



Faculty of Campus Fryslân

Neutrality and UN Peacekeeping: A Paradox?

Bachelor's Thesis

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Abstract

Neutrality has continuously been a foundation in international relations, while the implications of military personnel contributions to United Nations (UN) peacekeeping missions continue to be undiscovered. This thesis explored the influencing variables for military personnel contributions from the neutral countries of Austria, Ireland and Switzerland. Following a quantitative approach this research examined five independent variables (IV), military expenditure as a percentage of GDP, size of the military, number of UN peacekeeping missions attended, GDP per capita PPP, and the population size, and their correlation to the dependent variable (DV) of military personnel contributions. The results demonstrated that four IVs, military expenditure, size of the military, number of peacekeeping missions attended, and population size, had strong negative correlations with military personnel contributions. Illustrating that higher values in these variables correlate with fewer contributions. Contrastingly, GDP per capita PPP revealed a moderate positive correlation with the DV, implying that wealthier neutral countries are more likely to contribute military personnel. The findings underlined the intricate relationship between economic ability, national interest, and international responsibilities. Through incorporating aspects from constructivism and institutional theory the thesis emphasises the impact of legal frameworks, societal norms, and national identity for the actions of neutral nations. The study fills a gap in the existing English, French, and German literature by merging the fields of neutrality and UN peacekeeping. This aimed to provide a basis for future research to investigate further political and historical factors on the matter of neutrality. Finally, this thesis contributed to the understanding of how neutrality formed the global-local connections between peacekeeping obligations and national limitations.

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I. Introduction

The concept of neutrality has been a core part of international relations (Fischer et al., 2016). Although the concept of neutrality had initially been devised to promote peace and nonalignment, it brings with it situations of moral and ethical predicaments when faced with major issues such as violations of human rights in areas of conflict. In today's contemporary world, only a few nations title themselves as being neutral, such as Austria, Japan, Singapore, Sweden, and Switzerland. With these countries and others serving as a sample for this research, the aim is to examine what the influence of political, and economic variables have on the military personnel contributions to the UN peacekeeping mission. The decisions that a neutral country takes politically for or against partaking in UN Peacekeeping play a significant role as it indicates what values the country is willing to represent, and what international responsibilities it deems necessary to uphold. For neutral countries, acting on the international stage comes with certain challenges, primarily as they balance their neutrality with other international responsibilities at times of peace (Albrecht, 1988). Neutral countries on the international stage are commonly recognised for being moral leaders, advocates for disarmament, and promoting peaceful coexistence (Albrecht, 1988). With neutrality having been applied by several countries throughout history, its meaning has been redefined as time has gone by. While originally standing for the withholding of military actions during the time of wars between monarchies, the concept now includes "the maintenance of an attitude of impartiality toward the belligerents, and the recognition by the belligerents of this abstention and impartiality" (Kaddorah, 2022). With the developments in the modern world evolving to levels that were deemed unimaginable decades and centuries ago, the role of neutral countries in international relations has changed. Along with that, the responsibilities of nations and the way that they act internationally have been redefined. Therefore, this thesis aims to explore the gap in the existing literature regarding the factors that influence and determine the contribution of military troops from neutral countries towards UN Peacekeeping missions.

For this research paper, it is important to consider the following limitations. The study's analysed data concentrated on three restricted cases of neutral countries, stemming from the UN's definition of neutrality, which influenced the correlational results. The larger data sample size of forty-five countries reduced the impacts of single outlier values, demonstrating the necessity for a revised definition of neutrality in forthcoming research. Moreover, valuable political factors influencing contributions to peacekeeping were not able to be quantified. Lastly, the lack of existing literature created a dependence on the chosen quantifiable variables, creating the suggestion that future studies should investigate further influencing aspects.

II. Literature Review

A. Theoretical Framework

Through the theories of constructivism and institutional theory, it is possible to thoroughly address the interconnectedness between institutional limitations and normative impacts for military personnel contributions from neutral countries towards UN peacekeeping missions. Initially, institutionalist theory highlights the way that official laws, societal norms, and structures form the behaviour as well as actions of nations and organisations (Jönsson & Tallberg, 2001; Keohane & Martin, 1995). Therefore, using the institutional theory is important due to the research delving into how institutional factors, like the United Nations legal framework through the UN Charter, international treaties on neutrality like The Hague Conventions, and international agreements, impact the military personnel contributions made by neutral countries towards UN peacekeeping missions. When taking it all into account it established an appropriate theoretical framework from which the role of international institutions, like in the case of this paper the UN, shape the actions of neutral states.

The theory of constructivism is relevant as a theoretical framework due to the research of the paper inquiring into the continuously developing concept of neutrality, and how different neutral

countries interpret and apply it. Constructivism underscores the role that values, norms, and identities play in forming the actions of states (Adler, 1997; Reus-Smit & Snidal, 2008; Snyder, 2004). As the paper researches how the concept of neutrality is interpreted and operationalised by Austria, Ireland and Switzerland, it aligns with the principles of constructivism. This comes as a result of exploring quantifiable values which provide insights into the identities of the neutral nations as international actors and what influences their choices for military personnel contributions to UN peacekeeping.

B. Legal Foundation of Neutrality

First and foremost, neutrality in the contemporary world today has the following definition from the United Nations, "the legal status arising from the abstention of a state from all participation in a war between other states, the maintenance of an attitude of impartiality toward the belligerents, and the recognition by the belligerents of this abstention and impartiality" (United Nations, 2025). To aid in the development of this definition the United Nations (UN) relied on the law of neutrality established in The Hague Convention of 1907 (EDA, 2022).

The Hague Convention of 1907 (XIII) along with the Hague Convention of 1899 were the first multilateral international treaties to refer to conduct during warfare. Article 1 of the Hague Convention XIII states that

“Belligerents are bound to respect the sovereign rights of neutral Powers and to abstain, in neutral territory or neutral waters, from any act which would, if knowingly permitted by any Power, constitute a violation of neutrality.” (The Hague Convention, 1907).

Article 1 established the international legal acceptance of the neutrality of States, as well as their territory, and actions. Moreover, Article 2, states that any acts of hostility, such as capture or the right of search by a warship in the territory of a neutral country and its waters is a direct violation of that

country's neutrality (The Hague Convention, 1907). Article 9 of the Hague Convention XIII, states that

“a neutral State must not discriminate between belligerents regarding admission into its ports, roadsteads, or territorial waters.” (The Hague Convention, 1907).

The Hague Convention XIII set a precedent for neutral States, with belligerent states having a legal obligation to respect their neutrality, as well as neutral countries having the obligation to not differentiate their actions towards other countries.

The UN Charter of the United Nations established the commitments, structure of governing, and general framework of the UN along with its six principle governmental organs (United Nations, 2025b). It was signed on June 26th, 1945, and came into effect on October 24th, 1945, following the United Nations Conference on International Organisation (United Nations Charter, 1945). Chapter VII of the UN Charter is titled ‘Action with Respect to Threats to Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression’, encompassing Articles 39-51 and stipulates the UN’s ability to act with force if deemed appropriate and necessary by the UN Security Council (United Nations Charter, 1945). James Upcher in his Chapter on ‘Neutrality and the UN Charter’ from the book ‘Neutrality In Contemporary International Law’ provides a clear breakdown of how certain Articles of the Charter align with or contradict the principle of neutrality of States. Chapter VII and peace operations include specific provisions where there is ‘inequality or imbalance between the UN and a State against which it is taking Chapter VII action has legal effect.’ (Upcher, 2020). Article 2 (5) of Chapter 1 states

“All Members shall give the United Nations every assistance in any action it takes in accordance with the present Charter and shall refrain from giving assistance to any state against which the United Nations is taking preventive or enforcement action” (United Nations Charter, 1945).

It can be concluded that Article 2 (5) cannot mandatorily be imposed on a neutral State to assist the UN through military support. However, Upcher mentions that like the first part of Article 2 (5), the obligation to not aid a state which is subject to actions of Chapter VII can be used to override specific responsibilities that a state would otherwise have followed the law of neutrality (Upcher, 2020).

Therefore, although Article 2 (5) enables neutral states to fulfil their neutral obligations, certain possibilities under the UN Charter can allow for specific actions from Chapter VII to be disregarded. Moreover, Article 43 of the Charter reads as stating that the Security Council is not able to mandate Member States to provide military forces to its availability without an agreement in place (Upcher, 2020). Therefore, it can be understood that the Security Council cannot force military participation from Member States, which allows neutral countries to decide, at their discretion, when to provide armed support.

Under Chapter V: The Security Council, Article 25 states that nations are under the obligation to accept and carry out UNSC decisions (United Nations Charter, 1945). Article 25 removes the possibility for a neutral country to object to any actions which may contradict its neutrality (Upcher, 2020). Therefore, the sovereignty of a neutral State is not necessarily upheld by the UN, especially if the Security Council's decision contradicts its national principles.

According to the UN Charter, it has precedence over other international duties that a nation may have. This is stated under Article 103, Chapter XIII: Miscellaneous Provisions, "In the event of a conflict between the obligations of the Members of the United Nations under the present Charter and their obligations under any other international agreement, their obligations under the present Charter shall prevail." (United Nations Charter, 1945). Article 103 operates to ensure that obligations under the Charter are given priority over other international obligations when a situation of conflict between legal norms emerges. Furthermore, according to the UN Charter, Chapter XIII takes precedence over the 1899 and 1907 Hague Conventions following the implementation of Article 103 of the UN Charter (Upcher, 2020).

Table 1: Overview of The Hague Convention and UN Charter

Mentioned Legal Treaties		
Title	Year of Coming into Effect	Signatory Organisations / Countries
The Hague Convention ¹	1907	40 Signatory States, 30 States Ratified / Accession
UN Charter ²	1945	UN Member States

C. Legal Foundation for UN Peacekeeping

Whilst it is important to understand the literature regarding neutrality and the neutral nations focused upon in this paper, it is equally important to delve into the literature of UN Peacekeeping Missions. The existing literature for UN Peacekeeping Missions demonstrates the complexity involved with its application legally founded from the UN Charter and international law, politically, and practically.

George Khatidze's paper "The Legal Basis and Guiding Principles of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations" delves into the legal foundation and conditions that UN Peacekeeping Missions are based on. The legal foundation for UN Peacekeeping Missions stems from the recognition from the International Court of Justice and interpretations based on the fundamental objectives of the UN which states that the creation of peacekeeping forces had to be inferred from the doctrine of implied powers (Khatidze, 2011). The legal conditions of UN Peacekeeping Missions have been defined into three segments, 'Consent of the Host State', 'Impartiality of the United Nations Peacekeepers', and 'Peacekeeping Operations and the Use of Force' (Khatidze, 2011). Having the consent of the host state as a legal foundation for UN Peacekeeping is crucial to ensure that cooperation between those involved occurs and to respect sovereignty equally (Khatidze, 2011). The conclusion drawn from the section regarding 'Consent of the Host State' is that consent develops

¹ The Hague Convention, October 18, 1907, <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/hague-conv-xiii-1907/state-parties>

² United Nations Charter, October 24, 1945, <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/full-text>

dynamically in practice. Peacekeeping operations although being set out as consensual and conciliatory through changing mandates can become a mission with non-consensual application and combative (Khatidze, 2011). The second legal condition of ‘Impartiality of the United Nations Peacekeepers’ highlights that peacekeeping missions must be committed to being impartial, and not favouring a side (Khatidze, 2011). Being impartial is not only a legal obligation but also a political requirement to ensure its success (Khatidze, 2011). The impartiality of UN peacekeepers has been questioned considering the actions conducted by UN peacekeepers in the missions in Somalia (1992-1993 and 1993-95) and Yugoslavia (1992-1993) (Khatidze, 2011). Moreover, the paper demonstrates that peacekeepers can act when clear violations of agreements or international law have occurred, however, they have the duty to not overstep their role. Lastly, the third legal condition of ‘Peacekeeping Operations and the Use of Force’ demonstrates that the lines between self-defence and aggression used by UN peacekeepers are not clear (Khatidze, 2011). Additionally, throughout time the definition of force has been expanded to include defending the mission’s goals (Khatidze, 2011). This has led to the principle of proportionality being essential when self-defence has been used. This was controversially the case for the missions in Somalia and Yugoslavia where force was used that exceeded the proportionality of self-defence (Khatidze, 2011). Khatidze presented various insights into UN Peacekeeping Missions and the overarching abilities and limitations which it faces. The paper also demonstrated that there are uncertainties as to whether peacekeeping missions can uphold consent and impartiality in such situations.

From an interview with a high-ranking diplomat from one of the selected neutral countries, it was highlighted that the UNSC (United Nations Security Council) always establishes peacekeeping missions with the consent of the affected state or the parties to the conflict; the UNSC therefore does not take sides, but remains neutral; peacekeeping missions therefore do not have an “enforcement mandate”, which would contradict their neutrality. Therefore, the participation of neutrals in peacekeeping missions was never seen as controversial. On the contrary, neutrals have always been considered particularly predestined to participate in peacekeeping missions. It is decisive for neutrals, e.g. for the question of overflight authorizations, whether such measures are authorized by the UNSC

with a decision under Chapter VII UN Charter, e.g. Iraq/Kuwait, or are not authorized, e.g. Iraq 2003, Kosovo/Serbia.

Alexander Orakhelashvili's chapter 'The Legal Basis of the United Nations Peace-Keeping Operations' from the book 'International Peacekeeping' provided insights into the ability to establish peacekeeping forces and is like Khatidze's paper regarding the legal foundation (Orakhelashvili, 2017). To do so, Orakhelashvili analyses international law and the UN Charter. There is a slight overlap between the legal literature on neutrality above and Orakhelashvili's chapter regarding the UN Charter, as he highlights Chapters VI, VII and VIII as being relevant and necessary for the establishment of UN Peacekeeping (Orakhelashvili, 2017). From the analysis of the UN Charter's chapters, it is the UNSC, and the General Assembly can create the legal basis for missions (Orakhelashvili, 2017). Moreover, the chapter also revealed that local organisations can create forces despite missing UN approval, which had been frequently used by the 'Great Powers' (Orakhelashvili, 2017). To conclude the chapter, Orakhelashvili stated that due to operational and financial constraints faced by regional organisations are dependent on contributions for legal aid. This is done to strengthen the UN's main objective for peace efforts in exclusive regional areas.

Further literature, like the works from, Lise Morjé Howard's journal article "Peacekeeping, Peace Enforcement, and UN Reform", the "UN Peacekeeping Operations Capstone Doctrine" report from the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, Maurice Flory's journal article "L'ONU et les opérations de maintien et de rétablissement de la paix", similarly highlight the UN's role in UN peacekeeping (De Coning et al., 2008; Flory, 1993; Howard, 2015). This includes the legal role of the UN and the UNSC regarding the deployment of UN peacekeepers, as well as criticisms towards the UN for the actions conducted by peacekeepers on certain missions. Furthermore, Flory's article emphasised that the UN's peacekeeping missions are essential in attempting to keep peace, whilst balancing its participation balance idealism and the political realities which face constant adjustments (Flory, 1993).

The literature has shown that UN Peacekeeping Missions are legally, politically, and practically challenging to be established, successful, and true to their original mandate. However, when considering this all it becomes clear that there is a gap in the literature. With existing literature analysing either UN Peacekeeping Missions and their implications, or the role and application of neutral countries internationally, the combination of both has not been addressed. Therefore, this paper aims to fill this gap, from the English, French and German literature, by investigating how the neutrality of Austria, Ireland, and Switzerland influences their respective military personnel contributions to UN Peacekeeping Missions.

D. Historical Background on the Selected Neutral Countries

It is important to provide some historical background into the neutral nations that will be discussed in this paper and particularly on the three neutral countries of Austria, Ireland, and Switzerland which this paper will focus on. Initially, Austria had like Japan not been neutral before the end of World War II having been the Austro-Hungarian Empire and then annexed by Nazi Germany in 1938 commonly known as the Anschluss (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2025). During the Allied occupation of Austria beginning in 1945, Austria started to embrace its permanent neutrality as a condition for the withdrawal of Allied forces (U.S. Department of State Archive, 1955). 5 Months after the signing of the Austrian State Treaty, Austria legally enshrined its neutrality by passing Federal Constitutional Law of October 26, 1955 (Hilpold et al., 2023). It was emphasised that the Austrian people had voluntarily chosen to pursue neutrality, instead of having it be forced upon them (Hilpold et al., 2023). In 1956, Austria declined initial inclusion in the European Economic Community, now known as the European Union, due to its commitment to neutrality and joined other states in a less integrated economic entity known as the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) (Luif, 2016). However, with Austria's economy facing issues, and having developed a simplified classification of neutrality it applied to the EEC in July of 1989, and followed other EFTA countries such as Finland, and Sweden who acceded to the EU on January 1, 1995 (Luif, 2016).

However, Austria has since 1955 refused NATO membership as well as refusing to have foreign military bases on its soil, and in the 2024 election 76% of the population voted in favour of remaining neutral, and 18% were in favour of joining NATO (Pavel, 2024). Furthermore, Austria has been involved throughout the world in peacekeeping missions ranging from the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) to the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) earning Austria an official press release from the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations Jean-Pierre Lacroix thanking it for its contributions to peace (United Nations, 2021). All together this goes to show that Austria abides by the definition established by the United Nations on neutrality and has contributed to various humanitarian peacekeeping missions, making it a viable choice for this study.

Furthermore, Ireland since gaining its independence from the United Kingdom in 1922 has declared itself as a neutral country withholding from joining military alliances such as NATO as well as defence pacts and taking part in international conflicts (Stevenson, 2025). Furthermore, during the Cold War in the 1970s, Ireland remained neutral and did not become a member of the Non-Alignment Movement. However, at the start of the 1970s Ireland had changed its strict stance on neutrality to include the commitment to "United Nations peacekeeping, human rights and disarmament" (Tonra et al., 2013). Ireland's neutrality is not codefined by law or by any other legal status, but however, has been recognised and adopted as the foreign policy. Ireland in 1972 held a referendum on whether to join the European Community (EC), at the time 83% of the population voted in favour, and in 1973 officially became a Member State (European Commission, 2025). However, as with Austria, Ireland faced a challenge with the Maastricht Treaty of 1993 which transformed the EC into the EU and created the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The CFSP included the mutual defence clause under the Treaty of the European Union (TEU) Article 42 (7) from the Lisbon Treaty which states

"If a Member State is the victim of armed aggression on its territory, the other Member States shall have towards it an obligation of aid and assistance by all the means in their power, in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. This shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States.

Commitments and cooperation in this area shall be consistent with commitments under the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, which, for those States which are members of it, remains the foundation of their collective defence and the forum for its implementation" (European External Action Service, 2022).

The provision

"This shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States" informally known as the Irish provision, enables neutral member states like Austria and Ireland to forego Article 42.7 TEU and maintain their neutrality (Cramer & Franke, 2021).

Therefore, Ireland has followed the United Nation's definition of neutrality and is relevant to this paper.

Lastly, Switzerland is the country best known for its neutrality internationally. Switzerland's neutrality was first established and internationally recognised by the Congress of Vienna in 1815 in a declaration by the European monarchies of Russia, the United Kingdom, Prussia, Austria, and France (EDA, 2022). Since 1815, Switzerland has described its neutrality as an armed neutrality where it states that its armed forces are in place to protect its independence as well as territorial integrity. Both Switzerland and Austria have mandatory military service for male citizens. In Switzerland, the military service that male citizens between the ages of 18 and 30 are required to serve spans 18 weeks or 5 months, whereas in Austria the male citizens from the age of 17 until 50 are obligated to serve for a total of 6 months (Bundesheer, 2025; Confoederatio Helvetica, 2025). Through its continuous adherence to the definition of neutrality provided by the UN, Switzerland fulfils the criteria to be included in this paper.

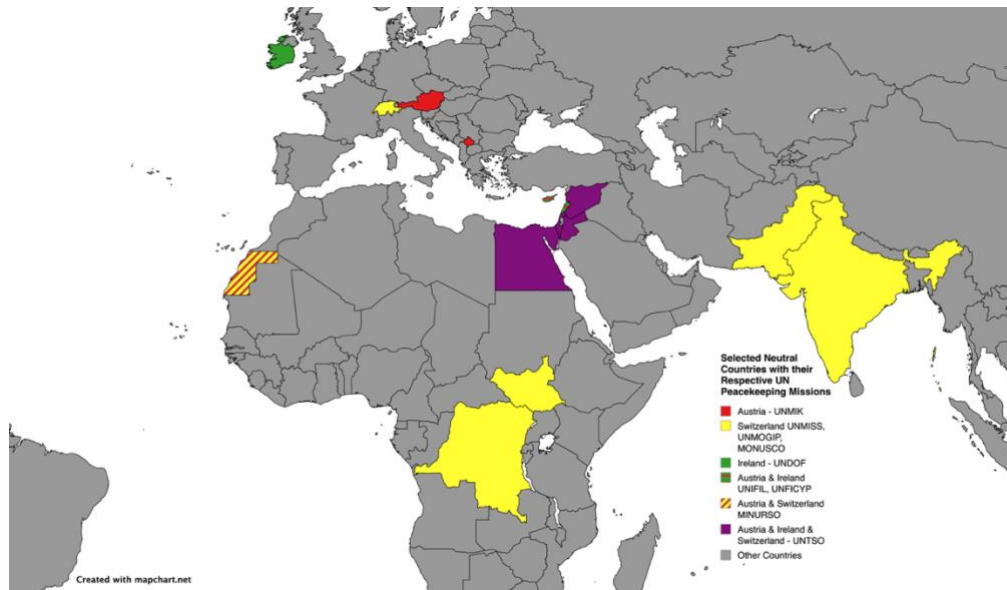
III. Methodology

A. Research Question

The research question that the paper focused on is: **What factors influence the military personnel contributions to UN Peacekeeping Missions for the neutral countries of Austria, Ireland, and Switzerland?**

This research question was chosen based on the existing gap in the literature on the matters of UN Peacekeeping Missions, and the military personnel contributions from Austria, Ireland, and Switzerland. Austria since its neutrality has been active in a total of 5 peacekeeping missions, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), where it deployed 166 of its military personnel (United Nations Peacekeeping, 2025).

Ireland has partaken in more than 4 peacekeeping missions, UNIFIL, UNTSO, UNFICYP, and the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), where it deployed 340 of its military personnel (United Nations Peacekeeping, 2025). Lastly, Switzerland has partaken in 5 peacekeeping missions, UNTSO, MINURSO, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), where a total of 2 military personnel were contributed to these missions (United Nations Peacekeeping, 2025). Having taken these details into account, there are differences between the number of peacekeeping missions and personnel that the respective countries have provided their military personnel. It is, therefore, that this paper needs to investigate the aforementioned research question and determine which of the hypotheses are true.



Graph 1: World Map Neutral Countries of Austria, Ireland, and Switzerland with their Respective UN Peacekeeping Missions

B. Definition & Selection of Neutral Countries

To select the neutral countries that were analysed the paper used the following definition of neutrality established by the United Nations "the legal status arising from the abstention of a state from all participation in a war between other states, the maintenance of an attitude of impartiality toward the belligerents, and the recognition by the belligerents of this abstention and impartiality" (United Nations, 2025). According to the World Population Overview, there are 25 countries which have since 1815 been classified as neutral (World Population Overview, 2025). These countries are in chronological order, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Andorra, Sweden, Vatican City, Ireland, Mexico, Monaco, San Marino, Japan, Costa Rica, Austria, Finland, Singapore, Malta, Panama, Cambodia, Moldova, Turkmenistan, Serbia, Rwanda, Uzbekistan, Ghana, Mongolia, and Haiti (World Population Overview, 2025). However, when applying the United Nation's definition of neutrality to the nations of today, there are only three countries that fit into its criteria. These three countries are Austria, Ireland, and Switzerland.

Nevertheless, after having explored the three selected neutral countries, it is necessary to clarify why nations like Finland, Japan, Singapore, and Sweden have not been included in this list, as they are important countries on the international stage of diplomacy. Finland since it gained its independence in 1917 from Russia had declared its neutrality and profited from the Finnish Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of 1932 as well as the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in 1948, solidifying its neutrality (Danube Institute, 2022). However, Finland moved away from its neutrality, through joining the NATO military alliance on the 4th of April 2023, Finland no longer classified as a neutral state (NATO, 2024).

Japan in 1947 enshrined in Article IX of Japan's new constitution its neutrality renounced wars and limited its military to measures of self-defence. However, Japan and the United States of America concluded the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between Japan and the United States of America in 1960 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 1960). It established a military alliance with U.S. military bases and multilateral military exercises which invalidated Japan's neutrality according to the UN's definition (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 1960).

Singapore became a member of the Non-Alignment Movement in 1970 and has never officially declared its neutrality (Graham, 2024). Furthermore, Singapore hosts various foreign military forces on its soil and is part of the Five Power Defence Arrangements with the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, and Malaysia (Graham, 2024). As a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Singapore sees no contradiction between its values of non-alignment and close defence-related ties with the U.S.A. following 'poly-alignment' for its foreign policy (Graham, 2024). These reasons exemplify Singapore's breaches of the United Nation's definition of neutrality.

Sweden originally declared its neutrality in 1812 making it the first state in the world to be a neutral state. In the twentieth century, Sweden shifted toward having an international foreign policy of furthering international peace, security by means of diplomacy, and cooperative security arrangements (Greene, 2022). However, like Finland, Sweden changed their stance on neutrality by joining NATO on March 7th, 2024, and in joining the alliance lost its neutrality according to the United Nation's definition (Moyer, 2025).

C. Hypotheses

This paper focused on one dependent variable (DV) and five independent variables (IV). The following variables were chosen as they demonstrate and clarify why they influence the military personnel contributions from neutral countries towards UN Peacekeeping Missions.

The DV that the paper examined was the **total military personnel contributions** to UN Peacekeeping Missions made by a country. By counting the total number of military personnel individuals that a country has contributed it demonstrated their ambition and willingness to establish international peace. Therefore, it was the belief that this DV has been influenced by the following IVs and should be able to answer the hypotheses.

The first IV was **military expenditure as a percentage of annual GDP in US dollars**. Annual GDP as a percentage of military expenditure is a necessary IV as it provides a unilateral way of measuring the financial resources which a country has in the areas of defence and military proactivity, regardless of whether the country is neutral. Moreover, if a country has a bigger spending of its annual budget for military and defence there is a clear demonstration of where the countries' priorities lie nationally and speaks to their mentality (Tian et al., 2024). Furthermore, the predicted causal effect was that the larger the military expenditure the more military personnel is contributed from the neutral countries towards UN peacekeeping missions.

The second IV which the paper investigated was the **total number of UN Peacekeeping Missions that a nation has partaken in**. As countries feel a sense of responsibility to internationally protect and uphold the R2P framework they contribute military and defence personnel to peacekeeping missions. This is also an area where both neutral and non-neutral countries contribute whilst following their interests and representing their military involvement. Moreover, the quantity of UN Peacekeeping Missions that a nation has taken part in showcases the value a nation puts on peacekeeping, as well as upholding international responsibilities. It is a choice for nations to partake in UN Peacekeeping Missions and being involved in multiple shows a willingness to uphold the UN's objective of peace and selflessly do this to protect others throughout the globe. Therefore, it was

important to take the total count of UN Peacekeeping Missions as an IV into consideration for this paper as it provided insights into a nation's background towards peacekeeping and what values they wish to uphold. The expected causal relationship would be that the more UN peacekeeping missions that a neutral country has taken part in, the more military personnel that they've contributed towards UN peacekeeping missions.

The third researched IV was the **size of the military**. This indicator aimed to investigate the size of the military personnel that a nation has available. Taking all of this into consideration made this IV relevant as the size of a nation's military could indicate a nation's capability for military actions and contributions. Therefore, the size of a country's active military was deemed important as an IV for this research paper, as the belief is that the bigger the size of the military the more military personnel can be expected to be contributed towards UN peacekeeping missions.

The fourth investigated IV is **GDP per capita Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) (current international \$ (2023))**. The GDP per capita PPP is a financial indicator that measures the average income per person from a country, whilst considering adjustments for differing prices in other countries. This IV was valuable to the paper as it aimed to delve into the economic capabilities of a country to establish military personnel contributions whilst providing a significant comparison between countries with varying economies. As a result, it was a meaningful variable which can provide various insights into a nation's abilities economically which in turn impacts the military personnel contributions. The expected correlational relationship is that the better economic situation of a country would allow the nation to provide more military personnel to UN peacekeeping missions.

The fifth and final IV which the paper explored was the **population of a country** as of 2025. The population of a country is an important determinant of the size of the military contributions that a nation makes. Countries which have a larger population size have the possibility to have more citizens enlist in their military. If a country, then chooses to partake in one or several UN peacekeeping missions then it can contribute more military personnel and aid which would resultingly support in areas of crisis. Additionally, having a larger population was a relevant variable for this paper as it can represent what the strategic interests of that country are, and support long-term contributions to

missions without overstraining their military and their respective abilities. Therefore, population size is a valuable IV for this research.

H₀: The (Independent Variables) did **not effect** on military personnel contributions of neutral countries

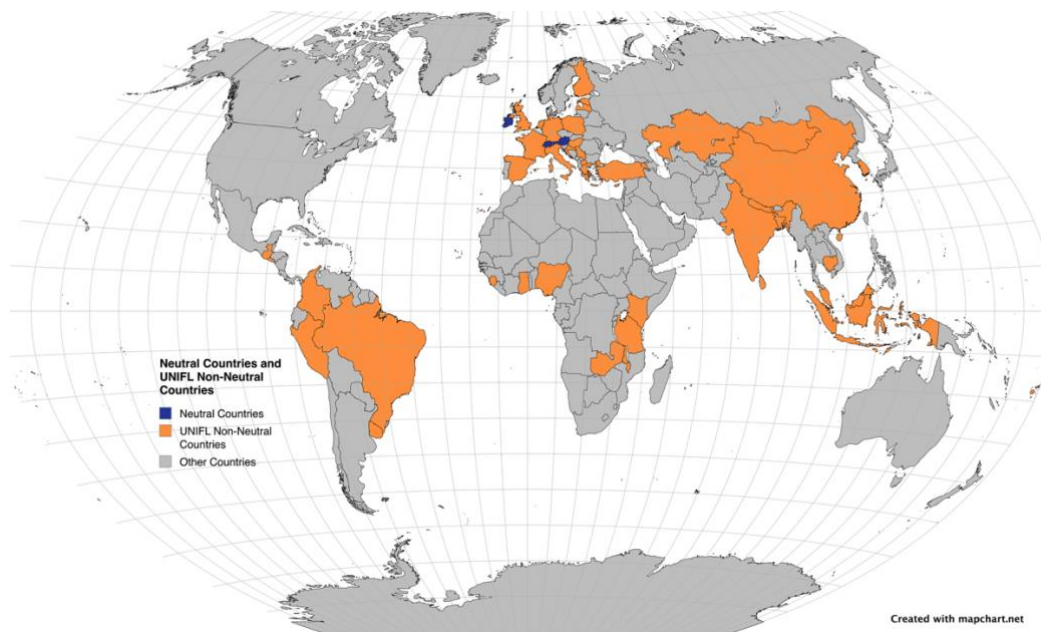
H₁: The (Independent Variables) had a **positive effect** on military personnel contributions of neutral countries

H₂: The (Independent Variables) had a **negative effect** on military personnel contributions of neutral countries

D. Data Collection

The form of collected data for this thesis was quantitative. Quantitative values were used for military expenditure as a percentage of annual GDP in US dollars, number of peacekeeping missions, military personnel contributions, armed forces personnel size, partaken UN Peacekeeping missions, GDP per capita by PPP, and the population of a country (Table 1). Utilising quantitative data allowed for the values from the respective countries to be compared equally. The non-neutral countries, to which the neutral countries were compared, are those from the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). Seeing as Austria and Ireland took part in UNIFIL, and had their highest military personnel contributions for it, and UNIFIL being the fourth largest UN peacekeeping mission to date in terms of personnel contributions, it seemed the best foundation for comparison for this paper is researching (United Nations Peacekeeping, 2025). Moreover, the study included the three neutral countries, and the forty-five UNIFIL participant countries to create a total of forty-eight countries which this paper investigated.

Graph 2: A world map of the Neutral Countries of Austria, Ireland, and Switzerland, in a Global Context with the UNIFIL Non-Neutral Countries chosen for this research



For this paper to answer the chosen research question and its subsequent hypotheses, it relied on primary sources. The relied on primary sources stemmed from databanks, like the World Bank Open Data for its measures of military expenditure as a percentage of annual GDP in US dollars from the most recent year 2023, GDP per capita PPP from the most recent year 2023, and total armed forces personnel. To collect the data, initially the variable “Military expenditure as a percentage of annual GDP in US dollars” was written in the search bar. Once selected the corresponding values for the selected forty-eight countries with the selected variable were noted down in an Excel spreadsheet. This same process had been done for the variables of “GDP per capita PPP” and “Armed forces personnel, total”. Whilst collecting the data this process had been done for a second time to ensure that the values were written down correctly. This process was done for all variables from all data sets. The World Bank Open Data is a reliable source as it uses highly internationally accepted and recognised standards for its methodology, sources, definitions, and classifications (World Bank Open Data, 2025). Through using the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics which is

also used by the International Monetary Fund, the use of its verified data enabled accurate and fair assessments from which conclusions for this paper were drawn.

The data used for the IVs of “number of UN Peacekeeping Missions” and “Military Personnel Contributions” came from the United Nations Peacekeeping website directly. This is because it is a direct source which is continuously updated and factually accurate. The data was collected from the website under the heading of “Resources”, then by the subsection “Data”, then “Troop and police contributors”, and then selecting “Troops” and “Staff Officer” for military personnel members (Graph 3). The data was collected after having individually selected the forty-eight countries and noted down the results in an Excel sheet the total number of military personnel that the respective countries provided.

Lastly, the IV of a country’s population was collected from the Worldometer database website. Data was collected from the following path, on the main page of Worldometer click on the count of “Current World Population” and then under the section of “WORLD POPULATION SECTIONS” choose “Population by Country”. From there, as with the other sources the countries were specifically found and the values from the column “Population (2025)” were noted down in the Excel spreadsheet like the DV and IVs. Worldometer is an independent organisation led by an “international team of developers, researchers, and volunteers” and has been used by various organisations such as Oxford University Press, BBC, IBM, and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) to name a few (Worldometer, 2025b). Having been creating and developing statistics used by nations and receiving data from nations and international organisations, Worldometer is a reliable source for data collection as it continues to uphold academic standards (Worldometer, 2025b).

To analyse the collected data, these was imported from the aforementioned databases into an Excel sheet. Following that in Excel under the ‘Data Analysis’ function the heading ‘Data’ was used followed by selecting the ‘Correlation’ analysis function. Following that, all the variables and the collected data were dragged and selected. The calculations for which stem from the Excel function from “Data” ➡ “Data Analysis” ➡ “Correlation”. Furthermore, to more clearly identify the difference

between the highest positive values and the lowest negative values, the Excel function of “Conditional Formatting” ➡ “New Rule...” is used. From this, it provided a correlation matrix analysis of the collected data and more importantly answers to whether the chosen IV had an influence on the military personnel contributions of neutral countries. This process had been done once, for only the three neutral countries of Austria, Ireland, and Switzerland, and another time for all forty-five countries that partook in UNIFIL.

E. Analysis Framework

To address the gap in the literature a correlation matrix had been used. A correlation matrix is a table which demonstrates the correlation coefficients between two variables and is commonly used to summarise and analyse data (Bock, 2025). The correlation coefficients for correlation matrices are calculated based on Pearson’s correlation coefficient (r) between the selected variables. Pearson’s correlation coefficient is a measurement which indicates the strength and direction of a linear relationship between the variables examined (Bock, 2025).

In the correlation matrix the values that will be demonstrated range from 1.000, which represents an ideal positive linear relationship indicating that as one value rises the other variable does so accordingly, to -1.000, which demonstrates a perfect negative linear relationship showing that as one variable decreases so does the other variable (Bock, 2025). A value of 0 would indicate that there is no linear relationship between the two variables in question. There has not been a universal definition of what defines a strong or weak correlation however, it is generally accepted that values ranging between 0.300 and -0.300 indicate a weak correlation (Nickolas, 2024). A strong correlation is identified in the range of 0.750 and -0.750 (Nickolas, 2024). Taking this all into account, it became clear that using a correlation table would allow this study to answer its research question and hypotheses.

IV. Results

Prior to analysing the collected data from Tables 3 & 4, it is crucial to once again mention the research question and the hypotheses. The research question for this paper is, **what factors influence the military personnel contributions to UN Peacekeeping Missions for the neutral countries of Austria, Ireland, and Switzerland?** Furthermore, the three hypotheses are that the (Independent Variables) have **no effect, had a positive effect, or a negative effect** on military personnel contributions of neutral countries. By conducting a correlation analysis of the IVs and the DV, based on the data gathered in Table 2, it became possible to answer the research question as well as hypotheses. Moreover, it was possible to analyse the data and compare the results from the neutral countries to the forty-five non-neutral countries that partook in the UNIFL.

Table 2: Contains all collected data from the DV and 5 IVs for the neutral countries of Austria, Ireland, and Switzerland, as well as the Non-Neutral UNIFIL participating countries. The 3 neutral countries are highlighted in blue, and the non-neutral countries in orange as referred to in Graph 1.

Countries	Military Personnel Contributions	Military Expenditure (% Of GDP 2023)	Size of the Military	UN Peacekeeping Missions	GDP per capita, PPP (current international \$)	Population 2025
Austria	166	0,80	23000,00	5	70478,80	9113574
Ireland	340	0,20	9000,00	4	124900,90	5308039
Switzerland	2	0,70	20000,00	5	89546,30	8967407
Armenia	33	5,50	47000,00	1	21342,50	2952365
Bangladesh	5422	1,00	22700,00	9	9147,80	175686899
Brazil	45	1,10	76200,00	11	21107,30	212812405
Brunei Darussalam	30	3,00	8000,00	1	85267,60	466330
Cambodia	605	2,10	191000,00	5	7425,50	17847982
China	175	1,70	2535000,00	8	24569,30	1416096094
Colombia	1	2,90	428000,00	3	20784,50	53425635
Croatia	1	1,80	20000,00	3	45603,00	3848160
Cyprus	2	1,80	13000,00	1	57217,40	1370754
El Salvador	53	1,30	42000,00	5	12657,00	6356503
Estonia	1	2,90	7000,00	2	46790,30	1344232
Fiji	308	1,30	4000,00	6	15152,10	933154
Finland	164	2,40	22000,00	5	61734,50	5623329
France	625	2,10	304000,00	5	58317,80	66650804
Germany	173	1,50	183000,00	5	69205,90	84075075
Ghana	2277	0,40	16000,00	12	7543,00	35064272
Greece	132	3,20	147000,00	1	41182,00	9938844
Guatemala	189	0,40	43000,00	7	13750,30	18687881
Hungary	27	2,10	46000,00	4	45021,40	9632287
India	5158	2,40	3068000,00	10	10166,20	1463865525
Indonesia	2531	0,70	676000,00	8	15415,60	285721236
Italy	875	1,60	338000,00	4	57801,40	59146260
Kazakhstan	153	0,50	71000,00	6	38515,20	29843754
Kenya	421	0,90	24000,00	8	6307,20	57532493
Latvia	3	2,30	9000,00	2	41491,50	1853559
Malawi	753	1,00	15000,00	5	1829,50	22216120
Malaysia	836	0,90	136000,00	6	36416,50	35977838
Malta	8	0,60	2000,00	1	63419,80	545405
Mongolia	875	0,60	18000,00	6	18004,90	3517100
Nepal	5697	1,10	112000,00	14	5393,60	29618118
Netherlands	1	1,50	41000,00	2	78305,30	18346819
Nigeria	194	0,80	223000,00	9	6207,40	237527782
North Macedonia	2	1,70	16000,00	1	24390,50	1813791
Peru	232	1,10	158000,00	6	16974,20	34576665
Poland	194	3,80	189000,00	5	46570,50	38140910
Republic of Korea	521	2,80	569000,00	6	52204,00	51667029
Serbia	266	2,90	32000,00	4	28748,50	6689039
Sierra Leone	10	0,60	9000,00	8	3367,50	8819794
Spain	705	1,50	199000,00	3	53299,90	47889958
Sri Lanka	307	1,60	317000,00	4	14460,70	23229470
Turkiye	87	1,50	512000,00	7	42326,20	87685426
United Kingdom	260	2,30	153000,00	7	58225,10	69551332
United Republic of Tanzania	1500	1,20	28000,00	5	4018,50	70545865
Uruguay	922	2,00	22000,00	6	34426,60	3384688
Zambia	994	1,30	16000,00	7	4077,00	21913874

Graph 3: Demonstrating the total combined contribution by mission and personnel type for the countries of Austria, Ireland, and Switzerland (UN Peacekeeping, 2025)

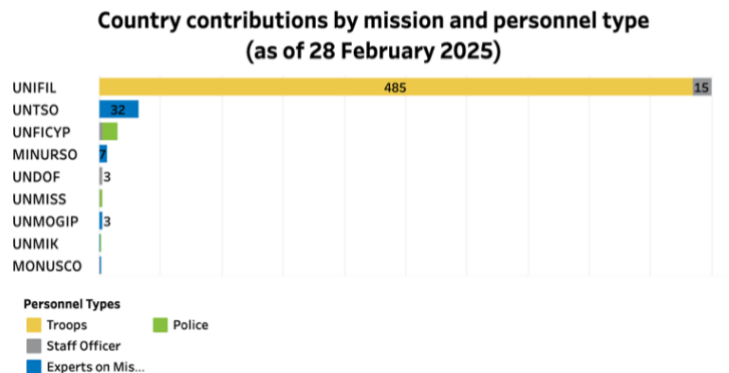


Table 3: Correlation Matrix Analysis for the Neutral Countries of Austria, Ireland, and Switzerland with the Dependent Variable and Independent Variables.

	Military Personnel Contributions	Military Expenditure (% Of GDP (2023 current international \$))	Size of the Military (2020)	UN Peacekeeping Missions (2025)	GDP per capita, PPP (current international \$ (2023))	Population (2025)
Military Personnel Contributions	1,000					
Military Expenditure (% Of GDP (2023 current international \$))	-0.788	1,000				
Size of the Military (2020)	-0.757	0.999	1,000			
UN Peacekeeping Missions (2025)	-0.874	0.988	0.979	1,000		
GDP per capita, PPP (current international \$ (2023))	0.653	-0.981	-0.989	-0.939	1,000	
Population (2025)	-0.857	0.993	0.985	0.999	-0.950	1,000

A. Analysis of the Neutral Countries

To start the analysis, Table 3 represents the correlation matrix for the three chosen neutral countries of Austria, Ireland, and Switzerland and their values for all six variables. An initial observation which became clear was that, for the DV of ‘Military Personnel Contributions’, there is only one other variable which had a positive correlation, ‘GDP per capita PPP’. However, starting with the first variable other than itself, ‘Military Personnel Contributions’ for the neutral countries had a strong negative correlation with ‘Military Expenditure (% Of GDP (2023 current international \$))’ of -0.788. This strong negative correlation indicated that in total, the three neutral countries which had a higher military expenditure as a percentage of GDP trended to contribute fewer military personnel to UN peacekeeping missions. Furthermore, this finding confirmed hypothesis H₂ (the (Independent Variable) **had a negative effect** on military personnel contributions of neutral countries), as the

independent variable of 'Military Expenditure (% Of GDP (2023 current international \$))' had been found to have a negative effect on the military personnel contributions from the three neutral countries. This correlation stemmed from Austria spending 0.8% of its GDP on the military, and Switzerland 0.7% whilst contributing 166 members and 2 members respectively in total to UN peacekeeping missions (Table 2). In comparison, Ireland spent 0.2% of its GDP on the military and contributed 340 military personnel members (Table 2). Additionally, from the analysis in Table 3, there was an inverse correlation between the neutral countries that invest less in military expenditure as a percentage of their GDP and their military personnel contributions to UN peacekeeping missions (Table 3).

The second variable from the correlation matrix in Table 3, 'Size of the military (2020)' was found to have a strong negative correlation with the DV, 'Military Personnel Contributions'. This strong negative correlation was represented through the value of -0.757 and indicated that H_2 (the Independent Variable) had a **negative effect** on military personnel contributions of neutral countries) was proven true. Analysing these findings, the larger the size of the neutral countries' military the fewer military personnel contributions were made towards UN peacekeeping missions. This was reflected in the data as, Austria had a military size of 23,000 and Switzerland 20,000 whilst having contributed 166 members and 2 members respectively, in total to UN peacekeeping missions, whilst Ireland contributed 340 (Table 2). Moreover, the analysis of Table 3 presented an inverse correlation between the neutral countries' size of the military and the contributions of military personnel to UN peacekeeping missions.

When analysing the third variable from the correlation matrix in Table 3, the total number of 'UN Peacekeeping Missions' attended with the DV of 'Military Personnel Contributions' demonstrated a strong negative correlational relationship. This strong negative correlational relationship was showcased by the value of -0.874, indicating that there was a negative effect for 'Military Personnel Contributions' if the number of 'UN Peacekeeping Missions' attended increased. Therefore, the third IV of total partaken 'UN Peacekeeping Missions' validated the H_2 (the Independent Variable) **had a negative effect** on military personnel contributions of neutral countries) due to its strong negative linear relationship. This was backed up in the data, as both Austria and

Switzerland had attended 5 UN Peacekeeping Missions in comparison to Ireland's 4 missions (Table 2). However, in these 5 attended missions, both Austria and Switzerland had contributed fewer military personnel, when compared to Ireland in their 4 missions. From this, as well as the first two IV it was similarly possible to draw an inverse correlation between the total number of 'UN Peacekeeping Missions' attended and the number of 'Military Personnel Contributed' (Table 3).

Furthermore, the penultimate IV 'GDP per capita PPP (current international \$ (2023))' when analysed from the correlation matrix in Table 3, was found to have a moderate positive correlational relationship with the DV. This moderate positive relationship was reflected by the value of 0.653, which indicated that countries that have a higher GDP per capita PPP were more prone to contribute military personnel to UN peacekeeping missions (Table 3). The data reflected this as Ireland had a GDP per capita PPP of \$124,900.90, Switzerland's GDP per capita PPP is \$89,546.30, and lastly, Austria had a GDP per capita PPP of \$70,478.80 (Table 2). Matching these values with the 'Military Personnel Contributions' proved that there is a positive effect, which proves H_1 to be correct. H_1 states that the IV **had a positive effect** on the military personnel contributions for the selected neutral countries of Austria, Ireland, and Switzerland.

From the correlation matrix, it was clear that the last IV, 'Population (2025)', Table 3 had a strong negative correlational relationship. The value which Table 3 demonstrated for this correlation is -0.857. This demonstrates that the H_2 (the (Independent Variable) **had a negative effect** on military personnel contributions of neutral countries) hypothesis has been proven right for this variable, as the negative correlation implies that the larger the population of one of the neutral countries, the fewer military personnel are contributed to UN Peacekeeping missions (Table 3). When looking at Table 2, it was possible to see where this correlation originates from as Austria had a population of 9,113,574 people, Switzerland had a population of 8,967,407, and lastly, Ireland had a population of 5,308,039. With Ireland having contributed a total of 340 military personnel members, compared to Austria's 166 and Switzerland's 2 the results were obvious (Table 2). Furthermore, because of this negative correlation, it is possible to also deduce an inverse correlation between the 'Population' of a country compared to the 'Military Personnel Contributions' to UN peacekeeping missions.

In summary, Table 3 demonstrates the correlation matrix for the selected neutral countries of Austria, Ireland, and Switzerland, and the DV and IVs that this paper investigated. The analysis uncovered that ‘Military Personnel Contributions’ had only a single positive correlation with the IV of ‘GDP per capita PPP’. There are strong negative correlations for the other IVs. Initially, ‘Military Personnel Contributions’ and ‘Military Expenditure (% of GDP)’ had a strong negative correlation of -0.788. This indicated that for the three neutral countries, the higher the military expenditure, the fewer personnel contributed towards UN Peacekeeping missions. A very similar strong negative correlation was found for the variables of ‘Size of the Military’ of -0.757 and ‘UN Peacekeeping Missions’ taken part in, of -0.874. As mentioned earlier, ‘GDP per Capita PPP’ contrasted the other results with a moderate positive correlation between itself and ‘Military Personnel Contributions’, showcasing that the higher a nation’s GDP per capita adjusted for PPP the more military personnel contributed to UN Peacekeeping missions. Furthermore, there is once again a strong negative correlation for the IV of ‘Population’ size. This meant that the larger the population of the neutral country, the fewer military personnel that they contribute to UN peacekeeping. From Table 3, H_0 (the (Independent Variables) **did not effect** on military personnel contributions of neutral countries), was disproven, as none of the IV correlated with the DV. H_1 (the (Independent Variables) **had a positive effect** on military personnel contributions of neutral countries) was proven to be correct, however, only in one instance for the DV with the IV of ‘GDP per capita PPP’. The H_2 (the (Independent Variables) **had a negative effect** on military personnel contributions of neutral countries) hypothesis was proven to be correct for four out of five variables. Therefore, it was possible to conclude that the research question was answered as all of the IVs influenced the military contributions from the three neutral countries towards UN Peacekeeping missions. As stated in the analysis above, the IVs of ‘Military Expenditure (% of GDP)’, ‘Size of the Military’, ‘UN Peacekeeping Missions’ taken part, and ‘Population’ size all had negative correlations, meaning that they were not increasing the number of military personnel contributed if their values increased. The opposite case was true for ‘GDP per capita PPP’ which had a positive correlation indicating that the wealthier the neutral countries are, the more military personnel contributions they make to UN Peacekeeping missions.

Table 4: Correlation Matrix Analysis for the 45 Non-Neutral Countries from the UNIFIL UN Peacekeeping Mission with the Dependent Variable and Independent Variables.

	Military Personnel Contributions	Military Expenditure (% Of GDP (2023 current international \$))	Size of the Military (2020)	UN Peacekeeping Missions (2025)	GDP per capita, PPP (current international \$ (2023))	Population (2025)
Military Personnel Contributions	1,000					
Military Expenditure (% Of GDP (2023 current international \$))	-0,198	1,000				
Size of the Military (2020)	0,342	0,095	1,000			
UN Peacekeeping Missions (2025)	0,613	-0,486	0,283	1,000		
GDP per capita, PPP (current international \$ (2023))	-0,396	0,329	-0,117	-0,559	1,000	
Population (2025)	0,365	0,009	0,966	0,352	-0,180	1,000

B. Analysis of the Non-Neutral Countries

Whilst it was crucial to have analysed the results for the three neutral countries of Austria, Ireland, and Switzerland, it was equally important to compare their values to the 45 non-neutral countries who partook in the UNIFL.

Initially, when looking at Table 4 the data does not match the results from Table 3. The first IV of ‘Military Expenditure (% Of GDP (2023 current international \$))’ with the DV of ‘Military Personnel Contributions’ was found to have a slight negative correlation. The value for the correlation between the two variables was -0.198 (Table 4). Therefore, it indicated that the correlational relationship for the non-neutral countries from UNIFIL was weaker and less consistent (Nickolas, 2024). This is quite different when compared to the values for the neutral countries of -0.788 (Table 3). This demonstrated that the inverse relationship for the neutral countries was strong and significant, however, for the non-neutral countries the weak negative correlation represented a small trend for the decrease in ‘Military Expenditure’ which led to a rise in ‘Military Personnel Contributed’.

Moreover, for the second IV of ‘Size of the Military (2020)’ in Table 4, there was a moderate positive correlation with the DV of ‘Military Personnel Contributions’. The moderate positive correlation was represented through the value of 0.342, indicating that the non-neutral countries from the UNIFIL which had a larger military size, had a bigger propensity to contribute military personnel to UN peacekeeping missions, because of having had more soldiers (Table 4). This was different for the results from the neutral countries in Table 3 which has a correlation value of -0.757. Therefore, it was possible to identify that the correlation, from the data, for the neutral countries represented had an

inverse relational and stable negative correlation between the variables. The non-neutral countries indicated that as the IV 'Size of the Military' increased the number of 'Military Personnel Contributed' slightly increased (Table 4). However, this correlational relationship was more inconsistent and weaker. Having a difference in direction between the two Tables indicated that the data for the variables act in profoundly different directions (Table 2).

Furthermore, after having investigated the third IV from Table 4, the number of 'UN Peacekeeping Missions' partaken in, it was possible to see a similar result as for the second IV from Table 4, when compared to its counterpart in Table 3. This was as 'UN Peacekeeping Missions' partaken in had a positive correlation of 0.613 when correlated with the DV of 'Military Personnel Contributions'. Having a positive correlation between the variables demonstrated that the countries which attended more UN Peacekeeping missions were more likely to contribute more military personnel. This was a logical conclusion, as partaking in multiple missions would require the respective nations to contribute more personnel to the various missions. Contrastingly, the same variables in Table 3 had a strong negative correlation of -0.874 for the IV of 'UN Peacekeeping Missions' partaken in and the DV. Seeing the two strong correlations in opposite directions the data from the two Tables showcased major differences between the neutral countries and the non-neutral UNIFIL countries.

The fourth IV from Table 4, 'GDP per capita PPP (current international \$ (2023))', had an opposing result when compared to Table 3. This is as in Table 4 the IV of 'GDP per capita PPP' had a value of -0.386. This value indicated a moderate negative correlation and demonstrated that the non-neutral countries with a higher GDP per capita PPP were motivated to contribute fewer military personnel to UN peacekeeping missions. Furthermore, when comparing the results from Table 4 to Table 3, the results were opposites. Table 3 had a correlation value of 0.653 in contrast to Table 4 having a correlation value of -0.386. The differences between the values highlighted that Table 3 had a strong positive relationship demonstrating that the wealthier neutral countries were, the more willing they were to contribute more military personnel, whilst for non-neutral countries there was a moderate negative correlation indicating the opposite.

The last IV of 'Population' size from Table 4, had a moderate positive correlation of 0.365. The moderate positive correlation established that the larger the population size of a country the more military personnel contributed towards UN Peacekeeping missions. This could have stemmed from larger nations, population-wise, being able to enlist more of their citizens into their military. Table 3, for the same variables, demonstrated a differing result of -0.857. Taking these two results into consideration, it could be said that the correlation from Table 3 had a consistently strong inverse correlation representing that if the population increased, the number of military personnel contributed decreased. Table 4 has a weaker and less consistent moderately positive correlation meaning that the population increases lead to a slight increase in the number of military personnel contributed.

In closing, the data allowed for an answer to the research question. All of the selected IVs had an influence, as can be seen in Table 3, on the military personnel contributions of Austria, Ireland, and Switzerland. The IVs of 'Military Expenditure', 'Size of the Military', number of 'UN Peacekeeping Missions' partaken in, and 'Population' size, had strong negative correlations with the DV of 'Military Personnel Contributions (Table 3). These findings suggested that the higher the military expenditure, larger military size, more UN Peacekeeping missions attended, and larger population size for the neutral countries lead to fewer military personnel contributions. The IV of 'GDP per capita PPP' had a moderate positive correlation with the DV, and therefore, stood apart from the other data (Table 3). Furthermore, these findings answer the H₁ (the (Independent Variables) **had a positive effect** on military personnel contributions of neutral countries) and H₂ (the (Independent Variables) **had a negative effect** on military personnel contributions of neutral countries) hypotheses to be correct.

The data from Table 4 for the non-neutral countries presented vastly opposing correlations. As the IV of military expenditure had a negative weak correlation, the variables of military size, number of partaken UN Peacekeeping missions, and population size demonstrated positive correlations (Table 4). Additionally, GDP per capita PPP showcased a moderate negative correlation, in contrast to the results for the neutral countries (Table 4). Having taken all of this into account, the

differences in data demonstrated the distinctive patterns for military personnel contributions between the neutral and non-neutral countries.

V. Discussion

From the theoretical view of constructivism and institutional theory valued understandings from the research paper's results were made for the influences of the military personnel contributions of the neutral countries of Austria, Ireland, and Switzerland towards UN peacekeeping missions. Initially, the negative correlation between the IV, military expenditure (% of GDP) and military personnel contributions aligned with the constructivist theory of highlighting the function which identity and norms have in forming behaviours of nations. The identity of neutral countries to further peace and diplomacy moves their priorities towards non-military actions for international actions (Simonet, 2025). This could even more so be the case when put into the context of UN peacekeeping missions. The analysis demonstrated that higher military spending by neutral countries can represent a priority for national sovereignty and security instead of exterior military obligations, underlining their self-perception as neutral players on the international stage.

Likewise, the negative correlation between the IV, size of the military, and DV, military personnel contributions, could be understood through the lens of constructivism. The fewer military personnel contributions, from Austria and Switzerland, can indicate their following to a stricter understanding of neutrality, that emphasises national defence in favour of international military participation. This is supported by Switzerland's longstanding stance of "armed neutrality", highlighting the importance of primarily protecting its sovereignty (EDA, 2022).

The analysis further presented a negative correlation amongst the total number of UN peacekeeping missions attended and military personnel contributions, which seems contradictory. Nevertheless, this result is explainable, by institutional theory, as constraints are implemented from international agreements and legal structures. As neutral states can commit to more UN peacekeeping missions to maintain their international duties, institutional restrictions, like the requirement for

UNSC approval, as showcased in the literature, could potentially limit the amount of personnel contributed. Furthermore, legal responsibilities for neutrality, stemming from The Hague Conventions and UN Charter, could also limit the ability of neutral countries to entirely participate in peacekeeping missions.

Intriguingly, the positive correlation between GDP per capita PPP and military personnel contributions demonstrated how economic ability supports neutral countries in accomplishing their international commitments. This understanding supports institutional theory, by showcasing how the economic means of neutral countries affect their capability to achieve institutional standards for military personnel contributions towards peacekeeping. Ireland, which had the highest GDP per capita PPP among the three neutral countries, illustrated this association by providing the highest number of military personnel whilst having the smallest military and lowest military expenditure.

Finally, the negative correlation amongst population size and military personnel contributions exemplifies the distinctive demographic constraints met by the neutral countries. Although a larger population size could theoretically allow for greater military personnel contributions, the theories and limitations show that other variables like political priorities and cultural approaches regarding neutrality could contribute a larger part. This aligns with constructivist theory, which highlights social norms and historical contexts to form a nation's decisions and being overshadowed due to demographic reflections (Reus-Smit & Snidal, 2008).

The findings of this research demonstrate the relationship between normative values and international limitations for forming the international actions of neutral states. Constructivism explains how the historical and cultural individuality of neutrality impacts the decisions of Austria, Ireland, and Switzerland. Especially for their resistance to strikingly militarise or value external military actions over national interests. Contrastingly, institutional theory creates a structure to understand in what way international legal frameworks, like the UN Charter and The Hague Conventions, enforce systematic limits for the decisions of Austria, Ireland, and Switzerland. Specifically, as they try to balance their international obligations with national ones.

Furthermore, the results indicate that for the military contributions from neutral nations to rise, politicians need to consider economic ability and national as well as international structures that govern neutrality. The policymakers from neutral countries can investigate new approaches to balance their obligations to their national neutrality with their responsibility towards international peacekeeping.

VI. Conclusion

In conclusion, this thesis studied the factors which influence military personnel contributions to UN peacekeeping missions for the neutral countries of Austria, Ireland, and Switzerland. Having used a correlation matrix to analyse the data, the results demonstrated that four IV, Military Expenditure (% of GDP), Size of the Military, Number of UN Peacekeeping Missions Attended, and Population Size, present strong negative correlations with the DV of Military Personnel Contributions. This indicates that the higher the values for these values, the lower the probability of military personnel contributions. Opposingly, the IV of GDP per capita PPP, presented a moderate positive correlation between itself and the DV, emphasising that the richer a neutral nation is, the higher the probability of increased military personnel contributions. Using the analysed data answers the research question as all of the five IVs influence the military personnel contributions of Austria, Ireland, and Switzerland.

Through having integrated insights from the academic disciplines of political science, economics, international law, and international relations, this research highlights the interdisciplinarity of current-day challenges. Military personnel contributions to UN peacekeeping missions are formed by the economic ability, political systems, and demographics of countries, which represent the interconnectedness between the need for international security, and the national priorities. Therefore, this paper has demonstrated that such global issues are unable to be entirely addressed and comprehended by using a single discipline.

Furthermore, regarding the global-to-local connection, this thesis emphasises the multifaceted relations between international responsibilities and national limitations. Whilst neutral countries are advocates for peace and diplomacy as tools on the international stage, the national implications like reduced military equipment, decreasing populations, and decreased interest in defence influence the possibility of contributing military personnel to UN peacekeeping missions. As has been demonstrated, Ireland having contributed more military personnel, represents how regional policies and economics affect their adherence to international commitments, whilst having a spending less on its military and having a smaller military. On the other hand, whilst both Austria and Switzerland have partaken in more UN peacekeeping missions, they have contributed fewer military personnel perhaps stemming from having invested more into their military annually and having bigger militaries whose priority lies within its borders.

It is fundamental for future research to investigate a broader range of political and historical variables, which address existing gaps in the literature in the applied quantitative framework. Moreover, it is also essential for further exploration of how neutrality and national policies form international military personnel contributions, connecting the existing gap between local urgencies and international responsibilities towards peace and security.

The research contained limitations in regard to the number of cases for neutral countries to analyse. The reduced number of cases, of 3, allowed for larger variations in the data to impact the correlational results. Future studies should investigate further political reasoning of countries that could reduce the impact of outliers. Furthermore, important political variables, like the political regimes of a given neutral country and their value on international peacekeeping, the political relations that neutral countries have, as countries who have political ties are more inclined to help one another, the nature of neutral countries' political systems, and the military policies of a neutral nation, were not able to be considered, but determine a nation's military contributions towards UN peacekeeping missions. Although Arend Lijphart's model of political regimes, from his book "Patterns of Democracy", had created a model for quantifying political regimes, it did not take the factor of UN peacekeeping into consideration, as well as the willingness to contribute military

personnel to such missions (Lijphart, 1999). Future research should investigate wider political and historical factors that impact neutrality and military personnel contributions.

VII. References

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