and cooperation. This aligns with strategic business development logic, where talent is treated as a strategic resource. Lastly, the change from training-centric development to well-being, resilience and long-term capability. The new strategy highlights significantly mental well-being, resilience, leadership culture and career paths even more. This shift reflects strategic HRM and HRD thinking, where human capability is understood as multidimensional and as crucial for organizations' readiness and ability to function effectively. Together, these changes mean that the FDF has moved toward a more dynamic and capability focused personnel strategy that use HRM in long-term strategic planning.

This study focuses on and demonstrates how the military HRM is developing from traditional models towards more flexible, capability-based models that resemble strategic

HRM in civilian organizations while still also being a part of military structures such as command hierarchy. Also, it shows that strategic HRM and SBD frameworks, for example, long-term capability planning, value creation and resource-based logic, can be used in military organizations like the FDF. Strategic change management framework shows here a shift from continuous change management to a larger transformation that is caused by geopolitical changes like the war in Europe, technological development, like AI and obligations caused by NATO membership.

The study is limited by its focus on only publicly available strategy documents and other publications. Internal strategic processes, classified materials and other operational HRM practices were not possible to use in this research, so it is only conducted on the basis of two texts. Also, the only personnel strategies available from the FDF were the ones from 2014 and 2024, which affects the understanding of changes that have happened in the FDF's personnel strategy before the strategy of 2015. Historic perspectives could potentially describe the strategic changes done in the FDF better. Also, the study is limited by the fact that there are no recent studies of personnel and strategic management in the context of the FDF. Other studies are mostly focused on armies and on hired military personnel in other countries such as the United States, and this doesn't straightforwardly translate into the defence system of Finland. This thesis could have also benefited from a more linear description of the societal developments together with the strategic developments, but this could also work for a social sciences study in the future.

Moreover, future studies could expand this work by using material that was not possible to use in this study, for example interviews with the FDF's HR leaders or commanders as well as policy documents or official records. Other potential areas for future studies could include examining how NATO membership reshapes the personnel strategy or a part of it or comparing the FDF's personnel strategy with other personnel strategies inside or outside of NATO countries to identify shared patterns or differences between them. Lastly, researching how AI, cyber capabilities or other development of technology change military HRM and long-term capability planning.

Overall, the Finnish Defence Forces have conducted a significant strategic shift in their personnel strategy all the while Finland itself has shifted geopolitically as well. This change includes moving from a stable, internally focused model toward a dynamic, capability-driven model. This development reflects larger trends in strategic HRM, strategic business development and defence transformation. Personnel strategy has become a central part of the capability, which the FDF builds long-term capability, responds to environments uncertainty and ensures readiness in a fast-changing environment. The findings highlight that personnel capability remains the foundation of the national defence and that strategic personnel development is demanded to ensure Finland's security in the short- and long-term. All in all, this study finds that strategic change management - together with strategic business development frameworks can adequately and directly be applied to defence and military contexts.

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