

## Abstract

This thesis focuses on the development of the Finnish foreign policy from the late 1980's to the early 1990's. Special attention is given to the role of the Soviet Union in this process. Other factors decisive for the change in the Finnish foreign policy course are also analyzed. Finland tried to ensure its security by pursuing policy of neutrality and at the same time developing especially good relations with the Soviet Union as a preventive measure. Mikhail Gorbachev changed not only the Soviet Union but also the dynamics of Finnish-Soviet relations. Finland was able to act more assuredly and independently, nevertheless its politicians still employed caution and well-established wait-and-see policy. The changing nature of the integration within the European Communities was another strong incentive to the foreign policy change. For there was a danger of isolation and disadvantageous trade condition if a small state like Finland opted to stay outside the quickly developing Common European Market and political union. Also in the early 1990s the Warsaw Pact, the Eastern bloc as well as the Soviet Union itself were dissolved, effectively changing the international world order. During this period Finland was able to establish more even relations with Soviet Union, respectively Russia as its main successor. The consequence of these factors was the amendment of the Finnish policy of neutrality with the policy of military non-alliance and credible independent defence. In 1992 Finland also submitted its EC membership application.