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Abstract intended to working group: Armed forces and society

#### AFFECTIVE INFRASTRUCTURE, BELONGING TO SOCIETY AND VIEWS ON NATIONAL DEFENCE AMONG FINNISH CONSCRIPTS

In my presentation I ask *how the concept of affective infrastructure can highlight both belonging to a society and the relation to national defence*. Infrastructure refers traditionally to 'big, durable, functioning systems and services' (Silvast et al. 2021, 2). Moreover, infrastructure is 'part of the balance of action, tools and the built environment, inseparable from them' (Star 1999, 377). Rather than understanding infrastructure as something stable and fixed, Berlant (2016) urges us to consider the dynamism, movement and use of infrastructure. In this sense, national defence could be understood as one type of infrastructure.

The concept of affective infrastructure refers in existing literature both to the ways in which affects can be understood to attach themselves to and mediate infrastructures and to a so-called apparatus of atmosphere, a larger affectual component forming a part of infrastructure (e.g. Näre & Jokela 2023). Thus, as citizens' will to defend has been established as one of the backbones of Finnish national defence, affective infrastructure is an apt term to grasp a part of the will to defend.

My presentation is based on the ongoing research Ethnicity, Finland and citizen's relation to national defence (National Defence University, Finland). The data is based on group interviews among conscripts from multi-ethnic backgrounds conducted in summer and early autumn 2023. The research participants were asked questions related to their sense and feelings about belonging to Finnish society, their views of Finland, their future and the future of Finland. In my presentation I will analyse the views of the conscripts with the concept of affective infrastructure.