4 The emergence and development of *samfunnssikkerhet* in Norway

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Introduction

The Norwegian word *samfunnssikkerhet* brings together two terms, *samfunn* (society) and *sikkerhet* (security or, as it is sometimes translated, safety). Traditionally, the provision of security has been the prerogative of states and governments, pursued through the use of military force against external enemies. Society, in a broad sense, includes individuals and groups sharing a common territory and culture, usually subject to that same government. Looking closely at the linguistic construction of the Norwegian term, it is notable that the Saxon Genitive link ‘s’ binds together the two words – an indication that society includes security and safety as its own intrinsic characteristics. Besides being a central term used in the Norwegian public discourse, this word has been applied since the end of the Cold War to define both a Norwegian national policy and a higher education and research field, each addressing issues concerning what makes the Norwegian society less secure in terms of threats, risks, and crises and which actors should be in charge of guaranteeing society’s security, whether that be civil protection authorities, the Armed Forces, or the private sector. When translated into English, *samfunnssikkerhet* has assumed different wordings: societal safety (Juhl and Olsen, 2006; Olsen et al., 2007), societal security (Burgess and Mouhleb, 2007a, 2007b; DSB, 2017; Lægreid and Rykkja, 2019), internal security and safety (Lango et al., 2011), and public security (NMD, 2018; White Paper 10, 2016). These English terms are attempts to find a matching word for the Norwegian version, testifying to the conceptual and practical complexities involved, since the word is peculiarly Norwegian and its definition and application were developed in a certain cultural and political context. For those reasons, the original Norwegian version of the term will be used throughout this chapter.

This chapter follows the previous chapter on Sweden (Larsson, this volume) by raising similar questions in the Norwegian setting. What are the Norwegian historical and political conditions that explain the concept and use of *samfunnssikkerhet*? Who was involved in the elaboration and application of *samfunnssikkerhet*? This chapter shows that we can draw some
Emergence of samfunnssikkerhet in Norway

Emergence of samfunnssikkerhet emerged as a concept around the same time as a similar version (samhällssäkerhet) appeared in Sweden, at the end of the Cold War, when national security concerns significantly changed in both countries due to the new geopolitical landscape. In addition, similarly to Sweden, in Norway samfunnssikkerhet developed independently from the Copenhagen School’s societal security concept (see Wæver et al., 1993). Finally, in Norway, as in Sweden, we can track parallel processes by which changes in the traditional approach to total defence intersected with the emergence of samfunnssikkerhet as a policy goal, thus raising questions: how and when did these processes cross and eventually influence each other? What implications does samfunnssikkerhet bring in the civilian and military sectors and in their respective roles and responsibilities to protect the Norwegian society?

To address these questions, this chapter traces the genesis of the term and how it has advanced, in the light of external and internal security events and societal changes, both within national security policy and the higher education and research field. Empirically, the chapter draws on official documents and internal university proceedings, in addition to interviews with two key academics involved since the start of the development of the term. White Papers (Stortingsmelding – St. Meld.), Propositions to the Parliament (St. Prp.), and Official Reports (Norges offentlige utredninger – NOU) are the three types of official documents considered. The use of primary sources provides a unique window into the formative political and academic thinking during the period under study, from the end of the Cold War until nowadays.

Changes in Norwegian total defence after the Cold War

Total defence represents the conceptual precursor to samfunnssikkerhet in Norway. Just after the end of the Second World War, the Norwegian Defence Commission in 1946 outlined the substance of a Norwegian total defence approach consisting of two pillars – military defence and civilian preparedness – with the goal to mobilise the whole of society in case of crises or war. As such, total defence assumed that peacetime was to be used to establish plans and strategies for the mobilisation of human and material resources when or if a war occurred. Military defence involved the armed forces (Army, Navy, and Air Force) in defence of Norway and of the integrity of its territory, while civilian preparedness included the civilian authorities (central, regional, and local administrations, Civil Defence authorities, Police, health, fire and rescue services) in charge of preparing Norwegian society and mobilising the necessary resources, both in peace and war time. Strong civilian preparedness was meant to assist the military defence, which could then use its resources for purely military purposes. In this sense, the defence of Norway was ‘total’ and aimed to avoid the tragic consequences of the Second World War by planning ahead, by protecting
the civilian population and requisite Norwegian values, and by preventing societal functions from collapsing. This approach was pursued until the end of the Cold War, when new global geopolitics required the Norwegian government to reflect on the meaning and pursuit of security and to consider consequent changes. From that point, which dates to the year 1993, an intertwined process took hold as one historical concept gave way to new thinking. On the one side, there was an attempt to align total defence to new times. On the other side, the notion of *samfunnssikkerhet* was taking early root as a way to break with the previous architecture of total defence, while accommodating several aspects of the total defence approach. In the year 1993 alone, the Norwegian government produced three White Papers on how total defence needed to change to be able to cope with new international and national challenges. The first White Paper 14 (St. Meld. 14, 1993), *Preparedness for peace. On Norway's future military UN involvement and the UN's role in conflict-resolution*, focused on the international setting, after the United Nations launched their Agenda for Peace in June 1992. The second White Paper 16 (St. Meld. 16, 1993), *Main guidelines for the Armed Forces' activities and development in the period 1994–1998*, demonstrated how a still unstable European geopolitical landscape (the Soviet Union's collapse and Eastern European countries' uncertain future) and new developments within NATO could impact the Norwegian national defence. White Paper 16 underlined that Norway was no longer facing direct military threats, but rather new global and European challenges that might develop into threats against Norwegian security interests. Here, total defence was still described in Cold War terms, which assumes that civilian resources must contribute to military defence, and is considered the only credible framework for the development of the future Norwegian defence. However, White Paper 16 recognised that economic and societal structural changes would reduce the opportunities for the Norwegian defence to rely upon civilian resources. Thus, this White Paper pointed out that the Armed Forces should start to progressively disengage from civilian resources and count only on their own in case of war. White Paper 16 proposed a series of reductions and restructuring of the Armed Forces in terms of personnel and equipment and called for new cooperation and coordination regarding civilian preparedness.

The third White Paper 24 (St. Meld. 24, 1993), *The future of civilian preparedness*, focused on the second pillar of total defence. It built on the assessment set out in White Paper 16, but introduced a new risk assessment for Norway, with more emphasis on accidents, crises, and catastrophes in peacetime and less space for more traditional risks related to war and external enemies attacking Norwegian territory. In this document, civilian preparedness is the pillar of total defence, which

[…:] shall, in case of crises and wars, ensure that society continues to function as normally as possible, provide the population with security
for life, health and welfare, as well as provide support within the framework of the Norwegian total defence.

(St. Meld. 24, 1993: 41)

This White Paper called for better clarity in responsibility-sharing between military and civilian authorities. In particular, it recommended a reorganisation of the Ministry of Justice and Police by including the Civil Defence under the Directorate for Civilian Preparedness and by giving the Ministry the overarching coordination of civilian preparedness.

In 1994, a fourth White Paper 48 (St. Meld. 48, 1994), *Long term plan for the civilian preparedness 1995–1998*, was issued as a follow-up to White Paper 24. This White Paper promoted a further development and an adaptation of total defence through an active and targeted cooperation among all the national and local emergency agencies, the Armed Forces, the business community and voluntary organisations. Here, White Paper 48 promoted four main areas of intervention for the civilian preparedness: reduction of the vulnerability of infrastructures, including vital and war-related business activities; mitigation of the consequences of crises or wars and protection of the population’s life, health, and welfare; contribution to meet the needs (in terms of goods and services) of the civilian population and the Armed Forces during crises and wars; and effective utilisation of emergency resources in peacetime. These four areas of intervention covered tasks fulfilled both in war and in peacetime, but White Paper 48 emphasised tasks in peacetime through a civilian preparedness planning more inclusive of an array of risks and threats in peacetime. As a consequence of White Papers 24 and 48, the Ministry of Justice and Police was formally assigned the task of coordinating civilian preparedness across sectors in 1994.

**Total defence meets *samfunnssikkerhet***

This section follows the emergence of *samfunnssikkerhet* as Norwegian national policy and how it intertwined with total defence’s developments. It offers an overview of the main official documents and how Norwegian national authorities attempted to shape *samfunnssikkerhet* as policy to build a robust Norwegian society.

**The Vulnerability Commission and its follow-up**

1999, when NATO intervened in the Kosovo War, represented a new phase for the post-Cold War total defence approach in Norway. From that year, the Ministry of Defence started to prioritise military operations in Kosovo and later, in Afghanistan, while the defence establishment went through ongoing structural and organisational changes (see Thomstad, 2019). The diminished focus on the second pillar of total defence, civilian preparedness
from a defence perspective, opened up a vacuum progressively filled by *samfunnssikkerhet*. At the same time, a series of accidents and natural crises with dramatic consequences for the Norwegian population initiated a political reflection about the level of the state's preparation and response capacities. Internal events, such as the Scandinavian Star ferry fire in 1990, the hurricane in Western Norway in 1992, the flood in Eastern Norway in 1995, the MS Sleipner shipwreck in 1999, and the train collision in Åsta in 2000, showed that Norway was not well prepared to properly face neither natural or man-made crises. At the same time, the country was facing a wider range of external challenges than before such as globalisation, international terrorism, and IT developments. A profound reconsideration of the national crisis management system was needed.

In August 1999, the Minister of Justice and Police Odd Einar Dørum received from the Prime Minister the mandate to establish a commission to report on how to improve the preparedness and security of Norway. This commission, known as the Vulnerability Commission, was led by the former prime minister and county governor Kåre Willoch and included representatives with diversified competences from civil protection, industry, Armed Forces, policy-making, and academia. Professor Jan Hovden, from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology in Trondheim, represented academia. He was, at that time, a prominent scholar in safety science and was very knowledgeable about American scholars such as Charles Perrow, who introduced the theory of ‘normal accidents’ (1984), and Enrico Quarantelli, the pioneer of the sociology of disasters (1998). He had studied the American political approach to safety and security issues and several reflections of the Commission’s eventual report were based on the 1997 American report on critical infrastructures protection (CIP, 1997; Hovden, 2004a). Hovden had professional contacts with Karlstad University, but, as a member of the Commission, he had little direct contact with Swedish public authorities in Stockholm or other academic environments (Hovden Interview, 2019). It is, however, probable that other members of the Vulnerability Commission were in contact with their Swedish commission counterparts working on the same issues (Hovden Interview, 2019), since the reports provided by the two commissions almost at the same time display similarities.

The diversified competences of the members of the Vulnerability Commission were meant to offer a comprehensive description of risks threatening Norwegian society, both in war and peacetime. However, differences emerged on a narrow or broad approach to security (Hovden Interview, 2019). For instance, the representatives of the Armed Forces supported a narrow approach and wished to exclude recommendations on national security in the final report. On the other side, the Director of the Directorate for Civilian Preparedness promoted a broad and inclusive approach (Hovden Interview, 2019). The Vulnerability Commission delivered its report, titled *A Vulnerable society. Challenges for security and preparedness efforts* (NOU 2000:24, 2000) in June 2000. The report offered a detailed description of
what risk, vulnerability, preparedness, crises, and catastrophes are, following Perrow and Quarantelli’s literature. There was a strong focus on a series of accidents, natural and man-made crises that could affect the newly introduced term *samfunnssikkerhet* in its societal values such as life, public health and welfare, environment, the democratic system and its legal institutions, national governance and sovereignty, the country’s territorial integrity, along with its material and financial security, and culture (NOU 2000:24, 2000:8). *Samfunnssikkerhet* is not explicitly defined in this report, but it is applied as a blanket term impacted by a wide range of unwanted events that occur as a result of one or more coincidences, thus affecting the *safety* of the Norwegian society, and of deliberation and planning, thus having implications for its *security* (as Appendix 1 explains: see NOU 2000:24, 2000: 307). In the report, a set of measures to strengthen *samfunnssikkerhet* included increased cooperation between Police and Armed Forces, along with improvements to prevention and rescue services on the one side and intelligence and surveillance services on the other side. In addition, concrete measures for a better coordination between national and local levels were suggested, along with support to research. The Commission pointed out that the responsibility for crisis management was scattered among too many actors within different levels of governance, causing fragmentation, ad hoc responses, and a lack of prioritisation. To overcome this challenge, the Commission put forward three main recommendations: (a) a reorganisation of the political and administrative structures responsible for safety and security (for instance, a new Ministry of Security and Preparedness, separated from the Ministry of Justice, with coordination and executive functions, risk assessment capacities, and a central administration able to detect and follow all types of crises); (b) a strategy to merge relevant safety and security authorities to decrease the number of bodies and ministries; and (c) a new commission to work with major accidents and crises (Hovden, 2004b).

In the report, Professor Hovden provided a heuristic figure – the so-called ‘cross of thought’ – which attempts to show what *samfunnssikkerhet* is and includes (see NOU 2000:24, 2000: 287). The figure illustrates the two dimensions of *samfunnssikkerhet* by distinguishing between the English terms ‘safety’ and ‘security’. The horizontal axis lists unintended events (under the category of safety) and intended events (under the category of security). In the vertical axis are vulnerabilities, from the micro level (individual safety) to the macro one (national security). *Samfunnssikkerhet*, it is proposed, includes all this. Vulnerability in this approach touches upon macro values (national security) as much as micro values (individual safety). Indeed, the centrality of preserving central societal values was a recurrent theme throughout the report. The two axes are intertwined and raise challenges for *samfunnssikkerhet* in terms of how to make the society more robust. This approach underlines a significant shift of focus: from risk and probability that an event occurs to vulnerabilities and the macro and micro values therein.
By the time the Commission delivered its conclusions in June 2000, there was a new Norwegian government, this time led by the Labour Party. The Minister of Justice assigned the Ministry of Labour and Administration the task of following the recommendation about a new Ministry, showing the importance of establishing a distinctive political apparatus dealing with *samfunnssikkerhet* (Hovden Interview, 2019). However, with Mr Dørum again as Minister of Justice in 2001, that recommendation was only partially fulfilled through the establishment of the Directorate for Civil Protection and Emergency Planning in 2003, under the Ministry of Justice. This Directorate was the result of the merging of the Directorate for Civilian Preparedness (established in 1970) and the Directorate for Fire and Electrical Safety (established in 2001).

According to Hovden (Hovden Interview, 2019), the report did not receive the deserved media attention mainly due to these governmental shifts. However, the attacks of 11 September 2001 triggered media interest around it and Professor Hovden was soon involved in a series of meetings all over Norway to talk about its content (Hovden Interview, 2019). The attacks of 11 September 2001, together with the millennium bug, the outbreak of the foot-and-mouth disease in Europe, and some national transport accidents, were mentioned several times as new security challenges that needed to be handled with new measures in the follow-up of the report, White Paper 17 (2001–2002), *Samfunnssikkerhet. The road to a less vulnerable society* (St. Meld. 17, 2002). Professor Hovden was informally invited to several meetings with state officials and helped them to elaborate the definition of *samfunnssikkerhet* (Hovden Interview, 2019) as:

> the ability of a society has to maintain important societal functions and to safeguard citizens’ lives, health and basic needs under various forms of stress. The concept of *samfunnssikkerhet* is widely used and covers security against a full range of challenges, from limited, natural events, to major crises that represent an extensive danger to life, health, environment and material values, to security challenges that threaten the nation’s independence or existence.

(St. Meld. 17, 2002: 4)

In this definition, according to the document, there are key concepts that need explanation. For instance ability (*evne*) is the quality to cope with extraordinary events. To maintain (*opprettholde*) means to resist against negative events. Societal functions (*samfunnsfunksjoner*) encompass transport, health, and energy, but also manpower, leadership, and Police, thus covering both the sectors and the systems that help a society perform. The challenges to security were of any type and scale (from limited to major), as the report had pointed out. White Paper 17 emphasised, in particular, major threats like international terrorism, organised crime, technological failures, and climate change that emerged at that time. As such, *samfunnssikkerhet*
Emergence of *samfunnssikkerhet* in Norway

75
dealt with all the types of events in peacetime, during a crisis and in war, no matter if they impacted individual safety or national security, in terms of the independence and existence of the Norwegian state.

With such broad definition, one might ask, which security challenges are left to the traditional notion of total defence? White Paper 17 did not address the issue and kept the definition of total defence within the traditional approach, although recognising that the distinction between external and internal threats was blurred:

The total defence concept includes civilian support to the military defence of the Norwegian territory. The term civilian preparedness will preferably be used for those preparations which take place at a civilian side with the aim of supporting the defence of the Norwegian territory or securing civil society and civilian functions in crisis and war.

(St. Meld. 17, 2002: 92)

**The new total defence approach**


White Paper 39 described a new total defence in these terms:

A comprehensive and modern total defence concept consists of mutual support and cooperation and optimal use of resources between the Armed Forces and civil society for prevention, contingency planning and operational matters. The new concept of total defence gives greater importance to the military support to civil society. In its work with *samfunnssikkerhet*, the government will give priority to the development of civilian and military reinforcement resources that can support the emergency services’ handling of more seldom and serious events as well.

(St. Meld. 39, 2004: 8)

The definition introduces some novelties. For instance, there is no mention of civilian preparedness, but civil society seems to become the second pillar of total defence now. In addition, Armed Forces and civil society are at the same conceptual level, since the support is mutual and intertwined.
However, the focus is shifted from societal support to the Armed Forces to the Armed Forces’ support to the society. In this way, total defence contributes to *samfunnssikkerhet*. Throughout White Paper 39, indeed, there are recurrent references to the work needed to strengthen *samfunnssikkerhet* through closer military and civilian cooperation. Some examples are the National Security Authority (NSM), jointly administrated by the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Defence, and military rescue services available for civilian operations. All this work aims at “preventing unwanted events from occurring and to minimise the consequences when such situations occur” (St. Meld. 39, 2004: 6) and “the protection of civilians and vital societal interests in a time when a military threat is not prominent” (St. Meld. 39, 2004: 7). So, prevention and protection are the core of *samfunnssikkerhet* work, as much as of total defence. The scope of total defence was widened to those events placed in a so-called grey zone, which did not affect the security of the state in military terms, but rather the security of civil society such as terrorism and international crime. This widening of total defence in Norway does not find a corresponding conceptual expansion in Sweden, where the Swedish total defence is reserved for preparing Sweden for war (see also Larsson, this volume).

The long-term plan (St. Prp. 42, 2004) consisted of a timely description of the organisational changes within the Armed Forces since 2001 and the future plans to make them adhere to the new total defence approach described in White Paper 39. It should not come as a surprise, considering that the Ministry of Defence is behind this document, that the definition of *samfunnssikkerhet* used here is not as inclusive as in White Paper 17:

> *Samfunnssikkerhet* concerns safeguarding the security of the civilian population and the protection of key societal functions and important infrastructures against attacks and other harmful situations where the state’s existence as such is not threatened.

(St. Prp. 42, 2004: 19)

This definition implied that the preservation of Norway’s territorial integrity and political sovereignty was primarily a task for total defence. At the same time, the document underlined several times that it is not easy to draw a line between state security, guaranteed by total defence, and *samfunnssikkerhet*, guaranteed by close military and civilian cooperation, due to the growing complexity of Norwegian society and the world as such. Therefore, the subsequent reforms of the Armed Forces needed to consider that threats and crises would not fall merely under military or civilian responsibility. One of the tasks of the Armed Forces was, nonetheless, to contribute to strengthening *samfunnssikkerhet* by supporting Police and civilian authorities, according to the new total defence approach.

The follow-up of White Paper 39 and the long-term plan was White Paper 22 (2007–2008) *Samfunnssikkerhet – Collaboration and coordination*
Emergence of samfunnssikkerhet in Norway

In this document, the definition of samfunnssikkerhet was taken from the earlier White Paper 17. The introduction explicitly stated that samfunnssikkerhet has a broad meaning, since it covers minor and major events, intentional and unintentional: natural disasters, fires, terrorist attacks, sabotage, espionage and international crime threatening life, health, environment, values, and the nation’s independence or existence. The document presented the holistic approach of the Norwegian security policy, which could guarantee samfunnssikkerhet only through local, regional, national, international collaboration and coordination. In White Paper 22, the Norwegian government launched a series of initiatives: reinforcement of the Ministry of Justice’s coordination role, minimum requirements to be followed by municipalities in emergency preparedness, investments to involve volunteers in rescue services, and the strengthening of security measures to protect critical infrastructures. As the title of White Paper 22 suggests, the government aimed at involving agencies and ministries at all levels of governance and from all sectors in a cooperative and coordinated effort to guarantee the protection of Norwegian society, also through the strengthening of the security international cooperation, both at European Union level (the EU’s Civil Protection Mechanism and the EU Programme for the protection of critical infrastructures) and United National level.

These collaborative and coordination efforts were directed also towards total defence. The relationship between total defence and samfunnssikkerhet was described as follows:

Its core [total defence] is the mutual support between the Armed Forces and civil society within prevention, preparedness and crisis management across the entire crisis spectrum from peace to crises and war impacting security. The Armed Forces’ contribution to samfunnssikkerhet requires that the Armed Forces can only contribute based on their available capacities, expertise and the resources to fulfil the primary task of defence... All civilian crises should be handled with civilian resources. Nevertheless, the total defence concept is relevant for the work on samfunnssikkerhet about reinforcement and collaboration.

(St. Meld. 22, 2008:71)

The development of samfunnssikkerhet since 2006

The preservation of societal functions is a recurrent term in all the above-mentioned documents. However, none of them clearly described what societal functions are. A partial attempt is traceable in White Paper 17, where societal functions include a wide range of sectors, such as health, energy, and transport, and the systems that make these sectors and, thus, the entire society operate properly. Any disruption of these societal functions, due to crises and disasters, makes society more vulnerable and exposed to
serious consequences. In 2006, the Ministry of Justice and Police established another commission to help identify and analyse societal functions that are vital for the well-functioning of the Norwegian state and society, in addition to suggesting a series of measures to protect them. The so-called Infrastructure Commission provided a report, *When security is the most important. Protection of the country’s critical infrastructures and critical societal functions* (NOU 2006:6, 2006), which, right from the title, made a clear distinction between critical infrastructures and societal functions. Critical infrastructures, in that document, are regarded as facilities and systems necessary to maintain societal critical functions such as electric power grids, IT systems for communication, water supply, transport, oil and gas. Societal functions cover the basic societal needs and the population’s perception to be safe and are, for instance, health and social services, Police, emergency and rescue services, as well as the parliament, the government, the Armed Forces, and the judicial system (NOU 2006:6, 2006: 16). According to the report, security challenges, such as climate change, natural disasters, terrorism, organised crime, ageing infrastructures, deregulation, affect critical infrastructures and societal functions due to their mutual dependencies. Thus, within the work in *samfunnssikkerhet*, various legislative, organisational, and financial measures at all levels of governance need to be taken into account to protect Norwegian society. This work echoes, to some extent, the Finnish Concept for Comprehensive Security (see also Valtonen and Brander, this volume, for similarly encompassing objects of security).

In addition to this clarification, the report sheds light on certain challenges resulting from the development of *samfunnssikkerhet* in the previous White Papers. The Infrastructure Commission argued that the term was ambiguous and distinguished amongst a broad, narrow, and political approach. In the broad approach, *samfunnssikkerhet* included extraordinary, along with every day and minor, events. Every day and minor events such as fires or traffic accidents were included since they might cause harm to society if they were not properly prevented and handled. This broad definition has, however, a weakness: by including such as wide range of threats and risk, it ends up being imprecise and difficult to use. The narrow approach considers only extraordinary events as the focus of *samfunnssikkerhet*, since they have the potential to harm large parts of the society. Extraordinary means are required to cope with these events. Finally, the political approach was the result of three White Papers. The first one was White Paper 17. The second was White Paper 39, which, as much as White Paper 17, treated *samfunnssikkerhet* as a blanket word. The third was White Paper 37 (2004–2005), *South Asia tsunami disaster and centralised crisis management* (St. Meld. 37, 2005), which was launched by the Ministry of Justice and Police few months after the 2004 Tsunami in Southeast Asia, where 84 Norwegian citizens lost their life. Here, *samfunnssikkerhet* is described as the goal of:

safeguarding the security of the civilian population and the protection of key societal functions and important infrastructure against attacks
and other harmful situations where the state’s basic interests are not threatened.

(St. Meld. 37, 2005: 50)

This definition is almost identical to the one from the Ministry of Defence’s long-term plan. It is the first time that terms like *attacks*, usually belonging to military lexicon, were used in a White Paper by the Ministry of Justice.

Based on these texts, one might perceive a predominant political approach deriving from official policy documents provided by the Ministry of Justice and Police and reflected in statements from the Ministry of Defence. Within this political approach, it is possible to make a distinction based on (1) the type of events (major or minor or both) one aims at including, without making a distinction between intended or unintended, and (2) what is impacted: societal values, critical infrastructures, societal functions, personal safety, and state as such (with the latter sometimes but not always included).

The terrorist attacks on 22 July 2011 perpetrated by Anders Breivik shook the whole of society. The Gjørv Commission was appointed to recommend improvements in the national crisis management system (NOU 2012:14, 2012). While the Commission was still working, the Ministry of Justice and Preparedness launched a new White Paper 29 (2011–2012), *Societal Security* (St. Meld. 29, 2012), which was very much influenced by that tragic event, to the point that the definition of *samfunnssikkerhet* made an explicit distinction of three kinds of events, the last one a clear reference to the terrorist attacks:

*Samfunnssikkerhet* involves protecting society from events that threaten fundamental values and functions and that put lives and health in danger. Such events may be triggered by nature, be a result of technical or human error, or of deliberate actions.

(St. Meld. 29, 2012:9)

In addition, it is the society as a whole that needs to be protected, in this approach. No distinction was made between societal values, critical infrastructures, societal functions, personal safety, and so on. White Paper 29 reviewed the national crisis management system and promoted measures and initiatives to avoid future similar events by strengthening collaboration and coordination among the responsible actors form the local to the national level. The renamed Ministry of Justice and Preparedness was invested with four new tasks: reduce societal vulnerability, strengthen interactions in preparedness and crisis management, improve management and management culture, and knowledge-based prevention.

The latest White Paper on *samfunnssikkerhet* (St. Meld. 10, 2016) was published in December 2016 with two novelties. First, the content of the document was presented as the Norwegian government’s *samfunnssikkerhet* strategy in a four-year perspective. The lexicon in the White Paper recalled the strategies provided by the European Union on several topics,
but, particularly, in the field of security such as the 2003 European Security Strategy and 2016 European Union Global Strategy released few months before this White Paper. Second, for the first time, an English version of the content was made available, with the title *White Paper 10. Report to the Storting (White Paper) Risk in a Safe and Secure Society. On Public Security* (White Paper 10, 2016). The Norwegian term *samfunnssikkerhet* is here translated as public security and the definition is as follows:

> Public security is society’s ability to protect itself against, and manage, incidents that threaten fundamental values and functions and that put lives and health in danger. Such incidents may be caused by nature, by technical or human error, or by intentional acts. Public security is influenced by three factors: the values we seek to protect, and their vulnerabilities; the dangers and threats we are confronted with; our ability to prevent and manage. (White Paper 10, 2016: 8)

This definition draws together wording from White Paper 17 (the ability of a society, societal functions, fundamental values) and from White Paper 29 (events that threaten fundamental values and functions and that put lives and health in danger. Such events may be triggered by nature, be a result of technical or human error or of deliberate actions). However, the definition from White Paper 10 underlined two substantial shifts. First, the notion of ability regained a central role. The ability of the society to cope and manage was, indeed, lost in the White Papers following White Paper 17, in which society was treated almost as a passive recipient of protection from an external entity. Second, the main expression of this ability is self-protection and self-management. These two tasks give society a more active and dynamic role and come close to a form of ‘governmentality’, which encourages self-responsibilities and self-regulation, similar to those associated with the term resilience, as argued by Joseph (2013; see also Villumsen Berling and Lund Petersen, this volume). Indeed, White Paper 10 stated that “a society’s ability to prevent and manage crises depends on more than public resources and efforts” (White Paper 10, 2016: 7) and that in a resilient society everybody is called to contribute to making Norwegian society stronger, since “we must all accept responsibility for how our own actions can affect the security of others” (White Paper 10, 2016: 7). In this context, the state’s main role is to provide Norwegian society with the best instruments to protect itself, bounce back after a crisis and learn to live and cope with risks and threats. This expanded upon White Paper 17, which had briefly mentioned individual responsibility in carrying on *samfunnssikkerhet* (St. Meld. 17, 2002: 4). To some extent, the Norwegian counterterrorism policy follows the same trend, as the chapter by Jore (this volume) demonstrates. Table 4.1 summarises the definitions of *samfunnssikkerhet* from the various policy documents analysed in this chapter.
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| Full range of challenges, from limited, natural events to major crises | }
In sum, the ostensible aim of *samfunnssikkerhet* does not substantially change through the various policy documents in terms of what is said to be protected and safeguarded. The exception here is White Paper 17, which explicitly includes the state's independence and existence as requiring protection, while the Proposition to the Parliament 42 and White Paper 37 leave this articulation out. In contrast to that general continuity, the various definitions differ in how they describe which threats, risks, or crises most directly implicate *samfunnssikkerhet*.

**Samfunnssikkerhet in the Norwegian academic community**

The evolution of the concept of *samfunnssikkerhet* was not limited to the political arena. This section illustrates the Norwegian academic community’s contribution since the late 1990s to establish *samfunnssikkerhet* as a subject to be taught in higher education. It is possible to track the beginning of this process, thanks to original documents such as minutes of internal meetings at the then-Stavanger University College (now the University of Stavanger), where in 1995 a group of scholars, supported by local and national politicians, started to draft a Master level study programme in *samfunnssikkerhet* (HiS, 1999a; Aven, 2013). Until then, no such term could be found in Norwegian academia (Aven et al., 2011). The closest, conceptually, that one could find was related to Norwegian research generated in the 1980s regarding industrial safety and the oil and transport sectors’ technological challenges. Since 2002, the Research Council of Norway had supported research programmes such as RISIT – Risk and Safety in the Transport Sector and HSE Petroleum (NFR, 2005). Study programmes, mainly at the University of Trondheim (NTNU), Stavanger University College, the University of Oslo, and Stord/Haugesund University College (now Western Norway University of Applied Sciences), focused on industrial safety. In particular, Stavanger University College had a long tradition in teaching subjects in this field: in 1981, thanks to a collaboration with Phillips Petroleum Company, a Bachelor’s programme in safety management was established, while, in 1987, petroleum technology studies were enriched by specialisations in safety techniques, thanks to collaboration with Statoil (now Equinor), the national oil and gas company (HiS, 1999b).

The group of academics at Stavanger University College who launched the Master’s programme in *samfunnssikkerhet* looked first and foremost at their own academic profiles to design the curriculum: risk analysis, urban planning, and accident prevention were the main areas in which they taught. Second, they considered accidents and crises in Norway during recent years and recognised their variety and the series of new challenges they raised for Norwegian society and the policy-makers. They made the distinction between intentional and unintentional events, since what they could provide was their expertise on unintentional events and their consequences. Intentional events, such as terrorism and sabotage, were purposely left outside
the scope of the Master’s programme (Boyesen Interview, 2019). Third, they received support from the County Governor and the Directorate for Civilian Preparedness. Local and national politicians were included in the working group in charge of preparing the application for the establishment of the Master’s programme, together with representatives from the business community and from other universities and university colleges in Norway. Professor Hovden was among the academic representatives, and he later became Adjunct Professor in Stavanger for a few years, to cooperate with the local academic community in supporting the Master’s programme. The application for the establishment of the Master’s programme was sent to the then-Ministry for Church, Education and Research in 1997, approved in 1998, and the first cohort of students matriculated in autumn 1999. Even before the report of the Vulnerability Commission and White Paper 17, the term *samfunnssikkerhet* emerged as the main focus in a new study programme in Stavanger.

The pioneering aspect of this Master’s programme rested in its multidisciplinary approach, during a period when academic disciplines were still developed within their rigid traditions. The Master’s programme relied on a group of academics from different disciplines, working at the Department of Technical and Natural Sciences and the Department of Economics, Culture and Society, which jointly established the programme. They considered that challenges related to *samfunnssikkerhet* needed the contribution of different disciplines. This multidisciplinary approach led to 30 years of research in a field that today has been firmly established as interdisciplinary and one that combines theory and practice. The education and research on security in Norway, from being dominated by engineering and, to some extent, economics within the field of industrial safety and accidents, have been enriched by the perspectives of social science, psychology, and anthropology due to the increased interactions between society, technology, organisations, and crises.

Interestingly, in the Master’s programme study plan, there is no definition of *samfunnssikkerhet* (HiS, 1999a). However, the Master’s programme was meant to provide students with competence to the development of a resilient society, a profound understanding of emergency preparedness, crisis management, and how society could be protected against threats and risks. The English name given to the Master’s programme was Resilience Management, reflecting the relative fungibility of the concept (see also Hyvönen and Juntunen, this volume, for similar developments in Finland). As of 2020, the time of writing, the University of Stavanger offers the widest and oldest higher education in *samfunnssikkerhet*, with subjects at Bachelor level, a series of Master’s programmes, an experience-based Master’s programme, and a multidisciplinary PhD programme.

A few years after the Master’s programme in *samfunnssikkerhet*, the Norwegian academic community began to reflect on the meaning of *samfunnssikkerhet*. Following the recommendation of the Vulnerability
Commission’s report to establish a research programme on *samfunnssikkerhet*, the Research Council of Norway invited the Norwegian Directorate for Civil Protection and academic representatives from Stavanger University College, NTNU, Rogaland Research, SINTEF, the University of Oslo, and the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment to meet in a so-called ‘consensus seminar’ in Stavanger in October 2004 (Kruke et al., 2005). The participants aimed to better explain the key terms contained in the definition from White Paper 17 and to establish useful criteria, in order to distinguish which events threatened *samfunnssikkerhet* and which ones were outside its scope. The meeting concluded with the following points:

- **Ability (evne):** society’s daily management, as well as institutions and society’s management of extraordinary events.
- **Maintain (opprettholde):** to be resilient.
- **Critical social functions (viktige samfunnsfunksjoner):** both the institutions and the systems which keep a society functioning.
- **Protecting the life and health of citizens and meeting their basic requirements (borgerens liv, helse og grunnleggende behov):** institutions should cope with negative events, by guaranteeing protection to their citizens.

An event affects *samfunnssikkerhet* if it falls into one or more of the following categories:

- Major events that go beyond the ability of the affected local community to manage the consequences, since they are impossible to handle with established systems and common routines (extraordinary stresses and losses).
- Events impacting technological and societal systems with complicated links and strong mutual dependence (complexity and mutual dependence).
- Events that undermine trust in the institutions that should protect and prevent (trust in vital social functions).

These categories were not meant to be exhaustive, but a way to operationalise what *samfunnssikkerhet* was and to avoid that it included all kinds of stresses. For instance, national defence, human security, and sustainable development were areas falling partially outside the scope of *samfunnssikkerhet*. Moreover, events such as daily life damages, common diseases, isolated accidents, and common crime were not considered a risk or a threat to the Norwegian society. However, the participants admitted that there were grey zones and overlapping issues in both cases. It was further argued that traffic accidents, domestic accidents, or work accidents might not have any impact on *samfunnssikkerhet* (ibid., 2005). The participants fully supported the recommendation from the Vulnerability Commission’s report to establish a national research programme. Indeed, in 2006, the Research Council of
Emergence of *samfunnssikkerhet* in Norway

Norway launched SAMRISK (*samfunnssikkerhet og risiko*), using a similar concept and perspective, which contributed to additional institutionalisation of the term (NFR, 2011, 2014, 2018).

The key findings of the seminar were refined in an English article published in 2007 by some of the seminar’s participants (Olsen et al., 2007). In the article, *samfunnssikkerhet* was translated as societal safety in English. This translation reflects the peculiar context in which *samfunnssikkerhet* was born as an academic subject, characterised by a strong academic tradition in safety science and safety management of accidents occurring within high-risk industries such as oil and gas, shipping, nuclear plants, and transport, and very much influenced by the seminal works of Perrow (1984), La Porte and Consolini (1991), Beck (1992), and Rasmussen (1997). However, if one follows the distinction between safety and security from the heuristic figure by Hovden, mentioned earlier (see NOU 2000:24, 2000: 287), safety is related to unintentional events, while security is related to intentional events like terrorism. Thus, societal safety poses the problem of emphasising only certain kinds of events, while in the Norwegian term there is no such differentiation, since *samfunnssikkerhet* covers safety as much as security. Indeed, the 2007 article uses examples of events that fall under both headings. At this point, a linguistic digression is necessary, since the use of another language may have effects in the way *samfunnssikkerhet* research is conveyed. According to the Oxford Dictionary, security derives from the Latin word, *securus*, which means free from care (*se* – without and *cura* – concern, care, responsibility). In English, security is “the condition of being free from danger or threat” (Oxford Dictionary, 2019a). Safety derives from Latin, *salvus*, which means unharmed, safe, alive. In English, safety denotes a condition, too: “the condition of being protected from or unlikely to cause danger, risk, or injury” (Oxford Dictionary, 2019b). Both words describe a condition or a state, while the only distinction that may arise in practice is that security cannot be achieved if safety is not guaranteed. As Finn-Erik Vinje, a philologist and professor in Nordic languages, pointed out (Vinje, 2005), a distinction between *safety* and *security* based on the type of the events – unintentional in the case of safety, intentional in the case of security – does not exist in English, as much as it does not exist in the Norwegian word *sikkerhet*. Furthermore, Vinje argues that if the focus is on unintentional or intentional events, then the Norwegian language should use other terms such as *trygghet* (to be safe) and *sikring* (protection), respectively. Vinje’s philological attempt did not find any further development in Norwegian academia and remains the only one of this kind. To some extent, his proposal was taken up by the Standards Norway, which admitted that the English terms security and safety have been widely used, often inconveniently in the Norwegian context and thus they prefer to use the term protection for intentional events, instead of security (Standard Norge, 2012). Engen et al. (2016) argue that a clear distinction between safety and security is difficult to achieve. One should rather discuss threats and risks that impact the
society (Engen et al., 2016: 26–27), while Burgess and Mouhleb (2007a: n.p.) claim that “Attaching the security label to any given event becomes a way of putting issues on the [political] agenda”.

Conclusion

The changed global geopolitical situation after the end of the Cold War questioned the Norwegian total defence approach. In the attempt to adapt to new times, total defence was modified in the relationship between its two pillars – military defence and civilian preparedness. Civilian preparedness has undergone the most radical changes, with a progressive disengagement of the Armed Forces in this field and the emergence of samfunnssikkerhet, a concept embedded in Norwegian national policy, as well as in the higher education and research field. The total defence approach survived in a new fashion, as a complement to strengthen samfunnssikkerhet by supporting Police and civilian authorities in coping with crises and disasters.

The definition of samfunnssikkerhet is political in the sense that it stems from public policy documents, starting from White Paper 17. These documents were the Norwegian government’s response to security changes and challenges at international and national level. Events with global impact, like the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 or the 2004 Tsunami, raised the same concern as local events like a flood or an avalanche: how to make Norwegian society, its infrastructures, and its functions increasingly robust. The external-internal divide that characterised the total defence approach does not concern samfunnssikkerhet in most of the policy documents analysed in this chapter. This political definition is not questioned by the Norwegian academic community, whose main contribution is to operationalise it by studying what or who is under threat or at risk, why, and which measures and initiatives the Norwegian government should pursue to strengthen samfunnssikkerhet.

In the Norwegian context, samfunnssikkerhet includes three aspects. It is, first and foremost, an ability of the society with the following attributes: to maintain, safeguard, protect, and manage. While society is treated as a static object in White Paper 17, in White Paper 10, society is construed as having a more active role in self-protection and self-management. Second, samfunnssikkerhet is a state’s task, which, through measures and actions against a wide range of stresses, provides protection to society and lessens vulnerabilities, but at the same time, seeks to make the Norwegian society more self-reliant, as White Paper 10 underlines. Third, samfunnssikkerhet is everything that needs to be protected and preserved to make the Norwegian society properly perform: fundamental values, critical infrastructures, societal functions, basic needs, the integrity and the sovereignty of the state.

As made clear in this chapter, the notion and deployment of samfunnssikkerhet as concept were influenced by broad societal debates, institutional interests, and, of course, actual events. In these aspects, the development
Emergence of samfunnssikkerhet in Norway

of the concept follows a similar line to the development of the ‘societal security’ or samhällssäkerhet concept in Sweden (Stiglund, this volume) and in the related ‘comprehensive security’ concept in Finland (Valtonen and Branders, this volume) or ‘security uncertainties’ in Denmark (Liebetrau, this volume). In all cases, the perception of a changing security environment, from the end of the Cold War to 11 September 2001, and the rise of societal threats such as pandemics and cyber-attacks prompted ongoing revisions and rearticulations of the goals of national security policies in these Nordic countries. The most recent shift in the security environment, often articulated as the ‘return of geopolitics’ following the Russian invasion of the Crimea in 2014, portends further changes in the articulation of security goals. In Norway, this is likely to play out in new relationships between the broad samfunnssikkerhet concept and the more traditional total defence notion. While the latter has until now been seen as a complement to the former, time will tell whether it regains dominance in the years ahead.

Notes

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2 A White Paper illustrates challenges in certain national policies and offers recommendations on how to solve them. They are not binding documents, but after a White Paper is approved by the Government, it is sent to the Norwegian Parliament (Storting), which usually elaborates proposals based on it that eventually become Norwegian laws. Usually, a White Paper is preceded by Official Reports, which are the result of working groups or committees – established inside the various Ministries, including the Prime Minister Office – to discuss and then report to the Ministry on a topic deemed relevant for the Norwegian society. In general, the members of these committees are selected by the political parties from different public services and the academia to guarantee a broad and diversified professional representation. The Propositions to the Parliament are the Norwegian government’s requests to the Parliament to take a decision about new legislation or amendments to an existing legislation, the budget, or other issues where the Parliament has to vote upon. The documents serving this chapter are provided by the websites of the Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Justice and Public Security.

3 All translations of Norwegian into English are done by the author.

4 For detailed accounts on the total defence during the Cold War, see Rønne and Sørlie (2006), Gjøseth et al. (2004), and Skogrand (2004).

5 The names of ministries and national agencies change through the chapter according to the changes introduced during the period under study.

6 The name was changed in January 2012.

7 The author worked with both versions, the Norwegian and the English, to verify the adherence of the English translation to the Norwegian text.

8 The author adopted the names as they were used at that time.
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Hovden Interview. (2019). Telephone Interview with Jan Hovden, August.


Emergence of samfunnssikkerhet in Norway


