

Multi-Domain Operations in a Norwegian Context

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NATO's 2022 Strategic Concept describes an ambition to enhance "*collective readiness, responsiveness, deployability, integration and interoperability*" (NATO, 2022b: pp. 1) through introducing *multi-domain operations* (MDO) (NATO, 2022a). MDO, similarly to US Joint All-Domain Operations (JADO) (Department of Defense, 2022) and UK Multi-Domain Integration (MDI) (Strategic Command and Ministry of Defence, 2022), means utilizing disruptive digital technology to enhance interoperability. NATO's Strategic Concept may be understood as indicating an intent to aim for a new doctrine for "[...] *the orchestration of military activities, across all domains and environments, synchronized with non-military activities [...]*" (NATO, 2022a, 2022b). This ambition, though, is demanding, and is acknowledged within NATO circles, stating that "*The effective application of Multi-Domain Operations can only be achieved through a cultural change, by nations and NATO [...]*" (NATO, 2022b: pp. 1).

The approximation towards MDO may, however, look different and possibly even more demanding from a small-state perspective. An invasive change in national doctrines and concepts will be challenging, entailing both technological, structural, and cultural change. For a small state economy, like Norway's, this change may be a bridge too far. But, on the other hand, integrating civil capacities in an overarching concept for national instruments of power may imply amplified national defence capability through exploiting existing resources. This research project addresses an area that is still quite new in academic research and will provide new knowledge on the effects of the digital shift within armed forces. Organization theory may provide lenses for describing and exploring, and providing knowledge on this apparently imminent change, through instrumental and institutional perspectives (Christensen et.al., 2017; March & Olsen, 1989; Smircich, 1985; Thompson, 2007). Focusing on Norway as a case and delimiting to implications of organizational change leads to the following research question; *What characterizes Norway's position in adapting to MDO; and how may MDO in a Norwegian context be explained through organization theory perspectives?*

KEYWORDS

Digitalization; Operational Capability; Military Technology; Multi-Domain Operations

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