

# The New Institutionalism: A tool for analysing defence and security institutions

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## Abstract

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*The aim of this paper is to investigate new institutionalism, its trends and their application in the analysis of security and defence institutions. The research is based on an analysis of theoretical literature to explore a system of assumptions about new institutionalism. Different approaches have been examined, including historical, rational choice, and sociological approaches. Historical institutionalism can be applied to identify the usefulness of past decisions, policy choices, appropriate strategy choices, and specific acquisitions for future policymakers, whereas rational choice institutionalism allows us to determine the influence of security and defence institutions on actors and their choices, how actors use the institutional framework for their own benefit, and how actors' choices influence the state policy. Finally, sociological institutionalism focuses on recognising actors' cognitive scripts and the changes they undergo, as well as causes that influence and determine cognitive scripts. Defence institutions are based on a precise regulative and normative framework and cognitive scripts of the highest authorities. Therefore, the external framework and the particular political impact on the supranational level can cause changes on the national level. New institutionalism provides an important perspective on the specifics of security and defence policy, actors' individual and collective goals, their strategies and interests as well as cognitive scripts.*

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## Keywords:

new institutionalism, defence and security institutions, decisions in past, rational choice, cognitive script

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## Introduction

The role of institutional research has changed over time from unimportant to more significant. It is clear that institutions are involved in the different areas, and they are more than formal organisations. Institutions form patterns of behaviour, they are rules and stable values, they form and determine politics, its outcome and direction. The most important and common are military institutions. When civilian institutions are not able to respond adequately, they should be ready to act and respond appropriately even under the most difficult conditions (war, military conflict, aggression, etc.). The state military sector and its institutional framework, as well as the internal decision making, thinking and communication process, is specific and different from the civilian sector. The military sector is basically formed from military personnel, and military units, which are specially prepared, trained and regulated. The military sector consists of the Ministry of Defence and the National armed forces. The Ministry of Defence is responsible for the national defence policy, it organises and coordinates its implementation. The National armed forces include ground, sea and air forces. The administrative structure of the ministry sector is formed by departments and independent sections, and it is structured according to the tasks. Military forces include the combat, combat service and combat service support units.

New institutionalism emerged and its roots can be found in the early 1980s. New institutionalism is the most prominent direction for analysing institutions and policy from a different perspective. For example, Barnes (2017) analyses new institutionalism as a subdiscipline of economics, whereas Alastair (2018) combines two new institutionalisms, dominant accounts of change (shock-driven and constant) for the nuanced research of post-crisis change. A wide variety of complementary and different methodologies for analysing institutions is being offered: rational choice, sociological and historical institutionalism etc. This article is based on an analysis of theoretical literature to explore a system of assumptions on new institutionalism, based on the works of March and Olsen (1989, 2005), Haal and Taylor (1996), and Peters (2012).

Defence and security institutions matter, because they shape and affect defence and security policy and its outcome as well. In the article, strands of new institutionalism and its basic approaches are analysed and application of new institutionalism to identify essential aspects of defence and security institutions. The article provides a perspective of social studies offering the tools of new institutionalism in the analyses of national institutions which forms and detects defence policy and its consequences.

### **The essence of institutions and new institutionalism**

Attention has been paid to institutions in political science since the 16th century. Meanwhile, institutions have become larger, more complex, resourceful, and more significant to collective life, and also as a result of politics. In this relationship, different definitions by several scholars can be identified. For March and Olsen (1989, p. 1), institutions are legislature, legal system, state, and firm/company. They define institutions from the behavioural point of view: institutions are formally organised political organisations, which are like arenas within which political behaviour occurs. It might be concluded that institutions can be defined as organisations with a specific purpose or an established law or practice. Since institutions as organisations include more than just norms, they comprise behaviour, interests, and beliefs. According to March and Olsen (1989, p. 1), institutions can be a law or bureaucracy, the way in which political behaviour was embedded in an institutional structure of rules, norms, expectations, and traditions. They have come to a different understanding of the nature of institutions: firstly,

an organised setting within which political actors act; secondly, processes that translate structures and rules into political impacts; thirdly, processes that translate actors' behaviour into structures and rules, and establish, sustain, transform or eliminate institutions (March and Olsen, 2005).

Diverse theories reflecting different views of institutions are used for the research into international relations. For example, according to Antunes and Camisao (2017, p. 15), in realism, the nation-state (state) is the principal actor in international relations, but other bodies (organisations, institutions, individuals) exist with limited power. Meiser (2017, pp. 22–25) concludes that the main concern in liberalism is to construct institutions that will protect individuals and their freedom by limiting and controlling political power. Nowadays, most liberal scholarship is based and focuses on international organisations and how they foster cooperation by helping states to overcome the incentive to escape from international agreements – this is neoliberal institutionalism or neoliberalism (Meiser, 2017, pp. 22–25). Theys (2017, p. 41) argues with regard to constructivism that it simply states the obvious – actions and interactions which shape reality, because thoughts and actions construct international relations. Constructivism also exposes that state's behaviour can explain not only the distribution of material power, wealth, and geographical condition, but also ideas, identities and norms (Theys, 2017, p. 41). Accordingly, it might be stated that reality is not fixed, but it is subject to change. Stivachtis (2017, p. 28) identifies that the English school is built around three key concepts: international system, international society and world society. The international society is about the creation and maintenance of shared norms, rules and institutions. In an English school, the term 'institution' is different from the term 'organisation', because 'institutions' refer to the state's long-term practice in relation to diplomacy, law, war, etc., not to bureaucratic structures (organisations) (Stivachtis, 2017, p. 28). The above mentioned theories are meta-theories.

The importance of institutions derives from Lecours (2005) statement that new institutionalism considers that political research is most effectively done as part of a focus on institutional research. Thelen and Steinmo (1992, p. 3) state that political science is the research of institutions. For Hamilton (1932), institutions are verbal symbols, which connote a way of thought or action which is embedded in the habits or the customs of a group of people (Lane and Ersson, 2002, p. 24). Thus, it is obvious that institutions are the means by which political goals can be achieved and commitment in the defence sector, shared values, and prosperity for citizens established too. Hall and Taylor (1996) argue that institutions are not just formal rules, but also symbol systems, moral templates and cognitive scripts (Lowndes and Roberts, 2013, p. 38). Concept 'new institutionalism' was coined by March and Olsen (Peters, 2012, p. 16). New institutionalism is a broad movement in contemporary political science that seeks to reinstate and refine the study of institutions as important variables in political life. New institutionalism consists at least of nine different approaches (historical, rational choice, sociological, normative, empirical, international, network, constructivist or discursive and feminist institutionalism), which call themselves new institutionalism. According to Peters (2012, p. 3), 'roots of political science are in the study of institutions' and the word 'new' means that there was something 'old', and 'new' is something different from the old one. Based on theories proposed by different scholars, new institutionalism derives from old institutionalism – old institutionalism constituted political science for the late 19th and first half of the 20th centuries. But old institutionalism is concerned with law and its role in state governance. Peters (2012, p. 18) identified that March and Olsen analysed political theory and concluded that such political theory should be applied in analysis; additionally, they noted that behavioural and rational choice had five characteristics of political science: contextualism, reductionism, utilitarianism, functionalism and instrumentalism. All of

these prevailing features of political science were replaced by new institutionalism (Peters, 2012, p. 18). The emergence of new institutionalism does not mean that old institutionalism is not topical. For example, Ringel, Brankovic and Werron (2020) combine old and new strands of thinking in institutional theory.

Bulmer (1997) states that new institutionalism is a middle-range theory. Discussions, disputes and challenges can be seen among sovereign states, particularly, during conflicts, aggressions or even war periods. Therefore, in crucial situations related to security and defence, states review not only their defence and security strategies, but they re-evaluate their defence and security institutions practices as well. State institutions have an important role in establishing and implementing the state's defence policy. The military sector and its institutional framework, as well as internal decision making, thinking and the communication process, is specific and different from the civilian sector. The recent global events highlight that in security and defence policy, it is necessary to pay more attention to changes in defence institutions, which occur over time. The new institutionalism is the most applicable theoretical school to reveal these changes.

New institutionalism arose in early 1980s as a response to the behavioural revolution of the 1960s and the rational choice theory. As a result, as a reaction to the behavioural revolution, historical institutionalism emerged. It investigates the long-term implications of institutional choices made at a particular time. Actors are not perfectly informed about the consequences of their choices and, therefore, their behaviour is constrained by locking into a place of past choices. The difference from other approaches is that in historical institutionalism, it is essential to study the origins and evolution of institutions over time to understand institutions as a whole. Rixen and Viola (2016, p. 10) state that "in this sense historical institutionalism is historical". Historical institutionalism is associated with a concern for institutional stability or resilience to change. By examining the long term effects of institutional choices made over time, historical institutionalism assumes that actors are not fully informed of the future consequences of the choices they make; therefore, choices in the past limit behaviour in future. Peters (2012, p. 71) identified that historical institutionalism in political science was the first version of new institutionalism. Historical institutionalism is in the middle between rational choice institutionalism and sociological institutionalism, and as stated, it is the most comprehensive approach from all new institutionalism directions. Regarding historical institutionalism, Lowndes and Roberts (2013, p. 37) identified three common concerns: these analyses are related to politics on a grand geographical scale (states, institutional framework, etc.), the scholars are interested in the long term development of institutions and temporal effects, and some researchers criticise and develop classical Marxism. Historical institutionalism analyses how institutions in different countries evolve and face similar challenges. Rosamond (2013, p. 91) argues that historical institutionalism explores institutional choices and their long-term impact, because institutions are created with a specific purpose, in a specific time, under certain circumstances with certain power, duties and responsibilities. Historical institutionalism examines major institutional changes as an unexpected transformation, which means that long-term institutional stability depends on external shocks that threaten and replace existing institutions with new and unprecedented ones. According to Lecour (2005), historical institutionalism uses periodisation strategy, splitting time into parts. The other basic approach is rational choice institutionalism.

Rational choice institutionalism, according to Rosamond (2000), is concerned with how actors use institutional venues to pursue their interests, how institutions can affect actors' abilities to achieve their interests, reducing the risks of interaction by reducing transaction costs. Lecours (2005, p. 16) assumes that rational choice institutionalism grew out of rational choice theory and its importance lies in strategic calculations of actors. From rational

choice institutionalism it follows that institutions are rules governing the political game and that institutions offer opportunities and constrain activities. Peters (2012, p. 47) shows that in rational choice institutionalism, actors are autonomous and individualistic; they use any decision situation to maximise their own goals. According to this strand, most political life occurs within institutions and institutions consist of rules and obligations for actors; they constrain the behaviour of actors. For the researchers of rational choice institutionalism, institutions are norms that are used by actors to identify actors involved in the decision process, how information is structured, what the action should be and its sequence. The researchers of the rational choice approach argue that individuals are rationally designed individualists, who, making decisions and choices, calculate their gains and losses. Institutions in rational choice institutionalism are significant, because institutions shape and determine the strategic behaviour of individuals. Compared to historical and rational choice institutionalism, it should be noted that sociological institutionalism identifies how institutions create meaning for individuals and it is based on cognitive scripts.

Lowndes and Roberts (2012, p. 3) explain that institutions are special procedures and practices, they produce stable values and recurring patterns of behaviour. According to the mentioned authors, new institutionalism is just as interested in the ways in which political behaviour and identities are shaped by institutions of dictatorship, tribalism, militarism, one-party states or religious republics (Lowndes and Roberts, 2012, p. 6). Lowndes and Roberts (2012, pp. 21–22) offer three phases of new institutionalism development: Phase 1 – Exploration and Rediscovery (1930s to 1970s), Phase 2 – Divergence and Division (early 1980s to late 1990s), Phase 3 – Convergence and Consolidation (early 2000s to date). The first phase includes a reappraisal of old institutionalism and subsequent reformation in the form of new institutionalism. In the second phase, new institutionalism grows rapidly in different directions and becomes very fragmented and happened via basic schools of new institutionalism. The third phase shows consolidation, because around core concepts and key dilemmas, different types of new institutionalism started to come together. The scholars recognise that theory evolves. To conclude the theoretical discussions, one can confirm that new institutionalism consists of at least nine different approaches, which call themselves new institutionalism.

## Fragmentation of new institutionalism

Most scholars have agreed on three basic approaches of new institutionalism, but at the same time, it is important that there is no consensus on this issue, because Olsson (2016, p. 12) identifies four dominant types of new institutionalism: rational choice, normative, sociological and historical institutionalism, Lane and Ersson (2002, p. 29) call sociological institutionalism holistic institutionalism, and Armstrong and Bulmer (1998) split new institutionalism into the historical and rational choice institutionalism (Rosamond, 2000, p. 114), Peters has shown seven different types of new institutionalism (additionally to the basic approaches: normative, empirical, interest representative, international institutionalism) (Lecours, 2005, p. 17), but Lowndes and Roberts (2013, p. 31) offer more than nine different approaches of new institutionalism. Among all the identified new institutionalism approaches, new strands of institutionalism have derived not from basic forms, but other approaches.

New institutionalism has been applied in art as well, for instance, according to Kolb and Fluckiger (2014, p. 4), new institutionalism can be identified in a series of curators, an art education and administrative practice that emerged in the 1990s. All directions of new institutionalism show that the movement of new institutionalism has been developing in a fragmented manner (Table 1). The challenge of new institutionalism is its diversity; therefore, the question of its consolidation is topical (Power, 2020).

New institutionalism basic approaches	Other approaches of new institutionalism
Historical institutionalism Rational choice institutionalism Sociological institutionalism	Normative institutionalism Empirical institutionalism International institutionalism Network institutionalism Constructivist or discursive institutionalism Feminist institutionalism, etc.

**Table 1. New institutionalism approaches (Lowndes and Roberts, 2013, p. 31)**

Normative institutionalism deals with norms; it studies the ways how norms and values embodied in political institutions shape individual behaviour. Normative institutionalism stands very close to sociological institutionalism, and it might be stated that normative institutionalism is the beginning of new institutionalism. Rational choice institutionalism defines political institutions as the systems which consist of rules and inducements, individuals maximising their utilities (Lowndes and Roberts, 2013, p. 31). Historical institutionalism analyses how the decisions made in the past influence institutional design and governmental systems, as well as individual decision making in future. Empirical institutionalism is a tradition which classifies different types of institutions and analyses their impact on government performance; by its nature, it is very close to traditional approaches. According to international institutionalism, each state strategy shapes structural constraints of international political life – these constraints can be formal or informal. Sociological institutionalism identifies how institutions create meaning for individuals, but network institutionalism shows how patterns of interaction among groups and individuals affect political behaviour. Constructivist or discursive institutionalism analyses institutions as behaviour shapers through frames of meaning; this means narratives and ideas that are used to explain and legitimise political action. The scholars of feminism institutionalism study institutions and gender norms; their interest lies in how gender norms operate within institutions and how institutions and their processes affect, construct and maintain gendered power dynamics.

All the mentioned strands of new institutionalism matter and show that institutions can be analysed from a different perspective, and they should be analysed as they influence political life and decision making. Chrysochoou (2003, p. 49) argues that for new institutionalism, institutions are instruments which can shape the patterns of political behaviour, and this refers not only to formal organs of government, but also to the standard procedures in governmental structures, such as norms and conventions of behaviour. New institutionalism derives from old institutionalism and there are several aspects which differentiate ‘new’ from ‘old’: in new institutionalism, researchers analyse not only formal rules and government, but also informal aspects of institutions – norms, ideas, coalitions and network; new institutionalism analyses how institutions act in practice and how institutions determine actors’ behaviour. New institutionalism has three basic strands, and each of them is called ‘New institutionalism’. Hall and Taylor (1996) note that all basic strands of new institutionalism ‘seek to elucidate the role that institutions play in the determination of social and political outcome’. Taking all that into account, it is necessary to examine all three basic strands and identify how these basic strands can be applied to identify the nature of defence and military institutions.

## Defence institutions and basic approaches of new institutionalism

The field of defence and security is specific, with its own culture and specifics in decision making, execution, procedures, subordination and thinking, etc. In the defence and security sphere, the long term effect of research is significant, because wrong

decisions made in the past can have important effects and consequences in the future. Policymakers depend on decisions made in the past. Processes include choice and changes of strategy, reasonable use of resources, etc. It is a question of long-term strategic thinking. For defence and security, by researching defence institutions within the framework of historical institutionalism, the usefulness of past decisions, policy choices, appropriate strategy choices, and specific acquisitions (technology, equipment, etc.) for future policy-makers can be identified.

The impact of past decisions is significant in the field of defence and security in the future, because every state's basic task is to ensure defence and security. Therefore, by historical institutionalism, the negative or positive effect of past decisions, the past investment effect, completed tasks, the change in strategies, the types of influence and other issues can be identified. Taking into account the fact that there is a wide range of defence and security institutions, by deeper analysis relationships between these institutions, their dynamics, and the long-term impact on decisions, etc. can be identified. Changes in the institutions and how they operate are particularly influenced by outside events (including international environment), especially when there are crises or conflicts, or even war between countries.

In institutions, individuals collaborate, because collaboration brings more benefits than working alone. The goals of political actors are organised hierarchically, and they create their preferences based on interests and goals in a given institutional context. According to Hall and Taylor (1996), the relevant actors have a fixed set of preferences or tastes, behave entirely instrumentally to maximise preferences, and do so in a highly strategic manner by calculation. Changes are taking place in the institutional framework all the time and, consequently, actors are affected by these changes. In the field of defence, institutions are strictly regulated, defining actors' duties, rights and boundaries of action, and limiting their freedom.

By rational choice institutionalism in a particular period, the influence of security and defence institutions on actors and their choices, how these choices are limited, and how actors use the defence and security institution framework for their own benefits and the common good and how actors' choices influence state policy can be identified. Actors' strategies in defence and security change when the external environment is changing, and institutional constraints change as well. Institutions are in some way the rules of the game. In the defence and security sector, rules are different from the civilian sector. In general, the relevant actors have a fixed set of preferences or tastes (usually conforming to more precise conditions such as the transitivity principle), behave entirely instrumentally to maximise the attainment of these preferences, and do so in a highly strategic manner that presumes extensive calculation.

Sociological institutionalism is an approach to institutions that emphasises their capacity to socialise actors and thereby influence interests and identities. Researchers of sociological institutionalism have moved forward; they analyse not only regulative and normative pillars of institutions, but they form a discussion on values, beliefs, and cognitive scripts. According to Durkheim (1985, p. 45), sociology can be defined as the science of institutions. In sociological institutionalism, actors are social beings; therefore, actors are not self-interested and rational, but they are satisfiers, and they act habitually. Steinmo (2008, p. 126) points out that: "humans are thought by sociological institutionalists generally to follow a 'logic of appropriateness' – meaning that rather than asking themselves 'What do I get out of X?', people first ask themselves 'What should I do?'. Kim and Robertson (2003, p. 5) identify that one school of sociological institutionalists understands the concept of institutions as a web of interrelated norms – formal

and informal – governing social relationships, while yet suggesting that institutions are the cognitive scripts, categories and models that are indispensable for action. Peters (2012, p. 137) showed that for Scott, institutions in sociological institutionalism consist of cognitive, normative and regulative structures and activities that provide stability and meaning to social behaviour.

A similarity between normative and sociological institutionalism has been observed. Some authors combine both directions and there are authors who analyse them separately. The founders of new institutionalism are March and Olsen and their version of new institutionalism includes lots of assumptions of normative aspect, but, at the same time, their argument is sociological institutionalism. Sociological institutionalism has developed including a cognitive aspect with cognitive scripts that are a significant element in strategy and decision making. With regard to sociological institutionalism, Premfors points out that it is based on three ideas: firstly, human actions depend on the social context where they occur, an agency is rather context-driven than goal-driven, and it is influenced by cultural logic; secondly, context is institutionalised – institutions not only affect actors in their immediate sphere, but they influence all society; thirdly, institutions operate at a sub-conscious level as well, by providing cultural infrastructure in society (Lowndes and Roberts, 2013). Institutionalisation is an ongoing process; it includes adaptation to the changes in the external environment. Institutionalism approaches can be used for example to identify the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) or European Union Common Security Defence Policy's (EU CSDP) impact on the national defence and security environment or the functioning of defence and security institutions.

According to Ouyang and Haydu, institutions in sociological institutionalism influence not only strategies and interests, but models of relationships among actors, their preferences, goals, identity and ideas, actors existence (Lecours, 2005). Bingham (2018) assumes that institutional structure means how actors act in context. In sociological institutionalism, the most important difference from other approaches of institutionalism is the cognitive dimension – cognitive scripts. Cognition is the mental action or process of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought, experience, and the senses. Cognitive processes use existing knowledge and generate new knowledge. Shank and Abelson, dealing with cognitive script theory, explore how mental structures organise knowledge and inform our understanding of the world, and both authors define cognitive scripts as related sequences of actions that characterise frequently experienced events and, in turn, guide expectations and behaviour in everyday situations (Jensen, 2006, p. 185). It is some kind of template of action. Cognitive scripts are useful mental mechanisms; new scripts may require cognitive processing and resources.

In the field of security and defence, the same experience over time creates an internalised “template” for a possible sequence of actions for the involved actors. This sequence may change over time. These changes in the external environment and regulatory and normative frameworks of the institution can cause changes in the cognitive scripts. Scripts that help actors to understand the current situation, to make a proper decision – it is based on past experience, knowledge and expectations. Scripts are formed through participation and observation over a lifetime and are activated through the understanding of similar situations and prior experience understood as behavioural instruction or a series of instructions that determine what to do in the specific situation. Applying sociological institutionalism changes in cognitive scripts are being identified over time, which is a vital factor in political analyses. Defence and security institutions are complicated structures with actors who think differently, because actors involved in defence and security policy should think differently than others and they should act strategically and evaluate things

with long term effect. Therefore, by using sociological institutionalism to identify the institutional impact on policy outcomes, it is possible to recognise actors' cognitive script, changes in cognitive scripts, and causes that influence and determine cognitive scripts.

## Conclusion

Attention has been paid to institutions in political science since the 16th century. Institutions have become larger, more complex, resourceful, and more significant to collective life and the outcome of politics. Institutions are not just formal rules, they are also symbols, systems, moral templates, and cognitive scripts. New institutionalism is a broad movement in contemporary political science, and all new institutionalism approaches have a common premise – institutions matter. The concept 'new institutionalism' was named by March and Olsen; it derives from old institutionalism. There are three phases of new institutionalism development: Exploration and Rediscovery (1930s to 1970s), Divergence and Division (early 1980s to late 1990s), Convergence and Consolidation (early 2000s to date). This article is a part of the debate on the new institutionalism with a focus on military institutions. This article is not a detailed study of all strands of new institutionalism or military institutions, but it highlights the need for a further discussion and research in this direction.

Most scholars have agreed on three basic approaches (historical, rational choice and sociological institutionalism) of new institutionalism, but at the same time, there is no consensus on this issue. National policies are embedded in an institutional framework; therefore, for better understanding of national policy and its changes, especially in the field of defence, it is essential to understand the nature of these institutions. By new institutionalism, mechanisms of institutional action, decision making process, cognitive thinking of officials, and policy outcomes can be identified, for example to identify the effect of a NATO, EU CSDP or military armed conflict on national and security policy and its outcome.

The major claim of institutionalism is that institutions matter. The article identifies basic strands of the new institutionalism that can be applied to identify specific aspects of institutions. Historical institutionalism investigates the long term implications of institutional choices made at a particular time. It analyses how institutions in different countries evolve and face similar challenges. Rational choice institutionalism is concerned with the way actors use institutional venues to pursue their interests, how institutions can affect actors' abilities to achieve their interests and reduce risks of interaction by reducing transaction costs. According to rational choice institutionalism, institutions are rules governing the political game; institutions offer opportunities and constrain activities.

The goals of political actors are organised in a hierarchical manner. They create preferences based on interests and goals in a given institutional context. Sociological institutionalism is an approach to institutions that emphasises their capacity to socialise actors and thereby influence interests and identities. Researchers of sociological institutionalism have moved forward. They analyse not only the regulative and normative pillar of institutions, but also form a discussion on values, beliefs and cognitive scripts. Scripts help actors to understand the current situation; therefore, facilitating proper decision making, which in its turn is based on past experience, knowledge and expectations. Scripts are formed through participation and observation over a lifetime. They are activated through understanding of similar situations and prior experience understood as behavioural instruction or a series of instructions that determine what to do in the specific situation.

The military sector and its institutional framework as well as internal decision making, thinking and communication process is specific and different from the civilian sector.

Decisions taken in the past are important in the future, especially in the field of defence and security. The positive or negative effect of past decisions, tasks, a change in strategies, ways of influence and other issues can be identified by historical institutionalism. By rational choice, institutionalism can be identified as the influence of security and defence institutions on actors and their choices, how these choices are limited, and how actors use the defence and security institution framework for their own benefit and the common good, and how actors' choices influence state policy. When the external environment is changing, actors' strategies in defence and security change and institutional constraints change as well. Institutions are like rules of the game. Defence and security institutions are complicated structures with actors who think differently, because actors involved in defence and security policy should think differently than others. They should act strategically and evaluate situations over the long term perspective. Actors can use the institutional framework because they represent the ministry and have the power. The Minister of Defence gives orders to the officials of the Ministry and National Armed Forces. He appoints them to an office and removes them from the office of the State Secretary. He represents the state, and he is the highest authority. Therefore, by using sociological institutionalism to identify the institutional impact on policy outcomes, it is possible to recognise actors' cognitive script, changes in cognitive scripts, and the reasons that influence and determine cognitive scripts. The world is socially constructed and new institutionalism's basic trends offer a way of analysing defence and security institutions. The new institutionalism and aspects of military institutions show that for further discussions, research should be based on a specific military institutional study, because the Ministry of Defence has a wide range of functions: it draws up, develops and implements state policy for defence, it plans development capabilities of the National Armed Forces (infrastructure, personnel, etc.), and each Minister of Defence has his own understanding of defence policy and the Minister formulates and determines policy, based on experience, observations and recommendations.

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