

Framing the Ukraine war on Twitter

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Communicating the Ukraine war on Twitter

A framing analysis of the Estonian prime minister's tweets

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the frames that are deployed by the Estonian prime minister Kaja Kallas about the war in Ukraine. Politicians aiming to disseminate influential messages have embraced social media and what it has to offer in terms of communication. By using Twitter, the micro-blogging platform popular among the public and elites, politicians are able to frame the world events. For the purpose of this thesis 96 English text-only original tweets were retrieved from the Twitter account of Kallas (@kajakallas) between 24 February and 24 March 2022. This timeframe covers the start and early stages of Russia's attack on Ukraine. A qualitative approach to framing analysis was chosen to analyze the selected tweets, guided by framing theory. The most prevalent frame utilized by Kallas in her tweets was the responsibility frame that indicated the responsibility of the West to support Ukraine based on common value systems and interests.

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INTRODUCTION

After a long time of tensions between Russia and Ukraine, Russia launched a full-scale unprovoked attack on Ukraine in the early morning of the February 24, 2022 - an escalation of the on-going Russo-Ukrainian war that begun in 2014 with the Euromaidan protests that turned into the Maidan Revolution or the Ukrainian revolution which culminated with the overthrow of Ukrainian government and was followed by Russia's annexation of Crimea. The further escalation of the war began in 2021 with Russia building up a military presence near its borders with Ukraine which then culminated when president Vladimir Putin announced a "special military operation" in Ukraine which had the agenda of "demilitarization" and "denazification". With airstrikes and missiles across Ukraine and Kyiv, Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky announced general mobilization and has been in war with Russia since with no sign of end in sight.

Furthermore, the reactions to the attack on a sovereign country in Europe have brought on great changes to EU-Russia relationship and the understanding of needing new ways to deal with Russia by maintaining unity in response to the war, building a foreign and security policy on the basis of Russia as a major threat to European security, by devising policies to integrate Eastern-European countries and by keeping a strong handle on responding in a tough manner to Putin's regime (Meister, 2022)

Although the Russo-Ukrainian is not the first war to be well documented on media, it is certainly considered to be the "first social media war" (Suciu, 2022) and the history's most "viral war" (The Economist, 2022) that has given individuals on the ground to share real-time reports from the warzone and for the public to respond to the war immediately. The use of media in shaping how wars are communicated is not a new concept in itself. The Vietnam War was considered to be one of the most well-documented war on television, the "television war" in which the public was regularly exposed to the realities of war (Mandelbaum, 1982), while the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 was the first major "Internet war" (Ciuriak, 2022). Moreover, social media has played an important role in other major conflicts such as the Arab Spring in 2011 or the Afghanistan war. Nevertheless, the scope and impact of digital technology and new media in the war in Ukraine has certainly shaped the way a war is communicated. For Ukraine as a country under attack, social media has provided the possibility to get operative information out about what is happening in the war, therefore giving the chance to broadcast war crimes and atrocities as they are happening. Ukrainians have been sharing photos and information about

what is happening on the ground through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Reddit, Telegram and even TikTok which has also given them the opportunity to control the narrative. Moreso, social media has given the possibility for calls to action all over the world and for gaining sympathy and attention to the war - Zelensky's Twitter account has grown from 300,000 to 7 million followers. In the annual Digital Diplomacy ranking, as of 2022, Zelensky serves at the 7th most influential leader in the world (Twiplomacy Study, 2022) It has essentially given him the opportunity to talk to foreign parliaments while his country is at war. For countries other than Ukraine, social media has served as a "battleground for states and non-state actors to spread competing narratives about the war and portray the ongoing conflict in their own terms" (Foreign Policy, 2022). Thus, the war in Ukraine has given way to a sphere of narratives and frames that political actors use in their communication to make sense of the war that has also created a departure point of interest for this thesis in hand.

Taking advantage of the momentum that the war has created has also served as an opportunity for leaders from smaller countries that have been threatened by Russia for a long time, to voice their opinions and shape public opinion about the war and what Russia's unprovoked attack symbolizes in bigger terms. The three Baltic States - Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania - that all share a common history of having been formerly occupied by the Soviet Union – have become some of the most loud advocates for Ukraine in Europe. One of these strong advocates for Ukraine is the prime minister of Estonia, Kaja Kallas, who was named as the new "Europe's Iron Lady" in May 2022 for her strong and unambiguous stance on the war (The New Statesman, 2022). Consequently, she has given multiple interviews for international media channels and her presence on media has quickly become a weekly occurrence. According to the international affairs magazine Politico, Kallas is one of the most influential people in Europe as an articulate and consistent spokesperson against Russia and its regime (POLITICO 28 — Class of 2023, 2022) While Eastern European leaders are not always as visible to international media, the war has brought on a change that has certainly been affected and influenced by the new media. Consequently, the hybridity of media as well as the ever growing impact of social media platforms as tools for communication for political elites and the public plays an important role in how the social reality and meanings are created. Thus, the instant communication that happens on social media has had direct effect on how the world reacts to Russia's aggression against Ukraine as the whole world is able to follow the war live.

The aim of this thesis is therefore to analyze how the Estonian prime minister Kaja Kallas, a leader of one of the countries formerly violently occupied by the Soviet Union that therefore

shares common difficult history with Ukraine, uses social media, specifically Twitter to ones advance in order to build influence by actively forming the public opinion on the Russo-Ukrainian war. Specifically, this thesis aims to explore how Kallas has framed Russia's attack on Ukraine via her official Twitter channel from the beginning of the war on the 24th of February up until the 24th of March.

BACKGROUND AND RELEVANCE

This section will give a brief overview of Estonia and its background in terms of the context of this thesis – that is how Kaja Kallas, the prime minister of Estonia has communicated Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

Estonia is one of the three Baltic States that was violently occupied from the 1940s until 1991 by the Soviet Union. After regaining its independence, cutting of the influence of the former Soviet Union became the country's first priority. In 2004 Estonia became an EU member state after six years of negotiations. In 2007, Estonia joined the Schengen visa area and in 2011, Estonia adopted the euro and in 2017, Estonia held its first presidency in the EU.

The Baltic States have been strong supporters of Kyiv since Russia's annexation of Crimea in March 2014. Thus, the threat and aggression of Russia and Russia's actions in Ukraine for the Baltic States have been an issue for a long time, especially since the crisis in 2014. Consequently, Baltic States have remained one of the strongest advocates for conveying clear and consistent messages when it comes to Russia. „In 2014, the Baltic economies were hit hardest in comparison to other member states by the EU sanctions against Russia, and yet the Balts were among the strongest supporters of the sanctions, as they prioritized their perceived security interests“ (Raik, 2016: p 248)

Furthermore, Estonia itself has been the target of Russian disinformation and cyberattacks for several years. As stated in an article by Politico „Estonians have few illusions about the capabilities of the neighbor to the east“ (Mackinnon, 2022). Moreover, due to the geopolitical position of Estonia and its history, the EU and NATO membership has given Estonia and other Baltic states more confidence and security, although „it has also brought the potential gains that Russia might achieve by the de-stabilization of these countries to a new level, since their security became a matter of unity and credibility of the EU and NATO“ (Raik, 2016: p 246)

The escalation of the Russo-Ukrainian war has further established the strong support for Ukraine that Estonia, together with Latvia and Lithuania. On the February 24th when Russia launched its attack on Ukraine, the Estonian Government made an official statement:

„I condemn Russia`s massive military attack on Ukraine in the strongest terms. With the attack on Ukraine, Russia wants to go back to a time when the notion of "might makes right" prevailed. The crime of aggression impacts everyone in the world and the international community must now be decisive, giving clear and unequivocal condemnation and response.“

(Statement by prime minister Kaja Kallas on Massive Military Offensive against Ukraine by Russia | Eesti Vabariigi Valitsus, 2022)

Since then Estonia has continued to support Ukraine both in terms of moral support and financial and military aid. According to the Estonian Ministry of Defense Estonia has sent a total of 300 million in military aid to Ukraine, making them one of the countries who has contributed the most in relative terms (ERR, 2022) Moreover, Estonia has taken several symbolic steps in regards to its difficult history and supporting Ukraine. In August 2022, the Estonian government decided to remove war monuments dating back to the Soviet Union, paving way to larger push of removing all the Soviet monuments from the public spaces (Gijs, 2022). A similar step was taken by other Baltic states, Latvia and Lithuania.

PROBLEM FORMULATION

As mentioned before, the main focus of this paper is to analyze how a political leader has framed and communicated a war on social media. Thus, the aim of this thesis is to explore how the Estonian prime minister Kaja Kallas has communicated with the public and other political leaders on social media platforms such as Twitter after Russia launched an attack on Ukraine in February 2022. Moreover, this thesis aims to analyze how Kaja Kallas has framed the war on Twitter and evaluate what do these frames indicate and what might be the underlying reasons for using certain frames to communicate the war.

This topic is relevant for several reasons. First, as we are living in an increasingly digital world influenced by social media platforms that are ever evolving then understanding the central role these platforms play in modern conflicts is mandatory for understanding how information is disseminated. Secondly, the way traditional media and new media operate in the new hybrid media system has changed the power dynamics of political communication in which the role of gatekeepers, such as journalists, has changed the way political elites are able reach the public and disseminate their messages without filters – therefore understanding the logic of new media serves as an important tool for understanding how it influences political communication.

Thirdly, studying the communication of influential actors gives way for understanding how leaders are able to frame events and therefore influence our perceptions of reality which, given the nature of social media platforms, reaches a wider audience than ever before.

THESIS STRUCTURE

The outline of this paper is as follows: The first section of this paper included an introduction to the topic, the context and background to the communication environment and the problem formulation. The next section begin with a short overview of the research field followed by presenting the relevant theories and concepts – the introduction into the theory of framing and framing on social media, new media logics and political communication and public diplomacy. From there, the methodology section follows which provides an overview of the philosophy of science that guides this thesis, research approach to framing analysis and describes the data collection. The next section is the analysis which will provide an insight into the frames identified in the data followed by the discussion section which will provide further understanding of the analysis by applying the theories and concepts introduced before. Finally, limitations are presented with suggestions for further research and a conclusion.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter will outline the theoretical basis for this study. The chapter will start with a brief overview of the research field that guides this study. Then, theories and concepts within the fields of framing theory, media logic, political communication on social media, and public diplomacy will be outlined to provide the foundation for analyzing the case at hand.

RESEARCH FIELD

This section aims to give a brief overview of social media in political communication, the role of Twitter, framing analysis conducted on social media and what implications there are for wartime communication on social media.

The definitions for social media may differ, but social media are commonly understood as „forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos)“ (Merriam-Webster, 2022) A widely used definition of social media has been offered by Kaplan and Haenlein, who described social media as “a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content” (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010)

Today’s social media platforms are widely used by politicians to communicate with public. The nature of these platforms allows politicians to react to events as they happen, control and take part in discussions that result from events. Social media platforms allow citizens and politicians alike to participate in political discussions. Consequently, Twitter has become central to world politics by playing a significant role in how states „articulate and develop policy responses“ and how it plays its part in „moments of transformative change and in acrimonious events that have resulted in the expulsion of diplomats from a state“ (Duncombe, 2019: p 424) Furthermore, Twitter accounts affiliated with governments and state leaders are used to communicate to domestic and foreign publics as a key public diplomacy outreach strategy. Thus, it has evolved into the preferred social media platform for „digital diplomacy“ (Duncombe, 2019, p 424) An indication of the importance of Twitter as a channel for politicians and diplomats alike is the yearly Twiplomacy study which lines up the most influential world leaders of each year. As of 2022, the most influential world leaders on Twitter in 2022 are Indian prime minister Narendra Modi, followed by US President Joe Biden and Turkey’s President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Although the main leaders stay the same from year to year,

there are some concrete examples of how the events in the world play their role in shaping the influence of certain leaders. For example, the Estonian prime minister Kaja Kallas is the 34th most influential politician on Twitter, whereas the previous Twiplomacy study did not include here in the World Leader Power Ranking list.

Twitter's relevance for political communication and diplomats has led to a growing body of research on political activity on social media. Research has shown that social media services have become main places for political communication as politicians use social media in their campaigns and journalists use social media for stories and sources (Jungherr, 2014). Scholars have also conducted studies that involve politicians from several countries and the comparisons between their interactions on Twitter (van Vliet et al. 2020). A content analysis about Canadian politics on Twitter showed that hashtags by politicians are mainly used for informing public of relevant information on politics in which the value stems from the "real-time nature of the information shared" (Small, 2011).

Perhaps some of the most popular examples of social media platforms influencing political outcomes are those of US politicians. US former president Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign was highly successful in making use of social media platforms in political campaigning and has even been pointed out to be one of the first indicators of the relevance of social media in political communication. A study of Obama's use of new media concluded that the role of new media technologies and the Internet allowed the historic election of US's first African American president as Obama made use of the new platforms to gain power and influence (Hendricks and Enton; 2010).

Moreover, the U.S. election campaign in 2016 in which presidential candidates, Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, tweeted their positions, used Twitter to launch attacks on one another and encouraged people to vote (Luca et al. 2020; Sisco et al. 2018) showed the capacity of power that social media platforms have in political communication and campaigning. In recent times, the study of how politicians communicate and disseminate their messages on Twitter has offered a good amount of research after the former US president Donald Trump has made use of Twitter as his main platform for conveying his messages, which, in turn, has proven to be a fruitful source for research (Brian 2017; Morels et al. 2017). A study of Trump's communication on Twitter concluded that his use of Twitter indicates a deliberate, strategically-minded performance (Yu and Watermann, 2020). There have also been comprehensive studies focusing on the linguistic side of Trump's Twitter in which it has been found that Trump's communication style has changed over time in a systematic manner depending on events

surrounding the communication (Clarke and Grieve, 2019) In addition to the former president of US, a study about the Brazilian president's Jair Bolsonaro's communication on Twitter concluded that the politicians tweets are populist in nature and mainly concentrate on blaming the elites and concentrate on creating fear (Mangerotti et al. 2021)

The field of framing analysis is traditionally associated with political communication and framing in the news media (D'Angelo and Kuypers, 2010; Van Gorp and Vercruysse, 2012), although there is a growing amount of research exploring the framing on social media such as a study exploring frames used by Trump on Twitter (Vlatković, 2018) or a study analyzing the frames used by Pakistani news media while covering protests on Twitter (Ashfaq et al. 2022) Moreover, a study of U.S. Congress members use of Twitter to frame political issues found out that politicians actively use social media to frame issues by choosing specific hashtags within topics (Heston et al. 2013).

Moreso, public diplomacy scholars and practitioners rarely use concepts such as „agenda setting“, „framing“ and „priming“ and few studies have integrated these with public diplomacy concepts (Gilboa, 2008: p 63). Nevertheless, these concepts used together with public diplomacy serve as an important tool for understanding the framing processes as the media represent only one side in the framing process because „politicians, policymakers, elites, interest groups, and foreign leaders all try to win public acceptance of their framing“ (Gilboa, 2008: p 64)

Additionally, communicating international conflicts and war on social media platforms is a new reality of the modern times. A study of war communication on Twitter discusses the effect new media has for modern warfare and the way in which we communicate wars (Patrikarakos, 2017). War on social media poses a threat of disinformation and propaganda which, according to Boucher (2022) has been an a major problem on Canadian social media where pro-Russian narratives are prevalent.

THE THEORY OF FRAMING

Framing research is an interdisciplinary field that is widely applied line of research in both political communication and journalism (Entman and Usher, 2018) Framing involves the construction of social reality by mass media, politics, and social movements.

The framing theory was proposed by Goffman (1974) who argues that frames allow individuals to „locate, perceive, identify, and label a seemingly infinite number of concrete occurrences defined in its terms“ (Goffman, 1974: 21). From then on, scholars have offered many definitions for frames and framing.

Snow and Benford argue that a frame inherently refers to „an interpretive schemata that simplifies and condenses the „world out there“ by selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences, and sequences of actions, within one’s present or past environments“ (Snow and Benford, 1992: p 138) Pan and Kosicski (1993) approach frames as themes that tie a news story into a coherent whole. „A theme is an idea that connects different semantic elements of a story (e.g., descriptions of an action or an actor, quotes of sources, and background information) into a coherent whole.“ (Pan and Kosicski, 1993: p 59) Chong and Druckman (2007) refer to framing as „the process by which people develop a particular conceptualization of an issue or reorient their thinking about an issue“ (Chong and Druckman, 2007: p 105).

Essentially, frames help us think about events as they are „constructions of the issue: they spell out the essence of the problem, suggest how it should be thought about“ (Guendez et al. 2016: p 585) and therefore frames are embedded in several aspects of our society: they are „parts of political arguments, journalistic norms, and social movements’ discourse“ (Vreese, 2005: p 53). Thus, there is no abundance of different definitions for framing and frames, but nowadays, perhaps the most widely used definition in the theory of framing is one proposed by Entman (1993) who argues that framing is essentially a result of selection and salience:

„To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described“ (Entman, 1993: p 52).

For instance, the „cold war“ frame that dominated the U.S. news of foreign affairs emphasized certain foreign events as problems, identified their source, offered moral judgments, and

commended particular solutions (Entman, 1993: p 52). These four aspects called functions of framing can all be identified in one sentence or non at all. They are defined as follows:

1. *„Problem definition“ – determines what a causal agent is doing with what costs and benefits, usually measured in terms of common cultural values*
2. *„Diagnose causes“ – identifies the forces creating the problem*
3. *„Make moral judgment“ – evaluates causal agents and their effects*
4. *„Suggests remedies“ – offers and justifies treatments for the problems and predicts their likely effects*

(Entman, 1993: p 52)

Out of these four functions problem definition constitutes one of the two most important functions of frames as defining the problem often virtually predetermines the rest of the frame. On the other hand, remedy promotes support of (or opposition to) actual government action (Entman, 2003: p 418). Consequently, a powerful frame is one that is frequently used by members of society as such frames have the greatest inherent power to call forth similar responses (Entman, 2003: p 422) Snow and Benford (1992) argue in a similar vein that successful frames must diagnose a problem, prognose solutions, and tactics, and motivate for action.

To frame is to highlight some pieces of information about a subject of communication, therefore elevating them in salience. Salience here means “making a piece of information more noticeable, meaningful, or memorable to audiences“ (Entman, 1993: p 53). Elevating bits of information in texts is achieved “by placement, repetition, or by associating them with culturally familiar symbols” (Entman, 1993: p 52). Moreover, in the realm of political communication, these words and images that are used to create a frame may be distinguishable by the “capability to gain the support of or opposition to the sides in a political conflict which is measured by cultural resonance and magnitude” (Entman, 2003: p 417).

In the same vein, frames that employ more culturally resonant terms naturally have greater potential for influence, and the words used in these frames are highly salient in culture. They are “noticeable, understandable, memorable, emotionally charged“ (Entman, 2003: p 417). Entman points out the importance of the repetition of the framing words and images in

influencing the public: “The more resonance and magnitude, the more likely the framing is to evoke similar thoughts and feelings in large portions of the audience“ (Entman, 2003: p 417)

Generic frames and issue-specific frames

Media frames generally fall into two categories: issue-specific frames and generic frames. Issue-specific frames are more subjective in nature and are applicable only to specific topics or events (de Vreese, 2005: p 54) Moreover, issue-specific approach to studying frames allows a deep level of “specificity and details relevant to the event or issue under investigation”, although analyzing issue-specific frames may make them difficult to generalize and compare in theory building (de Vreese, 2005: p 55)

Generic frames are broadly applicable to a range of different topics, therefore they “transcend thematic limitations and can be identified in relation to different topics, some even over time and in different cultural contexts (de Vreese, 2005) The five main generic frames are identified by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) who drew on the work of Neuman et al. 1992 who found that frames deduced from interviews with their audience were also present in news media coverage of different issues (de Vreese, 2005: p 56) These five frames are the attribution of responsibility, conflict, economic, human interest and morality (Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000).

The *conflict* frame emphasizes the conflict between individuals, groups, or institutions as means of capturing audience’s interest; the *human interest frame* aims to bring a human face or an emotional angle to the presentation of an event, issue, or problem and it often refers to an effort to personalize the news, dramatize or “emotionalize” the news, in order to capture and retain audience interest; *economic consequences frame* reports an event, problem, or issue in terms of the consequences, it will have economically on an individual, group, institution, region, or country; *morality frame* puts the event, problem, or issue in the context of religious tenets or moral prescriptions; *responsibility frame*. This frame presents an issue or problem in such a way as to attribute responsibility for its cause or solution to either the government or to an individual or group.

Framing process and devices

Framing is essentially a process of frame-building and frame-setting. In frame-building refers to the continuous interaction between journalists and the outcome of this process is the frames that manifest in the text. Frame-setting refers to the interaction between media frames and individuals’ prior knowledge and predispositions and has been investigated broadly to find the

extent to which audiences reflect and mirror frames (de Vreese, 2005: p 52). The consequences of framing can be altered attitudes on an individual level and on the societal level, frames can contribute to political socialization, decision-making, and collective actions (de Vreese, 2005: p 52)

Moreover, frames are built on framing devices: rhetorical devices and technical devices. According to Linström and Marais (2012) rhetorical devices include word choice, metaphors, and exemplars. Marais (Linström and Marais, 2012: p 31) Gamson and Lasch offer a deeper description of the nature of rhetorical devices (Gamson and Lasch, 1983: p 407-408):

- **Metaphors:** *They always have two parts – the principal subject that the metaphor is intended to illuminate and the associated subject that the metaphor invokes to enhance readers’ understanding;*
- **Exemplars:** *While metaphors rely on imagined events to frame the principal subject, real events of the past or present are frequently used for the same purpose*
- **Catch-phrases:** *Commentators on events frequently try to capture them in a single theme statement, tag-line, title or slogan that is intended to suggest a frame. Catch-phrases are attempted summary statements about the principal subject; and*
- **Depictions:** *News stories have certain principal subjects that they characterize in a particular fashion. They may do this through metaphors or exemplars or through a string of modifiers.*

Technical framing devices include various technical elements such as headlines, subheadings, photo captions, leads, source selections, quote selections, and concluding statements and paragraphs (Linström and Marais, 2012: p 32). These are previously used by researchers in traditional news media analysis (headlines, leads), however, social media platforms such as Twitter offer new forms of technical devices (e.g. hyperlinks, tags, mentions).

Framing politics on social media

Frames are found to be in communication of political discourse and in the minds of individuals. Frames are „ever-present in political communication, employed by many political actors to capture their preferred understanding of or to make sense of an issue, controversy, event“ (Oxley, 2020: p 3) Thus, framing and political communication are closely connected. Moreover, platforms such as Facebook and Twitter have transformed the dynamics of political

communication. As Rabadán argues: “To a large degree, the media have lost their monopoly on the management of current affairs and their ability to influence has been limited: political actors and citizens distribute their messages directly to mass audiences and achieve greater prominence in public debate” (López-Rabadán 2021: p 2)

Consequently, the frames that are constructed in our society are created both by elites and citizens: „Frames activate and spread among elites, journalists, and citizens, through both strategic and non-strategic communication“ (Entman and Usher, 2018: p 298) Furthermore, political elites create their own frames about an issue or an event and try to disseminate these in the public and in the news media (Jörg, 2011: 127)

Moreso, the importance of frames and their influence on the receivers of the messages in political communication is emphasized by Chong and Druckman: „Frames in communication matter—that is, they affect the attitudes and behaviors of their audiences. Politicians often adopt communication frames used by other politicians, the media, or citizens“ (Chong and Druckman, 2007: p 109)

The evolvement of social media platforms as tools for political communication has called for a reassessment of framing as politicians no longer need the endorsement of traditional media to reach the public. Furthermore, as framing is commonly used to explore traditional news media coverage, the research of framing on social media is an evolving field that is influenced by the new media logic.

Entman and Usher (2018) have pointed out that the biggest change to the transfer of information between elites, media, and the public are platforms – social media like Twitter, for example, creating a situation where elites are able to bypass media and connect to the public immediately. They argue that the evolvement of platforms has created a situation where the news media is not the first one breaking news, but has taken on the role of having to react quickly in order to catch up: „Moreover, platforms impose a temporal effect that degrades institutional media’s gatekeeping capacity; elites disseminate messages via, say, Twitter, to the public and everyone else simultaneously, leaving journalists who formerly obtained news first chasing to catch up“ (Entman and Usher, 2018: p 301) As Entman and Usher argue, platforms are accompanied by other important elements such as algorithms, analytics, ideological media and rogue actors that also play a vital role in the communication process in the digital age.

Algorithms are created by people, but are automated in nature as once they are set according to users’ preferences it becomes impossible to tell them to start new. “Every choice a user makes

dictates the algorithm's decisions about future content" (Entman and Usher, 2018: p 301) Therefore, algorithms gain influence over frame distribution largely monopolized by institutional media as they "exert the power to shape the users' experience and even their perceptions of the world" (Entman and Usher, 2018: p 301)

Digital analytics refer to elites and medias deployment of analytic tools to understand who receives their messages and how to gather data about their audiences and therefore reach their target users. Consequently, a more top-down power is exercised that, in turn, is a threat to democracy if softer news come to dominate the news media. Ideological media is another element that shapes the digital realm as "citizens can readily access ideologically-driven media messages unshackled by old norms of detached, quasi-scientific reporting and editing" (Entman and Usher, 2018: p 302)

Lastly, rogue actors are those outside norms that previously were restraining the "establishment media" and "political elites" who controlled the political communication. Thus, the network cascade is now interrupted by empowered, dishonest elites that disseminate false information by creating "fake news" that in their nature are also able to create frames that construct the way audiences grasp reality (Entman and Usher, 2018: p 303)

This is well illustrated by Entman's two versions of the „cascading activation model“ which aims to illustrate how governments and administrations use frame. In the original model (Figure 1) that was proposed by Entman in 2003, frames extend from the administration through other elites and then reach the media – journalists and news organizations , extending to news frames (framing words and framing images) and finally reach the public. As Entman points out this model is a simple hierarchy in which "ideas flow mostly from top to bottom" (Entman and Usher, 2018: p 300).

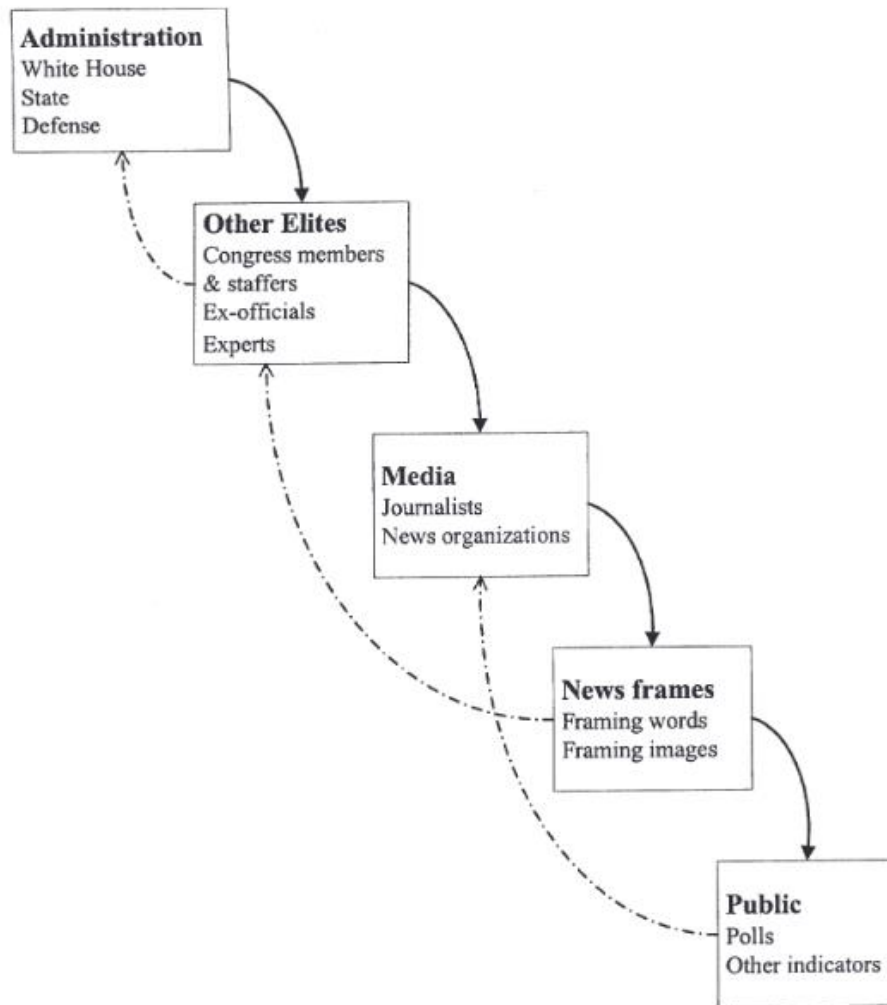


Figure 1: Cascading Activation Model (Entman, 2003)

Thus, in the original cascading activation model the political actor must push through media and journalists in order to disseminate the message. It is during this process that the framing words or images by the political actor are then framed by the media, thus, the original “frame” may get lost in the process or becomes something else than originally intended by the political actor.

The updated cascade model (Figure 2), however, that takes into account the affordances of the digital era shows the impact of platforms and their influence on how elites are able to frame issues and events in a way that their “suggested frames” reach the public without any influence from the gatekeepers. „Elites disseminate their own messages or reinforce content from ideological media directly to the public on a heretofore unknown scale“ (Entman and Usher, 2018: p 304). Entman and Usher emphasize the distinctive communication process created by the polarization of political networks and digitalization by „weakening some boundaries that

existed under the domination of institutionalized media, while hardening others“ (Entman and Usher, 2018: p 304).

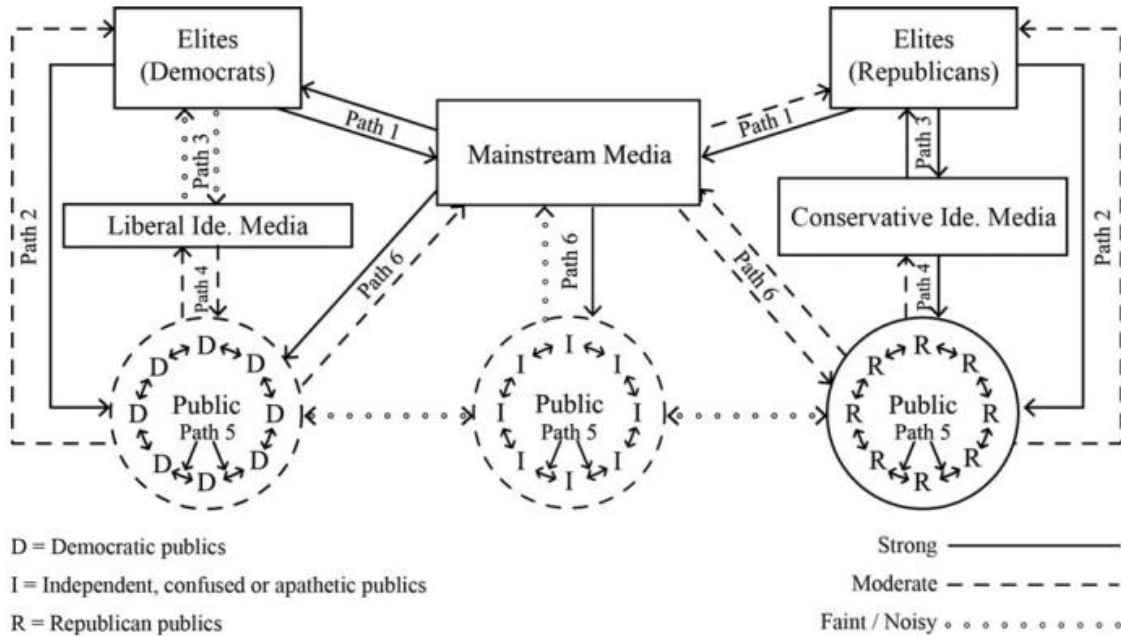


Figure 2: Revised Cascade Model (Entman and Usher, 2018)

Furthermore, elites set in motion the framing process by controlling the information they share about their preferred and actual uses of power. Algorithms can enhance the efficacy of elite frames – those that engage with certain frames from certain politics will see more of these frames therefore elites are able to use platforms to their advantage. This can also lead to the spread of misinformation by „authorities less committed to democratic norms, and by even less norm-constrained actors“ (Entman and Usher, 2018: p 305) Furthermore, the impact of digital technologies may play a role in the spread of “misinformation, polarize citizens, reduce social capital, and thereby undermine cooperative norms vital to democratic stability” (Entman and Usher, 2018: p 300)

NEW MEDIA LOGICS SHAPING THE POLITICAL REALM

As social media has become an integral part of political communication and inherently transformed the relationship between political actors and traditional media it becomes necessary to understand how communication is influenced by the logic of these digital platforms.

Furthermore, while media power used to be mostly enjoyed by those already established in the political world, the rise of social media platforms and their affordances has given a voice to the less-known politicians: „... but since media power is shifting, and by now often measured in visibility, metrics, engagement, and interactions, the political elite now includes populists,

hyperleaders with digital superbases, celebrity politicians, fringe demagogues, and disgruntled backbenchers“ (Runge, 2021: p 5)

Moreover, as the relevance of social media is growing the so-called „new media“ has changed the communication patterns of political actors (Jost, 2022: p 1) and created the possibility to use social media channels in a way that creates powerful messages. According to Runge (2021) the political actors who know how to make use of the new media have a greater chance of bringing attention to the issues they deem important: „Tech-savvy politicians, who embrace social media platforms and their strategic potential, are now able to be present in multiple media spheres simultaneously, expanding their ability to increase the salience of issues, influence agendas across platforms, and in effect control the narrative of political events.“ (Runge, 2021: p 5) Furthermore, being able to adapt to the affordances each technology has also created the possibility for disseminating powerful messages. „Fail to communicate in the way that the times and public demand, and leaders are unlikely to survive for long.“ (Taras, 2019: p 2)

Before the emergence of social media political actors conveyed their messages through news media outlets and had to adhere to the ways traditional media works - the „media logic“. According to Altheide (2013) media logic is defined as a „form of communication and the process through which media transmit and communicate information“ (Altheide, 2013: p 225). The theory of media logic is often discussed together with the theory of mediatization however they are not exactly alike. Klinger and Svensson (2015) point out that while the theory of mediatization refers to the general tendency in which almost all parts of society are influenced by the media, the theory of media logic provides an insight into how the institutions of society are adapting to media platforms and their organization and practices (Klinger and Svensson, 2015: p 1243)

Furthermore, Klinger and Svensson (2015) propose a new concept “network media logic” for understanding how political communication is changed by the emergence of social media platforms. In arguing that network media logic does not replace mass media logic, Klinger and Svensson point out that social media platforms operate differently from traditional media, particularly in the three dimensions that affect political communication: content production, information distribution, and media use (Klinger and Svensson, 2015: p 1251).

The production logic refers to the amateur production of content on social media platforms. That is, “network media logic of production is indicative of more individualized forms of media

content production compared to mass media where professionals judge what constitutes worthy information or not“ (Klinger and Svensson, 2015: p 1247)

The distribution logic refers to the way information is disseminated. As the traditional gatekeepers such as journalists are no longer the only ones filtering information, the success of gaining resonance within social media platforms depends on „the ability to publish information that users will forward within their networks, comment on and recommend to other users“ (Klinger and Svensson, 2015: p 1248) Information is no longer delivered from the sender to the recipient as in traditional mass media, but rather from user to user. This means that in the realm of social media platforms, there are no traditional „audiences“, but rather „users participating in networks of like-minded others“ (Klinger and Svensson, 2015: 1248)

The logic of media usage/audience on social media platforms means that there are high levels of selective exposure and fragmented audiences giving the possibility to tailor information according to what one hears about. In other words, “users construct and organize their social realities through networks“ (Klinger and Svensson, 2015: p 1250) As Scacco and Wiemer (2019) argue, this constitutes the challenges political actors face with digital communication and the importance of embracing those affordances: “With the public using many spaces to create a political, social, and cultural “wild west,” the logic behind this approach is to bring *more* message control and elite influence to online spaces that embrace flatter, more interactive flows of communication.“ (Scacco and Wiemer, 2019: p 20)

As the knowledge of how to network is a fundamental resource in connected societies, politicians also attempt to gain as many linkages and relationships as possible, making the maintenance of their social networks and connections as important as ever. As Klinger and Svensson argue: “Moreover, politicians cannot interact with mass audiences on social media platforms since there aren’t any, making connections to other users even more important as it “signals popularity” (Klinger and Svensson, 2015: p 1253)

Dynamics of social media logic

Understanding how the new media ecosystem reshapes social orders and chains of events is vital to understanding how political communication happens on social media platforms, that is – how social media platforms with the logic of their own shape social interactions. The question in studies of media and politics concentrates is how social media logic affects the way politicians communicate with the public (Enli and Simonsen, 2018: p 1081)

Social media logic refers to „the processes, principles, and practices through which these platforms process information, news, and communication, and more generally, how they channel social traffic“ (Poell and van Dijck, 2013: p 5).

Poell and van Dijck have identified four central elements that explore the dynamics of social media logic: programmability, popularity, connectivity, and datafication. These elements, they argue, are “pivotal in understanding how in a networked society, social interaction is mediated by an intricate dynamic of mass media, social media platforms, and offline institutional processes” (Poell and van Dijck, 2013: p 11)

Poell and van Dijck define programmability in terms of how platform technologies are constructed in a way that there is a relationship between its users and programmers. While programmers produce the algorithms, code, data, protocols, interfaces, and platform organizations, the users in turn influence the flow of communication and information activated by such platforms (Poell and van Dijck, 2013: p 5).

Popularity is influenced by both the programmability and socioeconomic components of a platform. Poell and van Dijck point out that Twitter’s Trending Topics feature gives users the possibility to push certain topics or events while Retweets able endorsement of specific tweets and ideas. Furthermore, this logic is connected to mass media as influential Twitter users are able to penetrate the system of mass media alongside leaders and celebrities: “Journalists from news media often treat tweets from celebrities or politicians as quotes—a peculiar reinforcement of Twitter's powerful function as a public relations tool” (Poell and van Dijck, 2013: p 7)

Although human connectedness is an important part of social media’s logic, Poell and Van Dijck argue that a more accurate term to capture this element of logic is connectivity which refers to the „socio-technical affordance of networked platforms to connect content to user activities and advertisers“ (Poell and van Dijck, 2013: p 8). To explain further: connectivity equally emphasizes the „mutual shaping of users, platforms, advertisers, and, more generally, online performative environments “ (Poell and van Dijck, 2013: p 8)

Lastly, datafication on social media platforms is defined as a crucial characteristic of social media logic as it has the ability to add a real-time angle. Poell and van Dijck argue: “Much of social media data’s value lies in their real-time „live“ appearance: platforms claim they can track instantaneous movements of individual user behavior, aggregate these data, analyze them,

and subsequently translate the results into valuable information about individuals, groups, or society at large“ (Poell and van Dijck, 2013: p 10)

Hybrid media system

The co-existence and mutual evolvement of newer and older media have created a new understanding – the hybrid media system. Chadwick (2017) introduced the concept to stress the importance of understanding the ever-changing relationship between media and politics and how both new and old media play into the relationship: „The hybrid media system is based upon conflict and competition between older and newer media logics, but it also features important pockets of interdependence among these logics“ (Chadwick 2017: p 285)

Chadwick notes that hybrid thinking serves as a platform for understanding other conceptual themes such as power, the idea of the system, and media logic. Furthermore, the interactions between older and newer media logic shape the power relations among political actors, media, and the public (Chadwick, 2017: p 23) Moreso, although new media is gaining resonance and changing the way politicians and the public communicate, television retains its primacy in the mediation of politics, but it is now accompanied by online media activity.

The hybrid media system has also created a new way of breaking news production – particularly fast-moving news of emergencies, political crises, and scandals (Bruns et al. 2016: p 14) Thus, an important arena in which the balance of power shapes the field is the „political information cycles“ which are becoming the systemic norm for the mediation of important political events. These political information cycles differ from „news cycles“ in that they are „ complex assemblages in which the logics – the technologies, genres, norms, behaviors, and organizational forms – of supposedly „new“ online media are hybridized with those of supposedly „old“ broadcast and newspaper media“ (Chadwick, 2017: p 74).

Political information cycles may involve a great number and a more diverse range of actors and interactions – they may include non-elite participants of whom most interact exclusively online: „The more that professional broadcast and newspaper media actors use digital services like Twitter and Facebook, the more likely it is that broadcast and newspaper media will become open to influence by activists who use the same tools“ (Chadwick, 2017: p 75)

The basis for political information cycles is similar to Entman’s and Usher’s (2018) updated cascade activation model as messages are disseminated without the interference of gatekeepers. Moreover, these cycles involve many “non-elite participants, most of whom now interact exclusively online in order to advance or contest news frames in real-time exchanges but also

during the subsequent stages of the cycle of news that follows a major event or the breaking of a story” (Bruns et al. 2016: p 15) As Chadwick has argued: they work on „cross-platform iteration and recursion“ which „serves to loosen the grip of journalistic and political elites through the creation of fluid opportunity structures with greater scope for timely intervention by online citizen activists“ (Chadwick, 2017: p 75)

So, taking advantage of political information cycles and understanding the potential of acting on information in a timely manner is a matter of gaining power – those who understand the importance of time and the circulation of information are more likely to be powerful. As Taras argued then acting quickly is a nuance of social media communication: “Leaders now find themselves playing in a high-speed game that never stops and in which the players never rest“ (Taras, 2019: p 7) Moreover, the birth of the 24-hour news cycle has created a situation where politicians find themselves in a constant campaign which has been sped up furthermore with by the emergence of social media as political actors are always on and have to always be ready to “react and perform” (Taras, 2019: p 2) Chadwick adds to the notion of acting quickly the importance of knowing when to delay, when to devote intensive attention to the pursuit of a goal, when to repeat, when to act alone, and when to coordinate (Chadwick, 2017: p 102).

Furthermore, he argues that “in the contemporary era, those who have the resources to intervene in the political information cycle are more able to exercise power; those who lack these resources are less able to be powerful in political life“ (Chadwick, 2017: p 102) Thus, power in the hybrid media system belongs to those who are successfully able to “create, tap, or steer information flows in ways that suit their goals and in ways that modify, enable, or disable the agency of others, across and between a range of older and newer media settings“ (Chadwick, 2018: p 285)

Twitter elements

As has become clear social networks are powerful tools for communicating and disseminating political information. Perhaps one of the most powerful social media platforms for political communication and diplomacy is Twitter - a micro-blogging platform that was created in 2006 by a team of programmers and is used by politicians and political leaders around the world. It is the largest microblogging service that allows its users to send and receive short messages.

The structure of the platform is what makes it so attractive to political leaders and diplomats alike as it is publicly accessible by anyone – not just followers (Duncombe, 2019: p 412) The restricted size of tweets which, is 280 characters, allows for quick scanning and tracking of

relevant conversations, and while “political leaders and diplomats can communicate directly with one another, this goes beyond personal interaction, as tweets are broadcast to a much wider audience” (Duncombe, 2019: p 412)

Table 1: Definition of the main Twitter elements

Retweet	A repost of a Tweet by another user, often used to pass valuable information. Retweets are identified with the abbreviation “RT”.
Reply	A response to another person’s Tweet. A reply is identified by the symbol “@”.
Mentions	A mention of another account in a tweet. A mention is identified with the “@” sign followed by a username.
Hashtag	A hashtag is a word or phrase preceded by the “#” symbol. By clicking on a hashtag it is possible to Tweets by other users containing the same keyword.
Tweet	A plain tweet containing up to 280 characters and may contain photos, GIFs, videos, text and URLs.

Twitter comes with a set of elements. The main elements of Twitter can be seen in the table above (Table 1). Enli and Simonsen (2018) argue that one of the affordances of Twitter is the use of hashtags that are operationalized through the concept of „connectivity“. Furthermore, hashtags are „inclusive, and democratic in the sense that all users have equal access to the tool, making the users in principle on equal footing“ (Enli and Simonsen, 2018: p 1082). The creation of the Twitter hashtag (e.g. #StandWithUkraine) feature serves as a tool to organize conversations by organizing tweets into „topics, publics, and c communities“ (Burgess and Baym, 2020: p 60) and its most common use is as „an agreed-upon phrase marking comments to unfolding events, such as news stories, political issues, crises, and emergencies“ (Enli and Simonsen, 2018: p 1084)

Additionally, hashtags serve as a valuable technical tool for politicians as they have „political value because political leaders, or anyone else, can spark dialog on an issue by giving the issue a hashtag in their tweets. Twitter users can search the hashtag, see what has been said about the issue, and they can also contribute to the conversation (Parmalee and Bichard, 2012). As Enli

and Simonsen argue hashtags have a certain potential communicative power because of their agenda-setting influence as “political processes are occupied by a continuous “framing contest” between various actors who are working strategically to tilt the public agenda towards their own favor” (Enli and Simonsen, 2018: p 1085)

Another embedded feature of Twitter is the possibility to mention (e.g. @kajakallas) other users in tweets which serves as a key to Twitter’s role as a medium for conversation and is “essential for creating, maintaining, and enlivening connections among users” (Burgess and Baym, 2020: p 39). Moreover, any Twitter user is able to @mention another user which opens quick communication between political leaders, diplomats, and individuals as any time a user is mentioned in posts they receive a notification. While the hashtags and mentions serve as organizing tools for conversations and people, the Retweet (RT) feature serves as a tool to quote other users

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The practice and origins of public diplomacy can be traced back to the mid-1960-s when the term was coined by an American diplomat Edmund Gullion and the practice became most closely associated with the United States. Public diplomacy gained strength after the Cold War period and was furthermore changed by 11 September 2001, an event that „changed the fortunes of public diplomacy against the backdrop of a troubled relationship between the Islamic world and the West, as well as „the war on terror“ declared by the Bush presidency“ (Melissen, 2005: p 7).

After 9/11, public diplomacy became an issue in foreign ministries from all countries with many developing a public diplomacy policy of their own, though, as Melissen points out, it was not 9/11 that triggered the interest in public diplomacy: „what is true in a more general sense, however, is that – as in the case of the United States – the rising popularity of public diplomacy was most of the time a direct response to a downturn in foreign perceptions“ and „most successful public diplomacy initiatives were born out of necessity (Melissen, 2005: p 9) Melissen argues that other countries have a lot to learn from US public diplomacy and the clearest lesson is that „the aims of public diplomacy cannot be achieved if they are believed to be inconsistent with a country’s foreign policy or military actions“ (Melissen, 2005: p 7)

Gilboa (2008) states that with the new century a new term for public diplomacy emerged - „new public diplomacy“ which „serves an attempt to adjust public diplomacy to the conditions of the information age“ (Gilboa, 2008: p 58).

The difference between the two terms is further explained by Pamment (2013) who points out that the „old“ (twentieth-century) public diplomacy is understood as a „one-way flow of information in which actors control the message by making instrumentalist use of media channels, by ensuring limited interaction between communicator and „recipient“, and by maintaining focus on specific short-term objectives“ (Pamment 2013: p 3).

Globalization and a new media landscape have challenged traditional foreign ministry „gatekeeper“ structures, and foreign ministries can no longer lay claim to being sole or dominant actors in communicating foreign policy. Therefore, the emergence of the new public diplomacy in the early twenty-first century is „a major paradigm fit in international political communication“ (Pamment, 2013: p 3). Flow of information has become much easier and more stakeholders are involved in international affairs and politics. The new public diplomacy is „dialogical, collaborative, and inclusive“ representing a „*break from broadcasting models and takes advantage of social media to establish two-way engagement with the public.*“ (Pamment, 2013: p 3)

Another definition of public diplomacy is given by Paul Sharp who describes it as „the process by which direct relations with people in a country are pursued to advance the interests and extend the values of those being represented (Melissen, 2005: p 12) Nancy Snow (2020) has defined public diplomacy recently: „Public diplomacy (PD) refers to statecraft activities and engagements beyond traditional diplomacy, predominantly cultural and informational, that are designed to inform, influence, and engage global publics in support of foreign policy objectives tied to national interests“ (Snow, 2020: p 2).

It is also notable that the field of public diplomacy in academia is still new and evolving offering two main aspects: the theoretical interpretations and the content of activities in practice (Saliu, 2020: p 79) Ayhan and Sevin (2022) point out that the question remains: has public diplomacy „emerged“ as an academic field or is it a part of other larger fields such as international relations or public relations? (Ayhan and Sevin, 2022: p 201) Moreso, the studies that were conducted about public diplomacy were, for a long time, mainly focused on the American experience, although more recent studies have focused on a growing list of countries and cases of other than the U.S. (Ayhan and Sevin, 2022: p 202)

Elements of public diplomacy

Nicholas Cull (2008), the most cited academic in the field of public diplomacy points out that although the term itself is relatively new „its constituent parts are, in contrast old: essentially as old as statecraft“ (Cull, 2008: p 31)

These parts that Cull refers to are the five elements of public diplomacy practices: listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchange diplomacy, and international broadcasting (IB) (Cull, 2008: p, 32) from which listening is considered a foundational skill as „listening is an actor’s attempt to manage the international environment by collecting and collating data about publics and their opinions overseas and using the data to redirect its policy or its wider public diplomacy approach accordingly“ (Cull, 2008: p 32)

Another component of public diplomacy, advocacy, is found in all areas of public diplomacy and is defined as „an actor’s attempt to manage the international environment by undertaking an international communication activity to actively promote a political policy, idea, or that actor’s general interests in the minds of a foreign public“ (Cull, 2008: p 32). Advocacy utilizes diplomatic outreach methods such as social media, press releases, management of websites, and other information tools to „tell one’s story to the world“ (Snow, 2020: p 2)

At the center of public diplomacy is cultural diplomacy which is „an actor’s attempt to manage the international environment through making its cultural resources and achievements known overseas and/or facilitating cultural transmission abroad“ (Cull, 2008: p 33). Cultural diplomacy, then, is also a key part of the use of soft power. Snow points out that „cultural exchange and cultural diplomacy are overtly committed to enhancing a country’s soft power“ (Snow, 2020: p 3) Cultural diplomacy can also be a one-way street and not a two-way exchange as Cummings argues, which can happen „when one nation concentrates its efforts on promoting the national language, explaining its policies and point of view, or „telling its story“ to the rest of the world (Cummings, 2009: p 1)

The element of exchange diplomacy in public diplomacy refers to „an actor’s attempt to manage the international environment by sending its citizens overseas and reciprocally accepting citizens from overseas for a period of study and/or acculturation“ and the element of reciprocity has made this area of public diplomacy „a bastion of the concept of „mutuality“: the vision of an international learning experience in which both parties benefit and are transformed“ (Cull, 2009: p 33)

International news broadcasting (IB) is mostly connected to media and is „an actor’s attempt to manage the international environment by using the technologies of radio, television, and the Internet to engage with foreign publics“ (Cull, 2009: p 34) Furthermore, IB can overlap with all the previously mentioned public diplomacy functions.

Conclusively, public diplomacy serves as a powerful tool for those looking to influence the public. „When handled well, public diplomacy can be essential to the success of a foreign policy. Each element in the taxonomy has its success story, which carries broader lessons for the wider operation of public diplomacy.“ (Cull, 2009: p 37)

The power of public diplomacy

The power and outcomes of successful public diplomacy lie in the influence one country has on another country. Defined in terms of framing, Entman (2008) points out the relevance of cultural resonance which implies that cultural proximity between actors translates to more understanding and acceptance between those sharing common values and identity. Consequently, cultural resonance has an impact of how one country is able to coerce its frames to another country’s media: “the greater the cultural resonance is between two countries, the more a government will successfully “push” its frames into the second country’s media, and the better that country’s image is among the second country’s public.“ (Sheafer and Shenhav, 2009: p 276)

Thus, as the ability to frame another country’s media is relevant in conducting successful public diplomacy, the power of doing so may lie in the concepts of smart, soft or hard power. Firstly, it is important to define the concept of soft power. The concept was coined by Joseph Nye in early 1990’s and is important in understanding how governments are able to influence one another. Soft power means getting what one wants through “attraction and co-option rather than military and/or economic coercion” (Beadle and Hill, 2014: p 11) Beadle and Hill point out that soft power is the opposite of using “sticks and carrots” where “sticks” refer to the use of force or sanctions and “carrots” refer to “the more conditional forms of financial assistance, sometimes to the point of bribes” to get others to do what they want them to do (Beadle and Hill, 2014: p 11)

A conclusive definition of soft power and how it works is defined by Nye (2004) as follows:

“Soft power is the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. When you can get others to want what you want, you

do not have to spend as much on sticks and carrots to move them in your direction. Hard power, the ability to coerce, grows out of a country's military and economic might. Soft power arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies. When our policies are seen as legitimate in the eyes of others, our soft power is enhanced"

(Nye, 2004: p 256)

What is the power of soft power, then? As Nye argues then soft power does not lie only in the image of a country or popularity or attractiveness. Moreso, soft power is a form of power – a tool for obtaining the outcomes a country desires. Arguing from the point of US politics Nye points out that power comes from not only strong defenses but strong sharing, which, if ignored, is a price that country pays as sharing intelligence and capabilities with others is where the power lies, thus, “dismissing the importance of attraction as merely ephemeral popularity ignores key insights from new theories of leadership as well as the new realities of the information age” (Nye, 2004: p 261)

Some other advantages that the use of soft power has are its ability to cope with globalization in terms providing governments the possibility to maintain relations through diplomacy networks such as the United Nations (UN), the WHO, the World Bank, the European Union (EU), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). As Beadle and Hill argue: “participating in these networks also has practical advantages in that it offers states the ability to shape the agendas and rules of the multiple regimes which characterize modern international life” (Beadle and Hill, 2014: p 16) A second advantage according to Beadle and Hill is soft power's are the mechanisms associated with it that are considered to be legitimate ways of conducting international relations in which different states and actors can participate – both weak and strong; non-state actors and governments. Thus, “soft power strategies are perceived to be benign and positive in their impact, whereas hard power can damage the status of even a superpower” (Beadle and Hill, 2014: p 16)

Nevertheless, although soft power seems to be the preferred tool for public diplomacy, the existence and influence of “hard power” cannot be ignored. As Nye (2008) has argued, hard power may employ coercion and payments to affect others' behavior. Although it is becoming harder for states to justify the use of force, there is an understanding of combining soft and hard power in order to achieve desired outcomes. Thus, power in a global information age, more

than ever, will include a soft dimension of attraction as well as the hard dimensions of coercion and inducement – using both of these simultaneously is effectively “smart power” – a combination of both co-option and coercion.

Smart power as a concept was introduced by Nye to emphasize the importance of using a combination of strategies in today's foreign policy and defined the concept of smart power as the ability to “combine the hard power of coercion or payment with the soft power of attraction into a successful strategy” (Nye, 2008: p 6) Furthermore, this combination of hard and soft power is based on the “recognition of the need for soft power, but it cannot be equated with entirely giving up on hard power, since it involves the limited use of hard power” (Havertz, 2019: p 99)

More importantly, the country with the largest army is not always the one that will prevail over others as the information age has changed these traditional understandings of power. “With the dawning of the information age, the prevailing country may be the one which is able to co-opt others with the best narrative” (Havertz, 2019: p 100)

What do small states have to do with power?

For purpose of this study which aims to analyze the communication of a prime minister of a small state, Estonia, it is necessary to briefly discuss what kind of power small states have when using the communicative power of public diplomacy and framing in managing international conflicts. As Lamoreaux and Galbreath point out then size is often associated with power, therefore the size of a state is often referred to in terms of the international influence of a state.

Estonia is one of the three Baltic states neighboring Russia. Although Estonia is also part of big organizations such as the EU and NATO, it nevertheless deems Russia and its actions as an existential threat: „While the three (Baltic) countries are indeed part of the EU, NATO, and other organizations, they still perceive Russia as one of the greatest threats to their national security (military, economic, societal).” (Lamoreaux and Galbreath, 2008: p 5)

Nevertheless, as Lamoreaux and Galbreath argue, belonging to these international organizations is what gives means to small states to impact international policies and therefore they are not the only states that “jump on the bandwagon”: „While it seems logical that small states on their own are limited as to what actions they can take, it also seems logical that as a member of an organization, their capacity to act increases.” (Lamoreaux and Galbreath, 2008: p 6) They argue that these small states do have to capability to “punch above their weight”, especially regarding questions that they are “experts” in as can be seen in the example of Baltic

states gaining independence from the Soviet Union and de-Russification, therefore serving as advisers: “Estonia is in a good strategic geopolitical position to aid the “new outsiders” such as Georgia, Ukraine and Belarus” (Lamoreaux and Galbreath, 2008: p 10)

In line with Armitage and Nye who argue that smart power is “an approach that underscores the necessity of a strong military, but also invests heavily in alliances, partnerships, and institutions (Armitage and Nye, 2004: p 7), small states can exercise power and possibly smart power. As argued by Sari and Sula (2014) smart power can be exercised by countries of any size “if it is able to establish a well-planned strategy consistent with its national power towards well-designed foreign policy objective” (Sari and Sula, 2014: p 21)

Scholars have defined “smartness” in small states through the notion of connecting smartness with small states’ ability to “adapt, be influential and not have any of the liabilities that accompany the great powers in the system” (Pedi and Sarri, 2019: p 6). Pedi and Sarri argue similarly to Lamoreaux and Galbreath, when small states manage to “punch above their weight” they usually take advantage of favorable circumstances, whether systemic, such as great powers rivalry, institutional, such as holding the presidency of an organization or that of the EU Council; or derived from a state’s geography of an organization or that of the EU Council; or derived from a state’s geography, the discovery of natural resources, competent leadership” (Pedi and Sarri, 2019: p 7)

To sum up, small states do have the ability to exercise smart power and especially so during the information age and the affordances the social media platforms have created for political leaders.

METHODOLOGY

The following chapter discusses the methodology chosen for this qualitatively driven study. Firstly, the philosophy of science chosen for this study is introduced. Secondly, the research method and approach will be explained in detail. Lastly, the process of data collection and the limitations of the methodology are discussed briefly.

PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE: SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONISM

Choosing a research philosophy is an integral part of the research process as it guides the way in which the researcher interprets the world. For the purpose of this study social constructionism has been chosen as the philosophy of science as it will give an understanding of how to approach the framing and frames as concepts that are prevalent in our world. Furthermore, as frames and framing is inherently a creation of social constructions it will serve as a useful tool for making sense of the constructions created by political actors that aim to influence the understanding of events.

Constructionism is a way of viewing the world through the lens of understanding how meaning and knowledge is constructed. Constructionism originated as an attempt to understand the nature of reality and has its origins in sociology and is mostly associated with the post-modern era in qualitative research (Andrews, 2012: p 39). Furthermore, its origins can be traced to interpretivism thinking, but while they share common roots they are different (Andrews, 2012: p 40). In definition, social constructionism is concerned with how „knowledge is constructed and understood“. Furthermore, „social constructionism places great emphasis on everyday interactions between people and how they use language to construct their reality“ (Andrews, 2012: p 44) Moreover, the constructionism paradigm is guided by the belief that „active construction of knowledge takes place when there is human interaction with the real world“ (Dawadi et al. 2021 p 26)

Positioning oneself as a researcher is an important part of conducting a research. According to Bryman: „Constructionism essentially invites the researcher to consider the ways in which social reality is an ongoing accomplishment of social actors rather than something external to them and that totally constrains them“ (Bryman, 2021: p 34) Furthermore, the categories in which people operate to create meanings about the world are „social products“, hence „their meaning is constructed in and through interaction“ (Bryman, 2021: p 34) More importantly, the researcher can also partake in the creation of constructions and therefore the constructionist approach requires self-reflection: “constructionist researchers are required to reflect on how

their own conceptions, values, experiences, interest, social identities, and so forth affect the research, as well as to reflect on how the researcher's epistemological stance influences the research process and its findings" (Chen et al. 2011: p 135)

Thus, while studying the creation of framing and frames, the researcher must keep in mind their own position in realm of where the framing is happening – how a social identity or values may affect the research. Furthermore, social constructionism is inherently the “creation and institutionalization of reality in social construction” (Van Gorp, 2007: p 62). The approach to framing research most often takes the constructionist stance in which the potential of frames to influence lies in the fact that they are connected to culturally familiar frames. „Cultural resonances contribute to the fact that devices are often perceived as familiar so that the frames to which they refer can remain unnoticed” (Van Gorp, 2007: p 73)

As explained before this study takes the stance of social constructionism that is most often used in framing research. It aims to present a certain version of social reality in which communication through framing processes happens by taking into account the context within which the communication is happening. Moreover, this study will try to analyze how social reality and meanings are created and constructed.

RESEARCH APPROACH

This study takes a qualitative approach to frame analysis as it is mostly focused on words and meanings and will not concentrate on statistics or numbers, although quantification is prevalent to some extent.

Qualitative approach to this study is valuable as the departure point of this study is to understand how communication is happening in a specific context. According to Wood (2004): “qualitative methods are valuable when we wish not to count or measure phenomena but to understand the character of experience, particularly how people perceive and make sense of their communication experience (Wood, 2004: p 69) Wood adds that making sense of this communication experience “involves interpreting meanings and other unobservable dimensions of communication”(Wood, 2004: p 69)

In regards to methodological approaches to frame analysis scholars have employed multiple approaches. For instance, by employing quantitative content analysis or computer-assisted frame analysis, or text-based interpretative, qualitative approach (Linström and Marais, 2012: p 25)

Furthermore, scholars have identified two approaches: inductive and deductive. According to Vreese, the inductive approach to framing refrains from analyzing news stories with a priori-defined news frame in mind as frames emerge from the material during the course of analysis (Vreese, 2005: p 54). While such an approach gives the opportunity for discovering new frames it is criticized for “relying on too small a sample and being difficult to replicate” (Vreese, 2005: p 53).

On the other hand, the deductive approach aims to explore frames that are “defined and operationalized prior to the investigation” (Vreese, 2005: p 53). This line of research was developed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) who focused on five frames: “conflict”, “human interest”, “economic consequences”, “morality”, and “responsibility”. The description of these frames can be found in the table below.

Table 2: Definition of five generic frames (Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000) by Velthorst (2015)

Responsibility	Attributing responsibility for a cause or solution to either the government or to an individual or group (Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000)
Conflict	Reflects conflict and disagreement among individuals, groups, or organizations
Economic consequences	Reports an event, problem, or issue in terms of the consequences it will have economically on an individual, groups or countries
Human Interest	Brings a human face or an emotional angle to the presentation of an event, issue or problem
Morality	Puts the event, problem, or issue in the context of morals, social prescriptions, and religious tenets

Moreover, Vreese points out that working with a deductive approach to identifying the frame of the relevant question: “What (which components) in a news story constitutes a frame?”. (Vreese, 2005: p 53-54).

The five frames presented by Semetko and Valkenburg have also been chosen for this study as they can be applied to framing analyses on social media (Manor, 2015; López-Rabadán, 2021). Therefore, this study is deductive in nature to some extent. However, while Semetko and Valkenburg's work was built on 20 questions to identify frames that were answered in a strict binary "yes" or "no" manner, this study takes a more flexible approach by drawing inspiration from the original questionnaire (See Appendix 1) by the scholars as a guide to identifying the prevalence of the five frames in Tweets by the prime minister. Furthermore, this study uses quantification to some extent by calculating how often certain frames arise in Tweets (e.g. how often is the "responsibility frame" attributed in the Tweets or how prevalent is the attribution of "moral frames"). For further understanding of the framing devices used by Kallas, this study has also counted how many times certain Twitter users are mentioned (e.g. @NATO) and which hashtags (e.g. @Ukraine) utilized are the most prevalent in the tweets.

For this purpose of this study, a codebook (See Appendix 2) inspired by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) was created for identifying and analyzing the frames present in individual Tweets and edited to match the purpose of this study (e.g. the word "news" was replaced with the word "tweets").

DATA COLLECTION

The aim of this study is to analyze how the prime minister of Estonia Kaja Kallas has used frames in her communication of Russia's aggression against Ukraine on Twitter. To do this, tweets from Kaja Kallas's official Twitter account (@kajakallas) between February 24, 2022 and March 24, 2022 were collected.

February 24th marks the day Russia launched a full-scale attack on Ukraine and is therefore chosen as a departure point for this study. Moreover, taking into account the scope of this study, this specific time period was chosen in order to analyze how the prime minister of Estonia, Kaja Kallas, used framing in her communication of the Russo-Ukrainian war in the early days as the conflict was still escalating.

The collection of data was done through Twitter research API with the help of the Digital Media Lab in Roskilde University.

A total amount of 160 tweets was collected from the selected time period of February 24, 2022 up to March 24, 2022. The data was then placed into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for further evaluation. For the purpose of this study, the data was cleaned: for an instance, all the *&* were replaced with „and“ and double tweets were deleted. Moreover, after the initial reading of

the data, it was determined that out of the 160 tweets 96 were suitable for further analysis. All the retweets (56) and tweets (10) that did not refer to Ukraine or the ongoing situation in one way or another were discarded. Sometimes two or more tweets were analyzed as one component as they were part of one statement (e.g. Twitter threads). An example of a Twitter thread is shown below:

Times are serious. Allies and friends continue to plan how to adapt in the new reality. On Monday I meet PM FI @MarinSanna and on Tuesday U.S US @SecBlinken in Tallinn and PM CA @JustinTrudeau via VTC. Thereafter will address @Europarl_EN on Wednesday and meet EU leaders in France. 1/2

Our focus will be on: 1. Giving maximum support to #Ukraine. 2. Isolating the aggressor from the free world and stopping Putin's war machine. 3. Preparing for serious steps in strengthening our own defence. 2/2

It is noteworthy that sometimes all the five generic frames can be identified in one Tweet whereas there are instances where a tweet does not contain any of the five generic frames.

ANALYSIS

In this chapter of the thesis the results of the analysis will be presented with a brief overview of Twitter elements used in the tweets. The five generic frames that were identified in the tweets were the responsibility frame, conflict frame, human interest frame, morality frame and economic consequences frame. Before continuing with the analysis of each frame, the questions outlined by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) that were used to evaluate the prevalence of each frame will be presented.

RESPONSIBILITY FRAME: DEMAND FOR INTERNATIONAL REACTION

This frame presents an issue or problem in such a way as to attribute responsibility for its cause or solution to either the government or to an individual or group. The responsibility frame may indicate a tweet that suggests that somebody has the ability to alleviate the problem, a tweet suggesting someone may be responsible for the issue/problem, someone is responsible for the problem or a tweet suggesting the problem requires urgent action.

Out of all the tweets analyzed the responsibility frame was the most prevalent of all the generic frames. Attribution of responsibility frame was found in 63 out of 96 tweets analyzed for this study. The responsibility frame was attributed to the first tweet used for this analysis and published by Kallas on the 24th of February, the day that also marks the beginning of Russia's attack on Ukraine:

I condemn in the gravest manner #Russia's large-scale military attack against #Ukraine. Aggression is a crime that demands the clearest international reaction and strong response. We are with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people at this dark hour. We #StandWithUkraine. Слава Україні!

(Kallas, 2022, February 24)

The application of the responsibility frame is identified in the choice of words – the demand for „international reaction“ and „strong response“ followed by a statement: „*We are with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people at this dark hour*“ With this request, Kallas conveys that there is a responsibility to act and respond to the situation that has emerged indicating someone, in this case, the „international community“ has the ability to alleviate the problem by reacting and offering support. As Entman has argued, offering a remedy to a problem is a function of framing that promotes support of government action (Entman, 2003: p 418)

The attribution of the responsibility frame was generally oriented toward the „international community“: the EU and NATO. The audience addressed in the tweets was also commonly referred to as partners and friends – the whole Western alliance and their response to the emerging crisis situation in Europe. The topics within the responsibility frame mainly refer to sanctions and isolating Russia, offering continuous support to Ukraine and its people and supplementing Ukraine with weapons as well as deterrence by increasing NATO presence in the Baltics and supplementing Ukraine with weapons.

The topic of defense and deterrence is present in tweets encouraging Allies to send weapons to Ukraine and for NATO to adapt to the developing situation in Europe. The message of increasing defense in the Baltic region is apparent from the beginning and is continuously conveyed throughout the whole period:

Spoke to US @VP Kamala Harris on the phone: ☒ We're imposing severe costs on #Russia's and Belarus's regimes for this inhuman war. Continuing close coordination ☒ We are laser-focused on delivering aid to #Ukraine ☒ Discussed how @NATO should adapt its presence in the Baltics
<https://t.co/txpc7mdeEN>

(Kallas, 2022, March 1)

By remarking that helping Ukraine is „our urgent priority“ and the emerging situation „demands us to adapt“, Kallas draws attention to the vulnerability of both the Baltics and Europe overall. The severeness of the situation is expressed through the connection of common values that Russia’s assault has created:

Thank you @EmmanuelMacron for your commitment and support both to #Estonia's and to our common defense. It's a true sign of unity and friendship. At this dark hour for freedom and democracy in #Europe, we stand together

in ensuring stronger defense across the Alliance. #StrongerTogether
<https://t.co/zaebf1YdWm>

(Kallas, 2022, February 25)

By conveying the message that there is a threat to the whole democratic world, Kallas establishes an immediate understanding of obligation towards responding to the attack. Furthermore, the call for responsible action is accentuated by alluding to the partnership of the Allies: „It’s a true sign of unity and friendship“ followed by a statement of standing together and assuring a defense across the Alliance. Furthermore, Kallas frequently makes use of culturally resonant terms such as „democracy“, „freedom“, and „free world“. In several instances, the battle of Ukraine is referred to as the fight for Europe. As Entman argues, images and words that are highly salient in the culture help create frames that are more influential (Entman, 2003: p 418).

Thus, by referring to common values under attack Kallas aims to create a stronger frame that resonates with her audience. Moreover, Kallas communicated it from the start of the attack by conveying the need for solidarity with the people and advocating assisting Ukraine with practical help. Interestingly, by communicating solidarity with Ukraine, Kallas states „Ukraine’s plight is Europe’s plight (Kallas, 2022, February 2024), therefore creating a much larger narrative by expressing the idea the West and Ukraine sharing the predicament of the situation

By insisting that assisting Ukraine in the ongoing war is a shared responsibility suggests how an event should be thought about which, as Guendez et al. argue is an essence of a frame as frames are constructions of the issue (Guendez et al. 2016: p 585) Kallas conveys this way of thinking by highlighting the obligation that EU has in offering Ukraine passage to the European Union. This position is communicated in several Tweets by stressing the importance of offering Ukraine a European perspective:

Ukraine is part of Europe, part of us. Today @EstonianGovt approved its official position to support #Ukraine's application to join the #EU. We must send a strong political signal: UA is a European state and belongs in the EU. I'll ask European leaders to voice their support. <https://t.co/bktYhMXGh8>

(Kallas, 2022, March 3)

Kallas determines responsibility for the EU outlook by repeating that Ukraine is „part of us“ and „belongs in the EU“ while also asking the EU leaders to advocate for the same stance. As Entman argues, words that constitute a frame may be distinguished by their capability to gain the support of sides in a political conflict (Entman, 2003, p. 417)

Although the notion of isolating Russia economically and politically are present in the Tweets from the first week, they become more prevalent as the situation in Ukraine progress further. The responsibility frame indicates that someone has the tools to alleviate the problem. By emphasizing the need to stop Russia’s „war machine“ Kallas offered a solution to the problem by using the means of initiating and intensifying economic sanctions against Russia with the goal of isolating the country. Moreover, the notion of isolating Russia is not only communicated through practicalities like actions that will influence Russia’s economy. The communication refers to the general picture of changing the policy toward Russia by claiming that the relations between countries and Russia must be changed:

✍️ Our focus should be simple: Putin cannot win this war. He cannot even think he has won. There can be no return to "business as usual". Only "no business at all." Some proposals on what a long-term policy of smart containment should entail

(Kallas, 2022, February 24)

As Entman has noted, framing is highlighting bits of information to elevate them in salience, therefore „making a piece of information more noticeable, meaningful, or memorable to audiences“ (Entman, 1993: p 53). Consequently, Kallas has framed the attack on Ukraine by creating a sense of responsibility by highlighting throughout the tweets that the outcome of the war is in the hands of the West. Hence, building on the idea of cultural resonance, the idea that „the more resonance and magnitude, the more likely the framing is to evoke similar thoughts and feelings in large portions of the audience (Entman, 2003: p 417), Kallas aims to evoke similar thoughts in her audience by creating the understanding of the graveness of the situation.

CONFLICT FRAME: ISOLATE THE AGGRESSOR

This frame emphasizes conflict between individuals, groups, or institutions as a means of capturing audience interest. The conflict frame may indicate a tweet outlines a conflict between individuals/countries, may indicate that one individual or country reproaches another, refers to two or more sides to the problem or issue and may refer to winners or losers.

The conflict frame was the second most prevalent frame identified in the Tweets. Out of 96 tweets, 44 used the conflict frame. The main topics that arose from the conflict frame tweets, were Russia's and Putin's war, and also a clear message of the needed outcome of the war.

Of these, the most prevalent one is the topic of Russia's attack against Ukraine. Similarly to the responsibility frame, Kallas addresses the attack frequently in a way that indicates the attack on Ukraine as an attack on everyone. Moreover, the conflict frame is reinforced by the repetition of catchphrases that serve as „attempted summary statements about the principal subject“ (Gamson and Lasch, 1983: p 407-409). Some of these reoccurring catchphrases are „stop Putin's war machine“ or „isolate the aggressor“. Furthermore, Kallas creates a sense of urgency by noting the need to „adapt“ and pointing out the significance that the attack has created:

Times are serious. Allies and friends continue to plan how to adapt in the new reality. On Monday I meet PM FI @MarinSanna and on Tuesday U.S US @SecBlinken in Tallinn and PM CA @JustinTrudeau via VTC. Thereafter will address @Europarl_EN on Wednesday and meet EU leaders in France. 1/2
(Kallas, 2022, March 6)

Our focus will be on: 1. Giving maximum support to #Ukraine. 2. Isolating the aggressor from the free world and stopping Putin's war machine. 3. Preparing for serious steps in strengthening our own defense. 2/2
(Kallas, 2022, March 6)

As becomes apparent, Kallas frequently repeats highly influential terms such as „war“, „aggression“ and „evil“ that constitute „high magnitude, high resonance framing“ (Entman, 2003: p 418) which further elevates the power of the framing. Moreover, the conflict frame created in the Tweets also strongly refers to what should be the outcome of this war. This is prevalent in multiple tweets where Kallas argues that Putin must not win and, even more, it is up to the Western countries that he won't succeed – an idea that is also indicative of the responsibility frame:

Russia expects us to take a step back soon. We will prove them wrong. We will keep on finding new tools in our toolbox until Putin's war machine has been paralysed and isolated. 4/6

(Kallas, 2022, March 8)

Furthermore, Kallas frequently refers to the legal aspect of Russia's actions, that is to highlight that Russia's incursion into Ukraine is a violation of international law as is the way Russia is having this war. By pointing out Russia „violates international law“ and its actions are „unlawful“, Kallas further establishes the conflict frame by pointing to Russia's actions as illegal and terrorist and by giving the magnitude of the action which creates a frame that opposes one side of the conflict (Entman, 2003: p 417). It could be argued furthermore that Kallas uses „smart power“ (Nye, 2004) in which attributing a combination of soft and hard power she aims to combat an international conflict: „the argument is not that soft power is sufficient to defeat terror, but rather that in the era of new warfare, a combination between hard power and soft power—is needed (p 274, Sheaffer and Shenhav):

The shelling of #Zaporizhzhya nuclear plant in #Ukraine is next-level brutality in Putin's war. I condemn this in the strongest terms. Attacking nuclear facilities is a criminal act to terrorise the public. Russia must stop and ensure proper nuclear safety now.

(Kallas, 2022, March 4)

To summarize briefly, Kallas frames conflict by conveying the message of threat and war in Europe. Furthermore, she establishes what must be done to stop it and highlights Russia's actions as criminal and unlawful by using high-magnitude terms that influence the public, or as Entman noted „evoke similar thoughts and feelings in large portions of the audience“ (Entman, 2003: p 417)

MORALITY FRAME: FIGHTING FOR COMMON VALUES

This frame puts the event, problem, or issue in the context of religious tenets, conveys a moral message or offers moral prescriptions.

The main topics that were addressed within the morality frame were those of supporting Ukraine's path to the EU, a sense of „evil“, and humanitarian aid. The morality frame was prevalent in 32 out of 96 tweets making it the third most prevalent generic frame on the PM-s Twitter communication.

Granting Ukraine the EU candidate country status was an issue that was common in the responsibility frame, but was also recognized in Tweets that were framed with the morality frame. In a Tweet published on the 28th of February, the PM draws attention to Ukraine's battle which she considers to be reflective of the values of the whole of Europe:

#Estonia has always supported #Ukraine to join the #EU. Now the brave people of UA are fighting for Europe and our common democratic values. It is our moral duty to grant UA EU candidate country status. As @vonderleyen said yesterday, Ukraine is one of us and we want you in EU.
<https://t.co/065tAlcXl4> (Kallas, 2022, February 28)

In emphasizing the „moral duty“ of granting Ukraine EU membership she simultaneously conveys the sentiment of morality and responsibility that has become apparent in the Western alliance towards Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. A similar idea becomes apparent in the other Tweets that communicate the moral standpoint of EU membership and Ukraine. Furthermore, she maintains that in doing so there is a benefit to the EU itself as, again – the fight Ukraine is fighting is not only for them but for the common good.

Focus on the future of #Ukraine and a clear #EU perspective. It is not only in our interest to give UA a EU membership perspective but also our moral duty. Ukraine is fighting not just for Ukraine, it is fighting for Europe. If not now, then when?

(Kallas, 2022, March 9)

The question „If not now, then when?“ creates a sense of seriousness by using a rhetorical framing device. For this reason, it becomes apparent that not only is the notion of accepting Ukraine to the EU or their fighting in the best interests of all the West countries, but the matter is a top priority given its seriousness. Once more, the thought of morality is expressed in communicating the importance of Ukraine to the EU as the PM connects the stopping of the „war machine“ to Ukraine's EU membership. Alluding to the shared value system Kallas presses the morality frame: by communicating the importance of „moral duty“, and „democratic values“ she is essentially alluding to culturally resonant terms. As Entman has argued then using ideas that are highly salient in culture, that is „noticeable, understandable, memorable,

emotionally charged“ (Entman, 2003: p 417) is a way of creating a stronger frame. Thus, by referring to shared value systems Kallas is building a frame that resonates with a wide audience.

Another notion that the moral frames convey in the Tweets is the denotation of the enemy – Putin, Russia – as „evil“ which needs to be detained. Furthermore, Kallas reinforces the morality frame by offering a prescription of an action which is apparent through the call for „standing up against the evil Putin has released“ (e.g. Kallas, 2022, date). By referring to his actions as „creating chaos“ and „inhuman“, a further sense of fighting „an evil“ is conveyed and describing with through words such as „brutal“ and „vicious „indicating use of a high magnitude, high resonance framing (Entman, 2003: p 417) which has been apparent in previous frames. Kallas also uses metaphors as rhetorical framing devices to indicate a sense of urgency such as „appetite comes with eating“ (e.g. Kallas, 2022, March 3) referring to the possibility of Russia invading another country if not stopped in its tracks.

In referring to the human costs of the war Kallas directs attention to the worsening humanitarian situation that the war has brought on by calling out for speeding up humanitarian assistance by Allies. Moreover, the prescription of managing the humanitarian situation is also oriented towards Russia itself by demanding the morally correct action from them:

We need to keep on providing military aid to #Ukraine, so they can defend themselves. As the humanitarian situation is alarmingly deteriorating, we must step up our humanitarian assistance. #Russia must guarantee safe humanitarian corridors at once.

(Kallas, 20220, March 14)

In conclusion, Kallas uses the moral frames to indicate the enemy as „evil“, therefore morally bankrupt. Furthermore, she highlights the importance of granting Ukraine EU membership by referring to it as the moral duty of the Allies by repetition of framing words and images (Entman, 2003). Moreover, as Cull (2008) notes the aspect of advocacy in public diplomacy is advocating for a policy, idea, or that actor’s general interest in the minds of a foreign public“ (Cull, 2008: p 32), Kallas utilizes public diplomacy by being an advocate for Ukraine’s EU membership and aiming for a strong response to Russia’s actions.

HUMAN INTEREST FRAME: SALUTING THE PEOPLE

This frame brings a human face or an emotional angle to the presentation of an event, issue, or problem. This frame indicates that a tweet that has a human example or puts a “human face”

on an issue, employs adjectives or personal vignettes that generate feelings of outrage or empathy/compassion, emphasizes how individuals or groups are affected by the issue/problem and may go into the private or personal lives of the actors.

The human interest frame was identified in 13 out of 96 tweets. The main topics within the human interest frame in the Tweets were found to be the impact on people and highlighting people's positive attributes.

Mentioning the people in Ukraine was a topic found to be prevalent in both the responsibility and morality frames. In the human interest frame, they are conveyed through their actions. Kallas alludes to the positive characteristics such as „bravery“ and „dedication“ of people in Ukraine on multiple occasions in her Tweets. Here, another instance of public diplomacy utilized by Kallas is seen through the element of listening which Cull defines as an „attempt to manage the international environment by collecting and collating data about publics and their opinions overseas and using the data to redirect its policy or its wider public diplomacy approach accordingly“ (Cull, 2008: p 32)

Furthermore, by emphasizing the positive traits of the Ukrainian people and quoting other political actors in support of the Ukrainian president she aims to direct public attention to Ukraine by framing Ukraine in a positive manner:

Quoting @eucopresident's message to Ukrainians: "I salute Volodymyr Zelensky's composure and his courage. They are a reflection of your composure and your courage." Fully agreed! The dedication and bravery of Ukrainian people is remarkable. #StandWithUkraine
<https://t.co/mZcSIUdto9>

(Kallas, 2022, February 27)

The refugees were mentioned several times in the Tweets. By highlighting the situation of the refugees and asking for countries to provide their help Kallas put a „human face“ on the issue. Moreover, she conveys a feeling of outrage by describing how attacks affect civilians. Illustrative Tweets below:

Attacks on UA civilians, hospitals, homes, schools. Hundreds of thousands forced to leave their homes. Neglect of nuclear safety. Today, shelling of #Kharkiv. We must document these horrors in Putin's war. They are war crimes, and should be called and investigated as such.

(Kallas, 2022, February 28)

Furthermore, by conveying the notion that „terrorizing civilians“ is part of the tactic that the aggressor has, a further sense of urgency is created. In addition to conveying the message to the Western alliance that refugees should be accepted Kallas also stressed in multiple tweets the importance of providing those fleeing with a transition as smooth as possible. An example of this is below:

I assured leaders of EE Ukrainian communities and Estonian Refugee Council that we #StandWithUkraine. Also visited UA refugee welcome centre. Our duty is to provide a stable environment to help people fleeing from Putin's war in #Ukraine resume normal life as smoothly as possible.
<https://t.co/v8XVSLJ5mS>

(Kallas, 2022, March 4)

Conclusively, by framing the war with the human interest angle, Kallas has highlighted two topics: the positive attributes of the people who are fighting for their freedom and the effect war has on those who are fleeing. By doing so, she is actively framing the emerging situation by creating emotional associations which aim to create empathy in the audience.

ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES FRAME: INCREASE DEFENSE TO STOP AGGRESSION

This frame reports an event, problem, or issue in terms of consequences it will have economically on an individual, group, institution, region, or country. This frame may indicate financial losses or gains now or in the future, may mention the costs/degree of expense involved or may refer to economic consequences of pursuing or not pursuing a course of action.

The economic frame was identified in 7 out of 96 tweets, making it the least prevalent frame of all the generic frames. The economic frame was mostly applied to tweets that conveyed the costs of increasing defense and economic sanctions.

The topic of defense was salient throughout all the tweets on the prime minister's Twitter channel predictably used within both the responsibility frames and conflict frames. By setting up a mutual understanding that stopping the aggression is tied to not only the defense of the country under attack but the whole of Europe Kallas suggests changing policies towards defense spending. Moreover, Kallas stresses what her own country, Estonia has done in terms of its

defense policies. By further stressing the connection between the emerging crisis in Europe and the actions of Allies that are able to combat it, further pressure was conveyed to increase defense spending:

To stop aggression in Europe, we must all do more for its defense. I welcome the landmark decision by @Bundestkanzler Chancellor Scholz to increase Germany's defense spending above 2% of its GDP. I hope many others will follow suit.

(Kallas, 2022, February 27)

Tweets containing the economic frame are to be expected as Russia has been sanctioned by the EU for its actions in Ukraine before 2014 after the annexation of Ukraine. Here, the sanctions are most importantly conveyed as a measure to stop Putin by „crippling“ his „war machine“ and continue the pressure. Moreover, Kallas stresses that stopping the aggression in Europe is in line with increasing defense spending. By indicating the importance of a strong military presence in Europe, but also alluding to the importance of allies and partnerships, the use of „smart power“ is imminent. Furthermore, the sanctions are geared towards inflicting consequences on the people of Russia:

We are crippling Putin's war machine. Huge measures announced by @vonderleyen EU and partners: no more #SWIFT for big RU banks. Asset paralysis of #Russia's central bank. Keeping oligarchs away from our markets. Pressure will be turned up and up, incl on the complicit Belarus regime. <https://t.co/uZ0qfUa5Bc> (Kallas, 2022, February 27)

To summarize briefly, Kallas has built the economic frames in a way that indicates the importance of sanctioning the enemy state and increasing defense spending in order to ensure the safety of Europe. Furthermore, by using a rhetorical device, the catchphrase „Won't stop until Putin's war stop“ Kallas further endorses an understanding of the unambiguous approach to responding to Moscow's actions while also indicating that simply a diplomatic peace-seeking approach with the Kremlin will not do.

TWITTER ELEMENTS

In this section a brief overview of the mentions and hashtags Kallas used in her tweets is given in order to explore the technical framing devices used.

MENTIONS

Through out the entire time frame chosen for this study Kaja Kallas made 83 mentions in her Tweets. The most mentioned account belonged to the official Twitter account of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (@NATO) with a total of 18 mentions.

NATO was mainly mentioned by Kallas to emphasize the need for defending its territory such as: “more combat-ready allied troops stationed permanently in the Baltic States, supported by long-range artillery, air defense and other enabling capabilities (Kallas, 2022, March 24) and “We must step up quick support to UA and bolster @NATO’s defense posture on the eastern flank” (Kallas, 2022, March 1) Similarly, NATO’s official general secretary Jens Stoltenberg’s official Twitter account (@JensStoltenberg) was mentioned three times in the context of welcoming allies to Estonia: “I will host PM @BorisJohnson and @NATO SecGen @jensstoltenberg at Tapa Army Base EE today” (Kallas, 2022, March 1) and the official account of the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defense Centre of Excellence (@CCDCOE)

Other frequently mentioned official Twitter accounts of other world leaders were the official Twitter accounts of the prime minister of United Kingdom Boris Johnson (@BorisJohnson) and the prime minister of Finland Sanna Marin (@MarinSanna). Both of the prime ministers were mentioned in regards to hosting them in Estonia and discussing measures that should be taken against Russia.

Kallas mentioned international press and journalists frequently by sharing links to interviews. CNN (@CNNSotu) was mentioned once together with the anchor of CNN Jake Tapper (@jaketapper) with reference to a recent interview where Kallas emphasized the steps that should be taken to isolate Russia: “Need to isolate #Russia on all levels” (Kallas, 2022, March 20) Kallas also mentioned Bloomberg TV (@BloombergTV and its Europe correspondent Maria Tadeo (@mariatad) in reference to her interview about offering Ukraine an EU perspective and emphasize the importance of not letting Putin win the war with Ukraine: “Putin has gone “all in” and it’s up to us all to assure he doesn’t win this war” (Kallas, 2022, March 10) New York Times (@nytimes) was also mentioned to refer to a recent essay Kallas wrote for the newspaper similarly to Globe and Mail and a journalist Marieke Walsh to mention an interview given for the newspaper. Matthias Kolb (@matikolb), a former correspondent for EU and NATO in Brussels was mentioned in regards to another interview for the newspaper Süddeutsche Zeitung.

Other official Twitter account of political leaders and political organizations mentioned by Kallas were @EmmanuelMacron, @Denys_Shmyhal, @ZelenskyyUa, @LamourouxEric, @Vonderleyen, @BorisJohnson, @KamalaHarris, @ThierryBreton, @MarinSanna, @JustinTrudeau, @krisjaniskarins, @IngridaSimonyte, @RTErdogan, @Europarl_EN @DutchMFA, @Eu_Commission, @SecBlinken, @eucopresident, @Bundeskanzler and @ENTSO_E, @WBHoekstra @Mariana_Betsa, @MinPres

Twitter accounts belonging to Estonian political actors were mentioned only a few times: Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (@MFAestonia), Estonian diplomat Kaimo Kuusk (@KaimoKuusk), EU Commissioner for Energy Kadri Simson (@KadriSimson) and the Estonian Government (@EstonianGovt). All of these mentions were mostly tweets to thank and mention the steps that were taken in support of Ukraine.

HASHTAGS

Kaja Kallas frequently used hashtags in her Tweets. Hashtags were included 159 times in the 106 tweets analyzed with one tweet often including multiple hashtags.

Most frequently used hashtags were used in support of Ukraine: #Ukraine and #StandWithUkraine.

Kallas also utilized hashtags #Russia and #Putin to refer to Russia's illegitimate actions in Ukraine and #Putin was most often used together with referring to the attack as "Putin's war".

DISCUSSION

The departure point of interest for writing this study was the way the prime minister of Estonia Kaja Kallas communicated Russia's attack on Ukraine on her Twitter channel. It quickly became clear that she has chosen an unambiguously concrete stance on the issue without leaving much room for assessing it as a situation that could somehow be solved by simply negotiating with the enemy. Such an approach is not surprising considering she is the prime minister of Estonia, one of the three Baltic countries residing just next to Russia that posits an existential threat: "While the three (Baltic) countries are indeed part of the EU, NATO, and other organizations, they still perceive Russia as one of the greatest threats to their national security (military, economic, societal)." (Lamoreaux and Galbreath, 2008: p 5)

What is interesting, though, is how Kaja Kallas managed to strongly frame the issue at hand by making it clear that Russia's attack on Ukraine is not just an attack on one country, but more a threat to the whole West and therefore democracy, while also taking an active role of pursuing the policies of the EU and NATO. Furthermore, by advocating for Ukraine and a strong response against Russia's invasion, she is simultaneously advocating for her own small country, which is in line with Lamoreaux and Galbreath's suggested idea that small states do not only "jump on the bandwagon of bigger allies", but take an active role in pursuing policies within organizations. Moreover, as Baltic states are familiar with the process of gaining independence from the Soviet Union and de-Russification, "Estonia is in a good strategic geopolitical position to aid the "new outsiders" such as Georgia, Ukraine and Belarus" (Lamoreaux and Galbreath, 2008: p 10)

Although studying the effects of her communication and the response of the audience was not the main research point for this study it nevertheless became apparent that in the first month of Russia's war in Ukraine, Kaja Kallas's stance on Russia caught the attention of international media which is not as common for politicians from Estonia as they rarely appear in international media. For instance, in the first month since Russia's attack on Ukraine, from 24 February to 24 March Kallas gave multiple televised interviews commenting on the situation in Ukraine. For instance, in her interview to CNN on March 20 Kallas noted what should be done by NATO to counter Russia (Zabriskie, 2022). In her interview on Bloomberg TV on March 10, Kallas pointed out that Russia does not have a "diplomatic has no diplomatic will" to resolve Ukraine (Bloomberg, 2022). Furthermore, Kallas also wrote an essay for the New York Times titled "I'm the prime minister of Estonia. Putin Can't Think He's Win This War" in which she argued that stopping Kremlin's aggression a task for NATO of utmost importance and therefore long-

term policies should be put in place (Kallas, 2022). In her interview with *The Globe and Mail*, Kallas stated that Western countries have repeatedly missed out on chances to “draw a hard line with Vladimir Putin”, thus the time to do it is now as Putin will otherwise set his sights beyond Ukraine (Walsh, 2022)

Kallas’s influence has been noted by many others as her worldview and opinions have made her visible both in her own country and internationally. Kristi Raik, the director of the Estonian Foreign Policy at the International Center for Defense and Security (ICDS), noted that Kaja Kallas "seems to be the most visible politician in the Central and Eastern European region today, and one who is being sounded out for her views." (ERR News, 2022)

USING MEDIA TO HER ADVANTAGE

How has Kaja Kallas used media to her advantage in advocating for what she deems necessary in the evolving crisis in Europe? In our digitalized society media platforms offer political elites and governments new ways of reaching out to fellow politicians and the public. Entman (2018) argues that elites have now the opportunity to disseminate messages via Twitter to everyone simultaneously, leaving the traditional gatekeeping media on the side. While such political communication that is driven by both speed and efficiency can have consequences for democracy (Entman, 2018: p 301) it also offers political actors the opportunity to bypass media, therefore giving them the opportunity to frame events and issues.

Kaja Kallas’s communication of Russia’s attack on Ukraine on her Twitter channel has certainly made use of the power of social media platforms that have changed the process of framing in political communication. In line with Entman’s and Usher’s (2018) updated cascade model in which elites spread their own messages and frames directly to the public and where elites and the public can directly connect without the interference of traditional media, Kallas has conveyed a strong and unambiguous stance on how the „international community“ should react to Russia’s actions – be it isolating them from the political arena by sanctions or by offering continuous support to Ukraine by both moral and practical means. As Sheaffer and Shenhav (2009) argued - for political actors, creating an image of themselves and gathering support for their proposed policies is in line with gaining power over the media. „Understanding that sympathetic media coverage is a prerequisite for achieving these goals, the fight to gain access to the media has become a central element in modern warfare and political conflicts“ (Sheaffer and Shenhav, 2009: p 275).

Furthermore, the cascade model which cuts the line between political elites and media elites plays into the concept of the hybrid media system proposed by Chadwick (2013) in which the involvement of new media has changed the power relations within media. Kaja Kallas, by being able to share hyperlinks to interviews with the established and popular international media outlets such as CNN and Bloomberg TV, she furthermore establishes the importance of her messages to her audience while increasing the visibility of her posts. In line with the idea of Chadwick's political information cycles which work on "cross-platform iteration and recursion", referencing these interviews on her Twitter immediately makes them visible to other political leaders, diplomats and the public. Thus, by being able to share interviews with international media Kallas creates another pathway to gaining power and visibility and therefore conveying her message to the public. As Chadwick argued then in the modern day political power belongs to those who have the capability to intervene in the political information cycles.

A MEDIA-SAVVY ADVOCATE

If those who know how to take advantage of social media affordances exercise greater means of power then Kaja Kallas has certainly used the opportunities offered by these platforms to advocate for the case of Ukraine. Runge (2021) noted that politicians who are technically savvy and understand the importance of embracing social media platforms „are able to present in multiple media spheres simultaneously, expanding their ability to increase the salience of issues, influence agendas across platforms, and in effect control the narrative of political events“ (Runge, 2021: p 5). Thus, embracing the affordances of social media platforms has become a prerequisite to successful political communication, or, as Scacco and Wiemer (2019) have argued: „With the public using many spaces to create a political, social, and cultural “wild west,” the logic behind this approach is to bring *more* message control and elite influence to online spaces that embrace flatter, more interactive flows of communication.“ (Scacco and Wiemer, 2019: p 20). Kallas has certainly done so in her communication by taking control of the messages spreading around the attack.

Moreover, Kallas has used the affordances of Twitter to set the narrative of an emerging security risk and war in Europe from the get-go which aligns with understanding the logic of social media – that is how communication on social media must be quick. As Taras (2019) noted social media communication for politicians means playing a „high-speed game“ (Taras, 2019: p 7). Thus, the distribution of information on social media is built on the logic of virality which refers to the ability to convey messages that users will forward and share. As Klinger and

Svensson point out successful communication on social media means gaining resonance with fellow users (Klinger and Svensson, 2015: p 1248). By framing Russia's aggression in Ukraine as an emergency situation in the whole of Europe, Kallas is able to create viral messages that are relevant to her followers, thus these tweets will be forwarded and shared.

For this reason, by reacting in a timely manner and making use of the momentum that Russia's attack on Ukraine has created has given Kallas the opportunity to draw attention to a bigger issue. In other words, the attack on the 24th of February is not the first time Russia has pursued its ambitions by illegitimate means by invading a sovereign country while the Western countries have been reluctant to respond concretely (Raik, 2017: p 66). As such, this plays into Chadwick's idea of power in the hybrid media system as the notion of knowing how to react and act to events that the political actor is interested in influencing: "Those who understand the importance of time and the circulation of information are more likely to be powerful" meaning „acting quickly, knowing when to delay, when to devote intensive attention to the pursuit of a goal, when to repeat, when to act alone, and when to coordinate (Chadwick, 2013: p 102)

In terms of using the affordances that social media has to offer, using hashtags can increase the visibility of certain social media accounts. For instance, Kallas frequently uses relevant hashtags such as #StandWithUkraine, which, used as a technical framing device, adds political value by giving the chance to „spark dialogue on an issue“ and, using hashtags is established as a successful tool to spark dialogue on issues and events: „ Increased social media hashtags about a political matter significantly enhance the political communication in society. (Jamil et al. 2019) Moreover, as a consequence of network media logic means that political communication on Twitter is not directed at a mass audience, therefore “being connected to many others is important because it signals popularity” (Klinger and Svensson, 2015: p 1253) Thus, a fundamental knowledge of how to network means that politicians attempt to expand their network as much as possible. On Twitter, it can easily be done by making use of the @ feature – that is, mentioning and addressing another user in a Tweet. Tagging or mentioning another user of Twitter is another tool for increasing the visibility of a political figure. The @ mentions also work as technical framing devices which Kallas has used by frequently mentioning the Twitter accounts of organizations such as @NATO and @Europarl_EN and on multiple occasions individuals such as @ZelenskyyUa, @SecBlinken, @JustinTrudeau. Moreover, by mentioning these people and organizations Kallas is able to further spread her political messages and influence and increase interaction with her posts on social media.

This notion can be seen as the affordance of algorithms on social media platforms which Entman explains as follows: „algorithms exert the power to shape the users’ experience and even their perceptions of the world“ and by doing so, they „acquire influence over frame distribution once largely monopolized by institutional media“ (Entman, 2018: p 301) Thus, a politician that knows the power of algorithms and has the knowledge of using these algorithms in an advantageous way that is able to emphasize spread their messages is deemed to be successful in their communication and framing of issues.

COMBINING UNITY WITH SMART POWER

Arguably, this kind of direct communication between political leaders and diplomats on Twitter allows open communication in which states have the power to employ Twitter in an attempt to improve or aggravate political crises. Furthermore, as Jamil et al. (2019) argue “Twitter has been implicated in noteworthy moments of transformative change and in acrimonious events that have resulted in the expulsion of diplomats from a state” (Jamil et al. 2019: p 424). Thus, Kallas has employed Twitter as one channel for diplomatic communication in which she has the opportunity to convey the urgent need for reacting and responding to Russia’s attack.

As mentioned before, a great portion of Kallas’s communication on her Twitter channel is geared towards gaining military and moral support for Ukraine while sending a clear message that Russia cannot be negotiated with in diplomatic terms. Conveying the war in Ukraine by referring to it as a threat to the whole West, the democracy, Kallas has frequently highlighted it as a “us” vs “them” situation. Arguably, the messages Kallas has conveyed and stances she has advocated for are aimed toward the West – the allies and partners. Furthermore, Kallas often refers to the West in her Tweets as the “free world” and “international community” – the former being a term primarily used during the Cold War era referring to all non-communist and democratic countries and the latter having been used by the U.S. to symbolize entities (“pariah states” or terrorists”) against which the “international community” fights (Byers, 2003: p 30). Russia and Putin, on the other hand, are referred to as “evil” and “vicious” – reminiscent of Ronald Reagan’s framing of the Soviet Union as the “Evil Empire”. These historically and culturally familiar symbolic terms serve as rhetorical framing devices that are used to create resonance with the public. This is in line with what Entman deems as the most effective part of framing: that is elevating parts in texts by “making a piece of information more noticeable, meaningful, or memorable to audiences” (Entman, 1993: p 53) Thus, inherently the way Kallas

is framing the war in Ukraine is all part of her public diplomacy strategy with aim of sending the signal of the importance of being united to fight the common enemy.

Thus, what becomes clear from the framing patterns and reoccurring themes in the communication on Kallas's Twitter channel is the underlying aim to advocate for her own country's interests as a small country. Furthermore, by using these opportunities offered by mediated public diplomacy Kallas has used its power to exert control over how the war in Ukraine is framed. This is in line with Cull's (2008) argument that one of the main elements of public diplomacy is advocacy which is utilized through diplomatic outreach methods for example social media (Cull, 2008: p 32). Moreover, as the situation in Ukraine has emerged it has also given Kallas as a leader of one of the Baltic States, the opportunity to use the "momentum" by using social media platforms, in this case, Twitter, to increase visibility and spark conversations on what should be done to combat yet another illegitimate attack on a sovereign country by Russia. In line with the idea of how small states can exercise power, Lamoreaux and Galbreath argued that contrary to the view that small states rarely influence outcomes of conflicts, belonging to international organizations (the EU, NATO) give the opportunity to be influential: "In short, though they are small by all accounts on their own, the Baltic states' membership in international organizations allows them to punch above their weight" (Lamoreaux and Galbreath, 2008: p 11)

It could be argued that the public diplomacy aspect Kallas uses in her communication is "smart power" – a combination of hard power and soft power (Nye, 2004) such that Kallas frequently stresses the importance of alliances and partnerships that Russia's attack on Ukraine has brought on while simultaneously advocating for a strong military presence in the Baltics and harsh economic sanctions on Russia. As Armitage and Nye argue then smart power is "an approach that underscores the necessity of a strong military, but also invests heavily in alliances, partnerships, and institutions (Armitage and Nye, 2004: p 7). Furthermore, smart power can be exercised by countries of any size "if it is able to establish a well-planned strategy consistent with its national power towards well-designed foreign policy objective" (Sari and Sula, 2014: p 21). Therefore, as a leader of a small country that has been threatened by their Eastern neighbor for a long time there is an indication by Kaja Kallas of moving forward by using smart power – that is, gain friends and strengthen relationships, but also take a concrete stand against Russia and not repeat the mistake of becoming a bystander or by missing out on the opportunity to act up against the enemy.

In conclusion, Kaja Kallas has communicated the war in Ukraine through framing on her Twitter channel by attributing the responsibility, conflict, human interest, morality and economic consequence frame. Moreover, Kallas has successfully done so by using the hybrid media system to her advantage – that is social media, specifically Twitter combined with more traditional media. By doing so she has managed to disseminate her political messages and ideas on multiple platforms simultaneously as is in the example of sharing interviews with broadcast media in her Tweets that both bring attention to the issues she is advocating for and increase visibility by having other users on Twitter being able to retweet and share the tweets. Lastly, Kallas's public diplomacy aims are geared towards the international community – the West, the EU, NATO and broader public. The way Kallas conveys her stance on Russia's attack against Ukraine is concrete and unambiguous. Furthermore, by employing tactics of smart power in her approach to public diplomacy Kallas signals the need for a strong reaction from the Western countries in terms of continuous economic sanctioning of Russia and military support to Ukraine.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This section of the thesis will give an overview of the limitations of conducting this thesis by discussing the timeframe chosen for this research as well as the limitations of the methodology.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology used for this study comes with a set of limitations. As mentioned before, framing analysis and research is mainly conducted by exploring the frames used by traditional news media, although with the emergence of social media platforms and their role in political communication, the study of framing and frames has also reached social networking sites. Still, there is an existing gap in the methodology aimed at conducting a framing analysis on social networking sites even though most approaches to framing in news are applicable to analyzing framing on other platforms as well.

For example, by analyzing frames used by political actors on Twitter it is important to keep in mind that the researcher is analyzing 280-character-long tweets compared to longer news articles. This limitation was also noted by Manor (2015) who conducted a framing study analyzing how nations frame one another on their official Ministry of Foreign Affairs Twitter accounts: „Framing studies have yet to offer a systematic methodology for analyzing frames at the level of individual tweet“ (Manor, 2015)

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Due to limited time and resources, this thesis focused on analyzing tweets from the time period of 24th of February to 24th of March. As a considerable amount of tweets collected for this study (106) were retweets or tweets that did not refer to Russia's war in Ukraine in any way the final total amount of tweets selected for the framing analysis was 96. Although the chosen amount of tweets offered valuable insights and more importantly all the five generic frames chosen for this study were present in the tweets, the time-period can only provide a small insight into the attribution of framing and political communication on Twitter by a political actor.

Thus, findings of this research are concluded from a short period of time, therefore for future research on this topic it could be interesting to use more tweets in order to gain a deeper understanding of how the frames are constructed. Furthermore, as this study aimed to explore the five frames identified in previous studies it did not discover any new frames. Using a different research approach such as an inductive method could provide an insight into the possible emergence of new frames.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis was to analyze how the Estonian prime minister Kaja Kallas framed the war in Ukraine on her official Twitter account during the first month of the war. A total of 96 tweets from the time period of February 24 to March 24 were chosen for this purpose. In addition to identifying and analyzing the frames Kallas used in her communication on Twitter this thesis explored the underlying reasons and context that certain frames conveyed. For the purpose of this study, five frames that were identified by scholars in previous studies were used: the responsibility frame, the conflict frame, the morality frame, the human interest frame and the economic consequence frame.

Out of these five frames Kaja Kallas applied responsibility frame the most in order to frame the war in Ukraine as something that needs full attention and reaction from the whole West with concrete actions from the EU and NATO. Furthermore, the responsibility of Russia's attack was often indicated through the reasoning that suggested that the war is not only a threat to the sovereign nation of Ukraine, but an attack against the whole democratic world.

The use of conflict frame conveyed the urgency of having to isolate the aggressor state, Russia and stop Putin's war. Moreover, the end of the war is in the hands of the Western countries. By using influential terms that refer to a conflict such as "war", "aggression" and "evil", Kallas was able to build a frame that can reach the public by using culturally resonant words and messages.

The morality frame was most often an indication of the responsibility that the EU bears in regards to Ukraine. Kallas emphasized the need to grant Ukraine a path to the EU and frequently referred to it as the "moral obligation" of the West to do so. Moreover, by using the morality frame, Kallas presented herself as an advocate for Ukraine.

The human interest frame was the fourth most applied frame. Kallas brought attention to the notion that Ukraine and its people who are fighting for their freedom and the sovereignty of their country are suffering. By bringing attention to the emerging refugee situation that Russia's aggression created, Kallas called for further support to the region. Inherently, Kallas is framing the war through creating a sense of empathy in her audience – by describing the atrocities and war crimes, what the people are going through – she was able to bring the war "close to home".

The economic consequence frame was the least applied type. The frame was mostly used to emphasize the importance of pressing Russia by economic sanctioning and defense spending –

both in terms of protecting the freedom and democracy of the Western countries and by providing Ukrainian military with weapons to continue fighting against Russia.

The way Kallas used to five types of frames to communicate the war in Ukraine to her audience was an indication of her call for a strong and unambiguous stance on Russia. Kallas's tweets implied that by simple negotiations, it is not possible to "solve" the situation in Ukraine as Russia's actions are indications of bigger ambitions that the president of Russia, Vladimir Putin, has and, therefore, the attack is a threat to not only Ukraine's freedom, but the whole Western world and democracy.

Furthermore, Kallas has effectively made use of the affordances of social media, specifically Twitter, to convey her messages to the public and create resonance in such a way that strong frames are constructed. Arguably the main target group of her messages are other political actors and elites such as journalists that are called for action regarding the war in Ukraine.

COMMUNICATION ARTICLE

This section deals with the communication article written for the purpose of this thesis in order to introduce its main findings. In the first part of this section the choice of the media outlet for the article and its target group are explained followed by the communication article itself.

PUBLICATION AND TARGET GROUP

This thesis analyzed how the prime minister of Estonia, Kaja Kallas framed the war in Ukraine on her official Twitter account. A framing analysis was used for conducting the research that involved analyzing a total of 96 tweets from February 24 to March 24. Kallas attributed the responsibility frame, conflict frame, morality frame, human interest frame and economic consequence frame in her tweets during the first month of the war. Moreover, as politicians nowadays do Kallas used the logics of new media and the hybrid media system to her advantage to disseminate her messages to the public and therefore constructing the understanding of responding to the war in Ukraine and to Russia and its actions.

As the research is embedded within the fields of media logics, political communication and public diplomacy, but also has educational value and is able to contribute to further analysis about the media systems and their influence on the current political communication then the article will be published in the American bi-monthly magazine Foreign Policy which is focuses on global politics, economics, and ideas and often publishes analysis about how our world works and is influenced by globalization and therefore the development of new media.

The target group for the article is a broad audience who is curious about how the events that happen are able to shape and reshape our daily lives, nations, institutions, cultures.

The communication article adds value to current discussions and understandings of how social media influences political communication and how political actors are able to use new media logics to disseminate their ideas and message to the public. Furthermore, its relevance during difficult times such as war in Ukraine lies in the ideas about media influence of public opinion shaping, but also the possible problems that come with the viral world in which the editorial power of journalists as “gatekeepers” is diminishing and taken over the logics of algorithms that are prevalent on social media.

THE COMMUNICATION ARTICLE

How does the digitalization of our society play into the power held by those making decisions and shaping our understanding of catastrophic events?

A year of war has certainly changed how we perceive the world order and raised questions about whether the prevailing freedom many of us are accustomed to is to be taken for granted. Ukraine has been fighting for theirs for almost a year seemingly with no end in sight. Even though for most of the Western world Russia's unprovoked attack on Ukraine seemingly came as a surprise, for countries sharing the same fate with the one under attack, their eastern neighbor's actions are anything but.

Kaja Kallas, the prime minister of Estonia – a country that shares history with Ukraine having been the subject of Russia's imperialist ambitions themselves for bigger half of the 20th century – has communicated in clear terms that when it comes to Russia and its president Vladimir Putin there is no reason to expect a positively diplomatic outcome. In a relatively short time, Kallas has become one of the biggest advocate for Ukraine and a strong opponent of those seeking to „discuss“ the situation in Ukraine with the Kremlin. Seeking to establish a concrete way of thinking towards Russia, she stated „*our focus should be simple: Putin cannot win this war. He cannot even think he has won.*“ To emphasize the point further Kallas argued that with Putin there is no returning to regular business, just „no business at all“.

This pragmatic approach to Russia, while not a new way of thinking for most of the political leaders in the Baltic states, managed to pierce through the West's long history of „taking it too easy“ with Russia. The country did invade Georgia in 2008, annexed Crimea in 2014 and then managed to launch a full-scale attack on Ukraine not even a year ago all while the Western countries had remained in friendly relations with Moscow. Only this time around these warnings from the Baltics are taken more seriously. In May 2022 after 3 months of war crimes and atrocities in Ukraine Kallas was named the „new iron lady of Europe“ with international media in line for interviews and commentaries on the current situation in Ukraine and what should be the next steps towards Russia.

Communicating a War on Social Media

What is it about this time that has given a prime minister from a small country a voice and the opportunity to speak to the whole world? By taking a closer look at the tweets tweeted by Kaja Kallas during the first month of the war it become apparent that by understanding the affordances – that is what artifacts such as media technologies allow us to do - that stem from

our mediatized world, are changing the way political actors are able to spread their stances on issues and events. Even more, social media platforms such as Twitter allow a different way of communication for a politician. As such, constructing the reality in a way one wants the world to make sense of difficult events has become an art of understanding how old and new media logics play together in a way that is possible to manipulate for desired outcomes.

The construction of reality that is a communication strategy in politics can be understood through the concept of framing. In essence, framing is the way people make sense of the world, therefore it is a part of how we communicate. In politics, understanding how to build a strong frame and moreover, how to frame issues in a way that it is able to shape the worldview of others is a powerful skill. By attributing five types of frames prevalent in news media in her in her tweets on her official Twitter account (@kajakallas) Kallas communicated Russia's actions and attack on Ukraine in sense of a threat that is to be taken seriously by all of West as not doing so will have consequences for the whole democracy.

Framing a War

For instance, through attributing the *responsibility frame* to the war in Ukraine Kallas spoke of „practical support to #Ukraine is our urgent priority“. Here, the two words *urgent* and *priority* are tools for creating a sense of having to act quickly as if it is a question of now or never and the outcome of the war rests on the shoulders of the West. By attributing the *conflict frame* the prime minister of Estonia demanded to „completely isolate #Russia“ by keeping on with strengthening sanctions against the enemy.

Such approach is in line with what was said before - the Western countries have been „too soft“ on Russia and Kallas knowingly decided to change the course of these naive perceptions held of Kremlin's power. Perhaps unsurprisingly and similarly to talking of responsibility towards Ukraine, Kallas framed the war through frames of morality. On one hand, she spoke of war crimes and atrocities, of the need to „document these horrors in Putin's war“ which was a reference to Russia's lack of morality. On the other hand, a much larger emphasis was placed on the moral actions of the West – friends and allies – for whom it is a „moral obligation to give #Ukraine a clear path to European Union“.

The start of war also brought on an on-going refugee crisis where mostly women and children were fleeing the country. Ukrainian men, on the other hand, were not allowed to leave Ukraine, but were urged to take up arms and fight Russian soldiers. Through framing the Russo-Ukrainian war through the *human interest frame* she spoke of soldiers „bravely fight for their

freedom“ and the „dedication and bravery of Ukrainian people“, but also shed light on the much darker side of war – that is having to leave their country. As such, listing these positive attributes of the Ukrainian people Kallas created the understanding of closeness of the sufferers to emphasize the importance of helping people leaving Ukraine which, looking at previous or now on-going refugee crisis situations has not always been an easy task to convince countries of. The *economic consequence frame* is unsurprisingly framed through economic sanctions and military defense. Kallas frequently tweeted of the need to increase defense spending in each NATO country while also stressing the importance of sanctioning Kremlin further.

Hybridity of the Media

How do these frames gain power outside of the minds of those framing, whether they do it knowingly or unknowingly? The way information flows through politicians to media to public has been changed by the evolvement of social media, thus, the way political information cycles work differ from regular news cycles as they are, according to Andrew Chadwick „complex assemblages in which the logics – the technologies, genres, norms, behaviors, and organizational forms – of supposedly „new“ online media are hybridized with those of supposedly „old“ broadcast and newspaper media“

That is, there is no editorial power in between a politician and the public as social media is almost a „wild west“ with a mass of audience. Journalists and media houses no longer play the role of gatekeepers. On the contrary, they have become the ones having to follow up with the possible news-worthy posts or Tweets that circle on social media at all hours as these are the new platforms for the most operative information and debate.

Understandably those politicians who are able to influence these cycles and are skilled communicators who understand how these new technologies work are also able to exert more power in terms of disseminating their messages. As such, Kaja Kallas has certainly used the ever evolving media logics to her power. Being able to post on Twitter around the clock with no apparent restrictions on what and how to say it is possible to reach the public with clear, straightforward messages that are uninterrupted by the traditional flows of political information. Knowledge of algorithms and being able to use Twitter for disseminating messages that have the power to go viral and gain influence through different networks has worked for Kallas's power. She used hashtags that were already circling on social media such as #StandWithUkraine in support of Russia's most recent war, but by also including the hashtags #Putin and #Russia she was able to increase the visibility and power of her tweets even more.

As said before – politics is inherently all about framing issues and being able to construct public’s understanding of the world. By informing her audience about the developments in Ukraine and how the enemy state should be „treated“ Kallas used Twitter as a platform for constructing the reality of the war which, as was apparent what she spoke of, was no longer a worry of only the country at war, but also a trouble for the rest of us.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1 – Original questionnaire by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000)

Table 1. Varimax-Rotated Factor Solution for the 20 Framing Items

Framing items	Factors				
	1 Attr. of resp.	2 Human interest	3 Conflict	4 Morality	5 Econ. cons.
Attribution of responsibility					
Does the story suggest that some level of gov't has the ability to alleviate the problem?	.80	-.11	.10	-.04	.10
Does the story suggest that some level of the government is responsible for the issue/problem?	.74	-.22	.12	.01	.10
Does the story suggest solution(s) to the problem/issue?	.69	.04	-.02	.00	.09
Does the story suggest that an ind. (or group of people in society) is resp. for the issue-problem? ¹	.67	-.22	-.07	.04	.04
Does the story suggest the problem requires urgent action?	.43	.14	.26	.01	.02
Human interest frame					
Does the story provide a human example or "human face" on the issue?	-.01	.76	.06	.04	-.04
Does the story employ adjectives or personal vignettes that generate feelings of outrage, empathy-caring, sympathy, or compassion?	-.08	.69	.04	.11	-.03
Does the story emphasize how individuals and groups are affected by the issue/problem?	-.08	.64	.06	-.02	-.00
Does the story go into the private or personal lives of the actors?	-.17	.61	-.02	-.00	-.00
Does the story contain visual information that might generate feelings of outrage, empathy-caring, sympathy, or compassion?	.04	.60	-.06	.07	-.11
Conflict frame					
Does the story reflect disagreement between parties-individuals-groups-countries?	.10	.02	.88	-.02	.01
Does one party-individual-group-country reproach another?	.01	.10	.81	.03	.02
Does the story refer to two sides or to more than two sides of the problem or issue?	.19	-.04	.77	-.04	.06
Does the story refer to winners and losers?	-.02	.01	.29	.06	-.02
Morality frame					
Does the story contain any moral message?	-.01	-.02	.02	.91	-.01
Does the story make reference to morality, God, and other religious tenets?	-.02	.09	.05	.86	-.03
Does the story offer specific social prescriptions about how to behave?	.01	.07	.04	.68	-.03
Economic frame					
Is there a mention of financial losses or gains now or in the future?	-.01	-.01	.03	-.02	.81
Is there a mention of the costs/degree of expense involved?	-.11	-.03	-.03	-.01	.73
Is there a reference to economic consequences of pursuing or not pursuing a course of action?	.23	-.11	.03	-.03	.74

APPENDIX 2 - Codebook for Framing Analysis inspired by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000)

Responsibility frame
Does the tweet suggest that: someone has the ability to alleviate the problem, an individual or country is responsible, a solution is suggested to the issue or the problem requires urgent action
Human interest frame
Does the tweet include: a human example or „human face“ on the issue, adjectives or personal vignettes that generate feeling of outrage, empathy-caring, sympathy or compassion, emphasize how individuals and countries are affected by the issue/problem or go into private or personal lives of the actors?
Conflict frame
Does the tweet reflect: disagreement between parties-individuals-groups-countries, one party-individual-group-country reproaching another, two or more than two sides of the issue or reference to winners and losers?
Morality frame
Does the tweet contain: any moral message, reference to morality or offer specific social prescriptions on how to behave?
Economic frame
Does the tweet mention: financial losses or gains now or in the future, costs/degree of expense involved, economic consequences of pursuing or not pursuing a course of action?