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Bachelor Thesis

Feminist Foreign Policy as a nation state strategy: Just another label or the way
towards gender equality?

A qualitative content analysis of Sweden and Canada as Feminist Foreign Policy countries and
Norway and Finland as countries with a high gender equality index

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Abstract

This thesis explores the grounds of Feminist Foreign Policy (FFP) and its linkages to gender equality. The work aims to contribute to a better understanding of the concept of Feminist Foreign Policy and explores the potential disparities between its theoretical foundations and its translation into nation-state concepts. For this purpose, official government documents of two FFP-countries and two non-FFP-countries are compared in their substantive foreign policy preferences. Employing a qualitative content analysis, the documents will be coded and analysed. Subsequently, the findings will be contextualised within the existing literature. The finding of this work is that Feminist Foreign Policy has the potential to promote greater gender equality, however it may also serve just as a mere label. The extent of its positive impact depends on how states interpret the concept, the coherence of their policy choices, and the objectives they pursue.

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Table of Abbreviations

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CFFP	Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy
FFP	Feminist Foreign Policy
FIAP	Feminist International Assistance Policy
FP	Foreign Policy
FPA	Foreign Policy Analysis
GEI	Gender Equality Index
GGGI	Global Gender Gap Index
GGGR	Global Gender Gap Report
ICRW	International Council for Research on Women
IHRL	International Human Rights Law
IR	International Relations
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual/ Transgender, Queer/ Questioning, Intersex, Asexual
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NAP	National Action Plan
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
ODA	Official Development Aid
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
WILPF	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
WPS	Women, Peace and Security

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1. Introduction

The critique of still prevailing patriarchal structures and large deficits regarding gender equality are mentioned in many ways from local context up to the international level. Milestones in this regard were for instance the United Nations (UN) Decade of Women from 1976 to 1985, the 1995 Beijing Declaration of Women, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or the UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security. Various studies underline the importance of gender equality and emphasise that improving women's conditions and opportunities benefits policy making at all levels. (Reminy-Elizor et al., 2023) Moreover, international organisations have long been pushing for the inclusion of policies that improve and focus on the lives of women, girls, and marginalised genders. And this is for good reason: At the current speed of progress it would take another 300 years to achieve a fully gender equal world as showcased in a new UN report. (United Nations, 2022)

For this complex issue, there is no blueprint to develop effective policies. A comparatively young approach is the concept of Feminist Foreign Policy (FFP) here. FFP can be seen as the result of a growing awareness about gender and the position of women in international politics. (Thompson et al., 2021; Zilla, 2022) In the course of questioning and breaking the patterns of conventional foreign policy (FP), FFP has also gained theoretical attention in international relations (IR) scholarship over the last years. (Carlsnaes, 2013)

The FFP-concept provokes debates about traditional ways of thinking and political patterns, thereby challenging the status quo - both in politics, civil society, and academia. In 2014, Sweden became the first country in the world to launch an FFP-strategy. To date, twelve countries have either implemented or announced to become a Feminist Foreign Policy country. Among them are Sweden (2014), Canada (2017), France (2019), Mexico (2020), Spain (2021), Luxembourg (2021), Libya (2021), Germany (2022), Chile (2022), Colombia (2022); Liberia (2022), and the Netherlands (2022). (Achilleos-Sarll et al., 2022; UN Women, 2022) Official text documents already exist for Sweden, Canada, France, Mexico, Luxembourg, Spain, and Germany. (Lunz, 2022) However, it must be stressed that countries interpret this theoretical concept differently and therefore pursue different strategic priorities.

Consequently, countries with an FFP-strategy are expected to perform better when it comes to gender equality than their non-FFP counterparts. However, looking at the Global Gender Gap Report (GGGR), only two of those states with an implemented FFP-strategy are among the top 10 in 2023. (World Economic Forum, 2023a)

This bachelor thesis aims to investigate the concept of Feminist Foreign Policy and to what extent it can pave the way towards gender equality. This is accompanied by the research question whether countries with a FFP agenda differ from non-FFP countries with a high gender equality index (GEI) in their substantive foreign policy priorities. In order to answer these questions, a qualitative content analysis of Sweden and Canada as Feminist Foreign Policy countries and Norway and Finland as countries with a high gender equality index is conducted.

1.1 Structure of the Work

This short introduction into the field of Feminist Foreign Policy and associated relevant definitions will be followed by a theory part which focuses on the reconceptualization of foreign policy. Firstly, I will give a short overview on what constitutes conventional approaches and the refinement towards more unconventional features of FP. Then, the bridge to the concept of FFP will be drawn and to what extent Feminist Foreign Policy can possibly contribute to explain state's foreign policy action(s). The next chapter focuses on the methodology that has been applied to the topic. Hereby, the concept of qualitative content analysis according to Mayring (Mayring & Fenzl, 2019) will be introduced, followed by the case selection, working hypothesis and the predeveloped coding guide. Afterwards, the coding results will be presented and evaluated. Then, a discussion about the extent that FFP can contribute to gender equality will be opened and in this respect the research question will be answered. Finally, the conclusion summarises the main findings and provides an outlook on possible future scenarios, highlighting where further research is needed.

1.2 Definitions

First of all, it is important to delimit and define some basic and, in this respect, important terms. For this paper, it is essential to start off with defining the concepts and terminology of foreign policy (FP) and feminism, while the concept of Feminist Foreign Policy (FFP) is further elaborated in the theory part. In addition, defining gender equality is crucial in order to be able to answer the posed research question whether FFP can serve as the way towards gender equality.

Foreign Policy

There are various definitions of the term foreign policy, however scholars agree “[...] that it is concerned with behaviour of a state towards other states.”. (As, 2018, p. 1) Scholars also agree that a foreign policy is a necessity for each state to function. The aim hereby is to determine and identify “[...] the decisions, strategies, and ends of interaction of a state with another.”. (As, 2018, p. 1)

Feminism

The German Dictionary Duden defines feminism as the umbrella term for various streams that advocate for self-determination, equal rights, and freedom for all genders and especially women.

Feminists campaign against sexism, strive for a fundamental change in social norms, the traditional contribution of gender roles and the patriarchal culture. (Duden, 2018)

Gender Equality

The *UNICEF Glossary of Terms and Concepts* about gender equality offers the definition that gender equality is a concept “[...] that women and men, girls and boys have equal conditions, treatment and opportunities to realize their full potential, human rights and dignity, and for contributing to (and benefitting from) economic, social, cultural and political development [...]”. (UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia, 2017, p. 3) It must be added that the concept of gender equality does not end with men and women, but also essentially includes Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual/ Transgender, Queer/ Questioning, Intersex, Asexual (LGBTQIA+) people who are also affected by multiple forms of discrimination. (OHCHR, 2023b)

2 Theory Part: Reconceptualising Foreign Policy

The theory part focuses on the reconceptualization of foreign policy and the respective focal points of analysis. Scholars such as Columba Achilleos-Sarll or Valerie Hudson build their critique of foreign policy on two strands of foreign policy: conventional and unconventional Foreign Policy approaches. Therefore, the reader will first of all be introduced to conventional concepts of foreign policy which mainly theorize around ideas of realism and focus on the security of the national state. In a second step, these conventional features are expanded to include the period after the end of the Cold War, in which postmodern theories have come into greater focus and have added so-called unconventional features to foreign policy. These started taking more actors into the frame of analysis. Still, both concepts lack considerations about ethics and gender which will be further elaborated on in *2.3 What Established Concepts Lack in Explaining FP*.

Subsequently, the connection to Feminist Foreign Policy will be established. This is done by defining the concept first and afterwards exploring to what extent Feminist Foreign Policy can contribute to explain foreign policy action. Here too, the limits of the concept and the explanatory power will be addressed.

In General, foreign policy analysis (FPA) developed as a subfield of International Relations with the goal to theorize and study foreign policy. It first came up in the United States in the 1960 and 1970s. (Brummer & Hudson, 2015) FPA lies somewhere between theories of IR and other areas of public policy that take the international context as well as the "state's domestic dynamics and decision-making processes" . (Morin & Paquin, 2018, p. 2) into account. At the same time, FPA does not have a distinct level of analysis but defines itself by its dependent variable – foreign policy. (Morin & Paquin, 2018)

2.1 Conventional Foreign Policy

Conventional Foreign Policy analysis focuses on "[...] the study of the conduct and practice of relations between different actors, primarily states, in the international system.". (Alden & Aran, 2017, p. 3) The "[...] state is seen as a unitary and rational actor [...]" (Alden & Aran, 2017, p. 5) where a few political and/ or military leaders are central to decision making. (Achilleos-Sarll, 2018)

This can be traced back to classical realist thought where the state functions as the central, sovereign actor within the international sphere.

States are in a constant struggle for power and wealth and compete with other national states. Already Hans Morgenthau has equated national interest with power. (Alden & Aran, 2017) This constant competition limits the opportunities for cooperation between states to survival and the maximisation of national interests and security. (Aggestam et al., 2019)

At the same time, conventional theory builds a rigid inside/ outside dichotomy of foreign and domestic policy. Hereby, foreign policy is seen as a typically male field as it is about attributes such as rational behaviour and power. Domestic politics, on the other hand, requires “compassion and solidarity” (Morin & Paquin, 2018, p. 277) which are associated with feminine characteristics. (Cassidy, 2017; Morin & Paquin, 2018) This division also gives rise to further dichotomies such as us/ them, national/ international, war/ peace, and Global North/ Global South. (Achilleos-Sarll et al., 2022; Achilleos-Sarll, 2018)

The image of the “political man” (Nagel, 1998, p. 242) is also aligned with this perspective. Accordingly, “[...] state power, citizenship, nationalism, militarism, revolution, political violence, dictatorship, and democracy - are all best understood as masculinist projects, involving masculine institutions, masculine processes and masculine activities.”. (Nagel, 1998, p. 243)

2.2 Unconventional Foreign Policy

This conventional approach to Foreign Policy slowly started to change after the Cold War came to an end. At this point, multilateral organisations, and actors such as the UN gained an increasingly important role in the international system and the sole focus on security for and by the state was no longer sufficient as the only explanatory factor for foreign policy action. In this context, “[...] increased linkages between a variety of state, sub-state and non-state actors have eroded the traditional primacy of the state in foreign policy.”. (Alden & Aran, 2017, p. 9) The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) adopted a *Human Security Concept* in 1994, which also signalled the shift towards a human-inclusive or even a human-centred approach to security. At the same time, human rights and a growing emphasis on ethical and moral duties were brought into focus. This helped to disrupt prevailing power structures, especially those dominated by men, including the strengthening of humanitarian international law, courts, minority rights as well as the laws of war. (Aggestam & Rosamond, 2019; Jayakumar, 2023)

Also, as Achilleos-Sarll describes it, unconventional FPA approaches focus on why certain policies were adopted and on the role of social constructions in FPA, which conventional FPA has so far largely ignored. This approach succeeds in building a connection between foreign and domestic policy shifting the focus from “[...] the process of decision-making to the production of foreign policy [...]”. (Achilleos-Sarll, 2018, p. 39) This also marks the beginning of a co-constitution of ethics and foreign policy. (Achilleos-Sarll, 2018)

2.3 What Established Concepts Lack in Explaining FP

To start off with the deficits of conventional foreign policy: the perception of the centrality of the national state, certain actors and security leaves no room for systemic changes in foreign policy. Such changes are, however, unavoidable in a world of ongoing globalisation and internationalisation. Therefore, “[...] foreign policy change has been rather ignored by classical FPA scholars.”. (Alden & Aran, 2017, p. 13) Conventional FPA ignores the fact that foreign policy is a domestic product and thus the sharp distinction between the domestic and foreign sphere is extremely obstructive to fully understand foreign policy actions. Also, “FPA often ignores or sidelines asymmetrical power relations and thus forms of domination and exclusion.”. (Achilleos-Sarll et al., 2022, p. 9) This results in the neglect of the receiving side of a countries foreign policy actions and behaviour. (Achilleos-Sarll et al., 2022; Achilleos-Sarll, 2018)

Even the approach of unconventional foreign policy, which is one step ahead and starts to include ethical and moral considerations, remains largely gender blind.

While it has taken the first step from including early steps of human security, there still needs to be another shift from human to gender security. (Bergman-Rosamond, 2020) Or as Heidi Hudson sums it up: “Broad-school security thinking has only offered a partial understanding of human security through its neglect of women’s pervasive insecurity.”. (Hudson, 2005, p. 171) This marginalisation of gender “[...] contribute[s] to the (re-) production of existing relations of power.”. (Achilleos-Sarll, 2018, p. 39) This results in gender, race and postcolonial aspects being only insufficiently included in foreign policy analysis. (Achilleos-Sarll, 2018)

2.4 The Approach of Feminist Foreign Policy

This is where Feminist Foreign Policy comes into play: How can this approach contribute to explain foreign policy? Can it correct the previous shortcomings in foreign policy and its analysis?

Feminist approaches and theories in international relations as well as foreign policy have been around long before the first FFP strategy was published by Sweden in 2014. (Morin & Paquin, 2018) There are five factors central to the emergence of FFP.

First of all, it is the intellectual thought of female visionaries such as Christine de Pizan, Jane Addams or Bertha von Suttner. All these women imagined a peaceful world, free of violence and gender-based hierarchies and discrimination. (Achilleos-Sarll et al., 2022) Secondly, feminist peace activism “[...] promoted a new vision of the international order [...]” (Achilleos-Sarll et al., 2022, p. 4) tracing back to the beginning of the 20th century. In 1915, more than 100 women from around the world came together for the first international women’s peace congress in The Hague. They brought together new visions for the global order and discussed peaceful solutions to bring the First World War to an end. The Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) was born out of this congress. To date, WILPF is an international non- governmental organisation and the oldest international women’s peace organisation in the world. (Jayakumar, 2023; Lunz, 2022)

Also, since the late 80s, feminist approaches to IR research gained academic significance. (Tickner, 1997; Zhukova et al., 2022) Ann Tickner emphasises that creating a new strain of research within FP was important because simply integrating women into existing theories would only muddle and reinforce gender hierarchies. (Tickner, 1997) Within this new strain, Cynthia Enloe introduced gender as an empirical category and tool to analytically understand global power relations. (Enloe, 2014) Finally in 1999, the first feminist IR journal was published: *The International Feminist Journal of Politics*. (Carlsnaes, 2013)

Global initiatives on gender equality made a further contribution to the emergence of FFP. International conventions are particularly important here and have contributed to setting new norms. These include the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the UN convention on women’s rights and the eradication of gender-based violence in 1979, followed by the Beijing Declaration and Action Platform in 1995. This is considered a visionary agenda for women’s empowerment that recognises gender as a key aspect.

Last but not least, the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda must not remain unmentioned here, which was adopted by the UN SC as Resolution 1325 in 2000. The WPS agenda acknowledges the pivotal role that women play in conflict prevention and the effort for sustainable peace. (Zhukova et al., 2022) The last influential factor are the so-called “norm entrepreneurs” (Achilleos-Sarll et al., 2022, p. 5) such as the former Swedish foreign minister Margot Wallström under whom the concept was first introduced at state-level. This constitutes the first time that a policy field has been defined as feminist by a government. (Zilla, 2022)

Today, feminist organisations such as WILPF are still active and new ones are emerging, such as the International Council for Research on Women (ICRW) or the Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy (CFFP). (Center for Feminist Foreign Policy, 2021; ICRW, 2023) The CFFP is the first organisation primarily dedicated to promoting a Feminist Foreign Policy doing international research, advocacy and consulting since 2016. (CFFP, 2023)

2.4.1 Definition of Terms

First of all, it is important to note that feminist theory in FPA is a multidisciplinary approach and there is not “the one feminist foreign theory” but rather a variety of epistemological and methodological approaches depending on the set goal(s). (Carlsnaes, 2013) Also, the theoretical foundation in academics is still blurred and systemic considerations recede into the background. Current research is more concerned with the role of states within FFP. (Jayakumar, 2023; Thomson, 2020)

What they do have in common, no matter which branch of feminist theory they come from, is that they acknowledge “deeply rooted structures of patriarchy”. (Carlsnaes, 2013, p. 170) In addition, feminists do not only see gender as an analytical tool but as “[...] conceptually, empirically, and normatively essential to studying global politics.”. (Carlsnaes, 2013, p. 172)

Following are definitions from different scholars that give the reader a more detailed insight into attempts of defining FFP as a holistic concept.

In the *Handbook of International Relations*, FFP is described as the questioning force to the objectivity of knowledge in international politics, which is mainly constructed by men. Feminist Foreign Policy expresses different normative concerns and “[...] look[s] at global politics through “gendered lenses”.”. (Carlsnaes, 2013, p. 172) All this is done to pursue the goal of “[...] making the invisible visible [...]”. (Carlsnaes, 2013, p. 173)

Aggestam and Bergman-Rosamond further refine this definition by describing the normative orientation in more detail as being “[...] guided by an ethically informed framework based on broad cosmopolitan norms of global justice and peace.”. (Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond, 2016, p. 323)

Scheyer and Kumskova further add the inclusivity of FFP, which involves whole populations and leaves no one behind. “[...] the feminist method is not about adding women into the system but revealing how the concept of gender is incorporated into it.”. (Scheyer & Kumskova, 2019, p. 59)

Lastly, the Global Partner Network to Advance Feminist Foreign Policy proposes a broad normative definition:

"Feminist foreign policy is the policy of a state that defines its interactions with other states, as well as with movements and other non-state actors, in ways that prioritise peace, gender equality and ecological integrity; enshrine the human rights of all; seek to disrupt colonial, racist, patriarchal and male-dominated power structures; and devote significant resources, including research, to achieving this vision. Feminist foreign policy is coherent in its approach across all its spheres of influence, anchored by the practice of these values at home, and co-organized with feminist activists, groups and movements at home and abroad." (Thompson et al., 2021, para. 5)

It is also pointed out by Sjöberg and Ticker that fixating on an all-encompassing definition would completely miss the circumstances of the prevailing political reality. The definition should therefore remain open and broad in order to be able to evolve it further. (Carlsnaes, 2013) That is why states inter alia develop so-called functional definitions to express their specific interpretation and respective goals of a Feminist Foreign Policy. (Jayakumar, 2023)

2.4.2 FFP's Contribution to Explaining Foreign Policy Action

Feminist Foreign Policy distinguishes itself from conventional FP by adopting different epistemological and methodological approaches, encouraging the deconstruction of existing beliefs and providing additional thought-provoking ideas. (Carlsnaes, 2013; Zilla, 2022)

FFP expresses doubt about the neutrality of facts in IR and the portrayal of a singular universal truth. As an alternative, it is advocated to engage in dialogues that transcend cultural and societal boundaries. The significance of giving equal validity to the perspectives of marginalized individuals and communities is also stressed.

Unlike traditional perspectives that associate gender exclusively with women, FFP defines gender as gender-power-relations. (Tickner, 1997) This means that it involves a thorough analysis of power dynamics, involving men, masculinities, and the interconnected experiences of security between men and women. FFP confronts the invisibility of gender and women in FP and its analysis. (Aggestam et al., 2019)

Feminist debates in FP also challenge the conventional understanding of sovereign states. They assert that categories like states, nations, and sovereignty are not fixed or natural but rather socially constructed. The state also institutionalizes and reproduces social hierarchies such as gender, class or race. (Kantola, 2007)

Feminist Foreign Policy places significant emphasis on redefining the concept of security. FFP scholars contend that existing foreign policy is influenced by patriarchal, racist, and colonial legacies, and they strive to overcome these influences. Central to their analysis is the question of "who has power and why" as this helps to uncover gender power relations within the context of security. (Center for Feminist Foreign Policy, 2021, p. 3) Merely focusing on the state as the central actor in security matters overlooks the prevailing interrelations of insecurity. (Tickner, 1997) To address this limitation, FFP is "[...] shifting the focus from the state to the individual as the primary referent of security.". (Center for Feminist Foreign Policy, 2021, p. 3) They do so by recognizing that social structures and inequalities significantly impact the security of individuals or marginalized groups. (Carlsnaes, 2013)

Tickner argues that security should not be confined to the state's defence against external threats. Instead, it should encompass a comprehensive range of dimensions, including physical, structural, ecological, gender-based, sexual, and systemic forms of violence. Ultimately, this fosters the implementation of inclusive policies that benefit not only a few but society as a whole. This perspective emphasizes that women's insecurities are often rooted in structural inequalities that are ingrained in the historical legacy of the modern state and the broader international system. By challenging the conventional understanding of security and advocating for a more holistic and inclusive approach, Feminist Foreign Policy aims to address the diverse dimensions of violence, gender-power-dynamics and inequalities that affect individuals and communities globally. (Tickner, 1997)

Moreover, FFP takes a significant step forward by bringing the norms of international conventions into practice when it comes to state relations with other countries. (Zhukova et al., 2022)

It aims to challenge and break away from the scripts and roles traditionally written “[...] by men, for men, and about men [...]” (Nagel, 1998, p. 243), thus contributing to a more inclusive and equitable understanding of international politics. (Nagel, 1998)

Finally, conducting a feminist gender analysis starts with investigating power: “What forms does power take? Who wields it? How are some gendered wieldings of power camouflaged so they do not even look like power?” (Enloe, 2014, pp. 8–9)

2.4.3 Boundaries of Explanation

The concept of Feminist Foreign Policy has limitations of explanatory power when it comes to foreign policy actions and preferences of states.

First of all, as FFP lacks a cohesive, single definition, there is no international consensus on what an FFP strategy must include. This on the one hand makes cross-country comparisons extremely difficult, and on the other hand, joint action and cooperation between FFP-countries brings challenges with it. (Papagiotti, 2023; Reminy-Elizor et al., 2023; Thompson et al., 2021)

Another limiting explanatory factor is the variety of understandings of feminism. There are multiple streams in feminist theory which all come with particular ideas, concepts and understandings possibly leading to tensions even within the field. (Papagiotti, 2023) “Differing feminist understandings thereby shape written policy, in turn, delimiting the terms of FFP and, ultimately, what it might achieve.”. (Achilleos-Sarll et al., 2022, p. 3)

One can also criticise the “conceptual muddiness” (Papagiotti, 2023, p. 8) of FFP. This may result in countries implementing FFP facing challenges in finding a balance between their national interests and promoting gender equality, often relying on non-binding approaches rather than legally binding instruments. (Papagiotti, 2023) Also, FFP tends to be approached as an external action by states, rather than being used as a starting point for self-reflection on the gendered and racial inequalities and insecurities within their own borders. Self-reflection would, however, be crucial for driving transformative change. Additionally, FFP in practice falls short in addressing the implementing countries' role and position within the global system. This can lead to exporting norms from the Global North reinforcing inequalities, colonial logic and overlooking the diverse cultural context. (Papagiotti, 2023; Väyrynen, 2021; Zilla, 2022)

Lastly, it is essential to approach the concept of FFP with a systemic perspective. Simply labelling a strategy as FFP does not guarantee its adherence to feminist principles. Mere representation of women in positions of power does not necessarily signify a transformative change as it may reproduce existing gender dynamics and structures. Some countries may focus on gender equality without explicitly using the FFP label. To truly promote gender equality, a deeper understanding and incorporation of feminist principles is crucial. (Morin & Paquin, 2018; Zilla, 2022)

And in the end, the question remains: Who defines power, who has it, and how is it used?

All in all, Feminist Foreign Policy seeks to address the limitations and deficiencies found in both conventional and unconventional foreign policy approaches. It aims to fill the gaps and overcome the shortcomings of these traditional approaches. In theory, FFP succeeds in broadening the concept of human security and shifting its focus towards gender security. However, in practice, nation states often adopt fewer comprehensive approaches, concentrating only on specific elements of FFP's principles.

3 Methodology

This part of the thesis takes a closer look at the methodological construct which lies the foundation for the analysis and comparison of the two FFP-countries and the two countries with a high gender equality index. In a first step, the underlying concept of qualitative content analysis according to Mayring is shortly introduced and it will be explained why this method was chosen for this work. In a next step, the case selection with a focus on the chosen data and investigation period will be described. Lastly, the working hypothesis and the coding guide give insights into the coding rules and the predetermined categories.

3.1 Qualitative Content Analysis according to Mayring

In General, collecting qualitative data in the field of international relations or foreign policy is accomplished by “[...] in depth studies of particular events, phenomena, regions, countries, organizations, or individuals.” (Lamont, 2015, p. 78) As this work seeks to find patterns which highlight the similarities and differences between all four chosen countries, a comprehensive comparison in their foreign policy preferences is conducted. (Lauth et al., 2015)

This comparison is supported by a qualitative content analysis according to Phillip Mayring. This social science evaluation method was developed in the 1980s and is now a standard method for text analysis. (Mayring & Fenzl, 2019; Mey & Mruck, 2010)

Qualitative content analysis is a method that makes it possible to collect different types of data, whether through the transcription of interviews, field studies or the analysis of documents. It is based on a strictly rules-driven procedure with a process model for the individual steps of analysis, thereby ensuring intersubjective testability. (Mayring & Fenzl 2019) It is about making the interpretation of texts describable and verifiable by defining rules in advance. (Mey & Mruck, 2010) The central aspect of qualitative content analysis thereby is category guidance. Pre-developed theory-guided, deductive (this is the case here) or inductive categories from the material are assigned to the respective text passages.

The analysis is carried out in compliance with precise content- analytical rules, although a certain room for interpretation cannot be prevented. A systematic approach is ensured by defining units of analysis - namely coding units, context units and evaluation units. Here, the coding unit defines the smallest text component that is evaluated, and the context unit defines which information is included for the respective coding. Finally, the evaluation unit defines the amount of material that is compared to the overall category system.

In order to ensure that the coding is of high quality and uniformity, the degree of intra-correspondence is examined. This is done by carrying out a second coding with some time interval and obtaining predominantly the same results without looking back at the previously assigned categories. This is an indicator for the stability and reliability of the coding work. On the other hand, intercoder-agreement can serve as a tool to ensure the objectivity of the work. This is the case when a second coder achieves high conformities in his/her coding with the previously conducted analysis.

In deductive category-led approaches - as applied in this project - a coding guide is created that sets out definitions, typical text passages and coding rules for each defined category. This coding-guide is developed theory-driven and, if necessary, further expanded and adapted during the pilot phase. Thereafter, the coding rules remain constant. (Mayring & Fenzl, 2019; Mey & Mruck, 2010)

Mayring and Fenzl argue that the description "quality oriented category-guided text analysis" (Mayring & Fenzl, 2019, p. 634) would capture the method conceptually even more accurately. This is because the qualitative assignment of categories can also be followed by further processing for a quantitative analysis.

Such could be the evaluation of category frequencies in certain text segments or the creation of an ordinal category system, thus quantifying the data. (Mayring & Fenzl, 2019) This will also become clear in the course of this work, as the categories recorded are evaluated quantitatively.

Here, too, it must be noted that the method is limited: coding according to policy preferences cannot identify deep structures, but rather serves to roughly subdivide into policy fields showing the focus of the respective countries. In this particular case, an intercoder agreement is not given since this final paper is prepared as an individual work. Therefore, the factor of objectivity could be diminished and there is no verification by a second coder.

3.2 Case and Data Selection

	Sweden	Canada	Norway	Finland
Title of Paper	Handbook Sweden's Feminist Foreign Policy (2019)	Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy (2017)	Setting the course for Norwegian foreign and security policy (2017)	Government Report on Finnish Foreign and Security Policy (2020)
Number of Coding Units	221	278	312	183
Framework Conditions	highly developed countries, OECD & NATO membership (Sweden shortly before joining), ratification of international treaties on advancing gender equality (WPS & CEDAW), equally staffed minister positions			
Explaining Variable (X)	FFP- Label	FFP- Label	No FFP- Label	No FFP- Label
Outcome (Y)	FFP- Policy Preferences	FFP- Policy Preferences	No FFP- Policy Preferences	No FFP- Policy Preferences

Table 1 Case Selection after Laut et al. (Laut et al., 2015, p.67)

Text Corpus

For the text corpus, a small-N case study was chosen. After Lauth et. al a small-N case study only includes up to 10 countries which represents a medium level of abstraction. This underlying case design makes it possible to find linkages between the explaining variable (in this case the independent variable X which is used for explaining the phenomena of an FFP/ non- FFP- label in foreign policy preferences) and the outcome (in this case the dependent variable Y which shows possible differences). (Lauth et al., 2015)

At the same time, a most similar case comparison was chosen for the attempt to determine different influences of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The comparison is done with constant framework conditions to keep the remaining bias of external circumstances as low as possible. (Lauth et al., 2015) These similar framework conditions include their membership in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (or shortly before joining as it is the case for Sweden), being highly developed countries as well as having ratified important conventions relating the topic. These are for example the Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPS) or the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Additionally, all states examined have at least equal representation when it comes to ministerial posts. (Countries - OECD, 2022; National Action Plan by Region – 1325 National Action Plans, 2023; Nato, 2023; OHCHR, 2023a; UN Women – Headquarters, 2023) The similar framework conditions will be analysed in more detailed under 5. *Evaluation*.

These most similar case designs are characterised by the fact that the cases differ in their explaining variable X – an FFP label or not – and therefore “[...] test for whether or not the one divergent independent variable accounts for divergent outcomes.”. (Lamont, 2015, p. 134)

The thesis identifies, codes, and analyses the substantive policy preferences of the above-mentioned states with the help of preselected official documents of the respective Foreign Ministries. These focus either on their Feminist Foreign Policy (Sweden and Canada) or present the general orientation and values of the government’s foreign policy (Norway and Finland). Official documents are hereby defined as “[...] documents, which are published, or are publicly released, by a state, organization, or business.”. (Lamont, 2015, p. 80)

All four official documents are publicly accessible in English language and are available on the ministry's websites. (Global Affairs Canada, 2017; Government of Sweden, 2018; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, 2020; Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2017)

These four official text documents were deliberately chosen because they obtain direct statements, focal points, and alignments of the respective governments about their foreign policy action and set priorities. As this Bachelor Thesis aims to draw conclusions about the possible differences in policy preferences of formally set FFP-countries and countries without a set FFP-strategy having a high score in gender equality, direct statements of the governments are the most suitable for this analysis.

The selection of the two FFP-countries is based on the fact that they have been implementing the strategy for the longest period of time: Sweden since 2014 and Canada since 2017. The Swedish FFP-agenda was abolished with the change of government in 2022. However, Sweden still lays the foundation for the concept of FFP and therefore must be included in the analysis. On the other hand, Norway and Finland have been performing under the top 3 of the Global Gender Gap Report since 2020 as well as under the top 10 in comparable indexes such as the Gender Inequality Index (GII) from the United Nations. (United Nations; World Economic Forum, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023a)

However, the limits of the small-N case selection must be acknowledged. There is a certain selection bias by the researcher when selecting cases. Also, it is hard to make generalizations beyond the examined cases as every country has a specific foreign policy agenda with partially distinct features even though being classified as most similar cases. (Lamont, 2015)

Investigation Period

The selection of documents is not based on a certain investigation period but rather on the availability of the foreign ministry's documents. The limits of the availability are essentially twofold: first, that some ministries have not updated their strategies yet and second, that the ministries are still occupied by the same party. Therefore, some of the papers were not published by the current coalition governments.

- Sweden: The Swedish case is special: Sweden was the first country in the world to introduce a Feminist Foreign Policy strategy in 2014. In August 2018, an official *Handbook* was published under foreign affairs minister Margot Wallström from the social democratic party. The strategy has been continued under social democratic ministers until October 2022 when the newly elected conservative party and its respective foreign minister withdrew from the FFP-strategy entirely. Officially Sweden is not an FFP country anymore but will still be analysed as their handbook and efforts have set the basis for subsequent publications. (Government of Sweden, 2018)
- Canada: *Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP)* was published in June 2017 and has since then been further pursued by ministers of Foreign Affairs/ ministers of International Development (as this strategy focuses primarily on development policies). All of them were/ are members of the liberal party in prime minister Trudeau's cabinets. (Global Affairs Canada, 2017)
- Norway: Norway's latest published document *Setting the course for Norwegian foreign and security policy* dates back to April 2017 and has not been updated by the new leadership of the Foreign Ministry since October 2021. It needs to be mentioned that it was published under a minister from the conservative party and continued also after the government changed in 2021 under a social democratic minister until present. (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2017)
- Finland: Finland's *Government Report on Finnish Foreign and Security Policy* was released in October 2020 under a five party coalition of left, green, social and liberal parties. This April 2023, the former government was voted out but there has not been an update of the strategy since. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, 2020)

Resulting from this, the papers of interest are set in a publication period between April 2017 and October 2020 with the remark of partially changing government coalition parties or even the complete abolition of the strategy.

3.3 Working Hypothesis

The guiding hypothesis hereby is:

FFP-countries and non-FFP countries with a high gender equality index differ in their substantive foreign policy preferences when it comes to the defined policy fields defined in the *Manifesto for FFP, 2021* (Center for Feminist Foreign Policy, 2021).

3.4 Coding Guide

This codebook describes and presents the coding rules and procedure for analysing the substantive policy preferences of the following four states: Sweden and Canada as two countries with an official Feminist Foreign Policy strategy and Norway and Finland as countries with a high gender equality index. The aim of this work is to analyse the focus points of the aforementioned governments in their way of conducting their foreign policy. This is done with the help of fourteen predefined categories which are per definition policy fields associated with FFP. Ultimately this should support and systemize the gained information from the coding samples. Furthermore, it is designed to answer the posed research question whether countries with a Feminist Foreign Policy Agenda differ from non-FFP-countries with a high Gender Equality Index in their substantive foreign policy priorities.

It is important to note that there is not one set definition of Feminist Foreign Policy. The definitions differ depending on the application of a particular feminist theory, but also due to the varying focus and orientation of the applying states. (Thompson et al., 2021) Therefore, an all-encompassing, normative definition including fourteen policy fields defined in the *Manifesto of Feminist Foreign Policy* from the Center for Feminist Foreign Policy (CFFP) was chosen for this project. (Center for Feminist Foreign Policy, 2021) The definition will be explained in more detail in the further course of this coding guide.

Unitizing

The set evaluation unit includes four governmental strategy papers consisting of around 1000 coding units. In this coding series, each paragraph forms the respective coding unit of analysis. A readable paragraph is defined as a section of text that begins after a blank line or indent and ends with a blank line or indent. This coding units can consist of one or more sentences. If a single sentence is separated by a blank line or indent it is also counted as a paragraph.

Only written paragraphs are counted as context units - data, charts, headings, numbers, and tables of contents are not evaluated as context units here.

For each paragraph, it must be determined whether at least one of the predefined policy fields is included. If one or more policy fields are contained in the paragraph, the below described coding scheme is followed.

Coding Rules

Coding rules applying for all categories in advance ensure consistency across the coding for all four papers. This increases the reliability of the coding results.

The following rules were developed throughout the first pre-coding sequence:

- I. The set-up policy categories listed here are only coded in their positive, FFP-compliant way. Pre-defined keywords and definitions help as an orientation here (see the *Appendix*)
- II. For more specific differentiation of the categories and to specify definition or clarity, only one dominant category is coded at a time, as otherwise there may be duplications and inaccuracies. This means that only one dominant category will be coded for each coding unit.
- III. If none of the listed categories can be coded, it is coded as *No Category*. If, in the first course of reviewing the papers, the coder notices other categories that stand out, these will be included for the second coding sequence.
- IV. Only contiguous text is coded. Excluded from coding are tables of contents, illustrations, introductions, explanation boxes, headings as well as introductory greetings.
- V. The inductively added category *State Security* is only coded in addition to the already set up categories as an additional information on how strongly the aspect of conventional foreign policy is still anchored in the respective strategy.

To offer an example: "Strengthening Norway's security is one of the Foreign Service's key tasks. Unless our basic security is assured, we will not have the freedom to promote other interests. In order to follow developments and safeguard Norwegian interests, Norway needs an appropriate presence around the world with the necessary skills and knowledge. The Foreign Service must adapt in the face of rapid change, and continue to enhance its ability to deal with unforeseen developments. The Government will also continue to restructure the Foreign Service to ensure that Norway is as well equipped as possible to address foreign and security policy challenges." (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2017, p. 43) In this case, the coding unit was coded as *No Category* as it does not align with any of the fourteen FFP categories in a positive way. At the same time, this unit has keywords such as "Strengthening Norway's security" and is thus coded as a *State Security* unit in addition to *No Category*.

Coding Categories

The coding uses fourteen deductively determined categories referring to the *Manifesto of Feminist Foreign Policy*. (Center for Feminist Foreign Policy, 2021) Hereby, deductive category formation means concluding from the general, previously defined theoretical framework (in that case prefabricated categories) to the individually classified material of analysis. (Burney & Saleem, 2008) In addition, a *No Category* section was added for paragraphs which do not contain any of the above-mentioned categories. During the coding process, examples as well as keywords were additionally added for the predefined categories. Also, *State Security* was inductively added as an additional category. It was added during the coding process as a response to the accumulation of conventional foreign policy attributes being found.

The following abstract establishes general descriptions for the predefined as well as the inductively added categories namely *No Category* and *State Security* from the first coding sequence. A list of keywords and examples for each policy field – if available – can be found in the *Appendix*.

1. Peace and Security

FFP concepts for Peace and Security go beyond the security of states and put human security in the focus of their actions. Hereby, they aim to transform military and power relations to decrease military expenditure and prioritize arms control, crisis prevention and support for stabilisation and peace.

2. Human Rights and Rule of Law

Inclusive and intersectional international human rights law (IHRL) stands at core for FFP. It emphasises exercising the same values within the countries borders as well as practicing them in their foreign policy.

3. Demilitarisation, Disarmament and Arms (Export-) Control

A core aspect for FFP is investing in peace instead of war. Hereby, international demilitarisation, arms (export) control and disarmament are put in focus.

4. Climate Justice

The climate crisis is one of the biggest existing threats globally. Wealthy and industrialized countries being the main polluters must realize their great responsibility for strengthening climate justice. They must commit to mitigation and support adaptation processes. At the same time, climate legislation and climate goals are essential.

5. Development Cooperation

Development Cooperation is still permeated with colonial thinking and power inequalities. FFP prioritises an intersectional cooperation putting financial commitments to reduce inequalities and focusing on gender specific spending at the forefront.

6. Migration

FFP understands (forced) migration as a militarised security issue that reinforces unequal power relations and disproportionately affects marginalised people. FFP demands a radical reform of asylum and migration practices and policies.

7. Global Health

FFP is guided by the human right to health. It puts the secure access to health resources at its centre both – in domestic and global health policies.

8. Trade and Investments

A Feminist Trade Policy sets the goal to overcome structural inequalities by redefining the purpose of trade, the understanding of prosperity and its measurement methods to achieve economic justice.

9. Decolonisation of Foreign Policy

Former colonial powers have to take full responsibility and need to face their racial histories. At the same time, foreign policy needs to decolonise, and postcolonial structures need to be actively tackled and reprocessed.

10. Combating the Anti-Gender Movement	FFP actively commits resources to counteract anti-gender groups and activities on all levels whether domestically or abroad. It promotes knowledge-building on topics around gender.
11. Women, Peace and Security Agenda	FFP underlines the original WPS objectives of decreasing militarisation and conflict prevention. At the same time, National Action Plans (NAP) are essential to institutionalize the WPS agenda on domestic level.
12. Inclusive Communication	FFP demands clear and accessible communication for everyone that is gender-responsive, inclusive, and free from discrimination and power relations. It tries to change the current tone of foreign policy formulation.
13. Participation and Leadership	FFP puts the change in structural power hierarchies and the fair and equal division of power across all levels and especially in institutions at the core. FFP strongly supports that equal and diverse representation results in more inclusive policies which serve the society as a whole- internally and externally.
14. Cooperation with Feminist Civil Society	A FFP acknowledges the important part that civil society plays for social cohesion. Therefore, it supports and cooperates with the work of civil groups and organisations through accountability, the promotion of dialogue and long-term funding.
15. No Category	This category applies when none of the above-mentioned policy fields are addressed in their predefined way or a topic is only discussed but not in a country-specific context.

16. State Security

This category was added inductively after the pretest. It is conducted in addition to the existing fifteen categories to see how much these four states focus on conventional features of foreign policy.

To sum up, a qualitative content analysis after Mayring will be conducted for all four foreign policy papers. Here, a small-N case analysis of most similar cases namely Sweden, Canada, Norway, and Finland is carried out. This content analysis is supported by a predefined coding guide including coding rules and a total of sixteen categories. However, it should be noted here that a certain selection bias by the researcher must always be presumed, generalisations beyond these four cases are difficult to make and ultimately, objectivity might be compromised as only one person has coded.

4. Coding Results

This section goes into more detail about the coding results. First of all, the conducted reliability test is used to secure the stability of the results in advance. In a next step, the coding results are compared as a whole before each country is looked at in more detail. In addition, the coding results of the two FFP-countries and the two non-FFP-countries are contrasted. Lastly, the results for the *State Security* category as well as the most relevant FFP-categories for all four countries will be discussed.

The coding process was done with the help of the software MAXQDA which supports researchers in their qualitative data analysis. Among other things, MAXQDA can be used to code and categorise data to identify thematic patterns and relationships. Furthermore, one can assign codes to specific text passages or data sections and create hierarchical code trees to organise coding systems.

All four foreign ministry papers with overall 994 coding units were coded twice: in a first run, additional keywords were added to the coding guide, examples for the coding guide were selected and another category was inductively included: *State Security*. The second run was done 5 days later. This rules out that the same categories could be adopted by memory and prevents being biased from the results of the first coding sequence. In this second run, the coding rules, units as well as categories were fixed and could not be changed anymore. Therefore, the evaluation builds on the results of the second coding sequence.

As an intermediate step, a reliability test was carried out to ensure the stability of the coding based on the generated coding guide. According to Raupp and Vogelsang, reliability tests are agreement estimations, but they can never guarantee for the complete reliability of the overall results. Rather, only a limited number of examination units is taken into account. According to Lombard et al. around 10% of the content should be examined for their reliability. (Lombard et al., 2002; Raupp & Vogelgesang, 2009)

Hereby Krippendorff's Alpha was chosen as the reliability coefficient. Krippendorff describes that for the substantial strength of agreement one should "[...] consider variables with reliabilities between $\alpha=0.667$ and $\alpha=0.800$ only for drawing tentative conclusions." (Krippendorff, 2019, p. 356) and that everything above is almost perfect. (Krippendorff, 2019) The calculation of Krippendorff's Alpha was carried out with the help of RStudio. The first 25 paragraphs of each paper were coded to cover a total of roughly 10% - namely 100 investigation units - of the whole object of investigation. The category *State Security* was not included here. The code for RStudio and the results of the reliability test can be found in the *Appendix*.

In a first step, the calculation showed a percentage agreement of both coding runs of 94% and Krippendorff's Alpha measures 0.901 which, according to the threshold value of at least 0.667, predicts a high reliability of the given sample.

It needs to be mentioned that this test-retest condition where only one person codes and reanalyses the same text can still be inconsistent. This is because the variable of intercoder-agreement is missing, where at least a second person achieves very similar coding results. Moreover, Krippendorff's Alpha is normally designed for multiple coders and therefore it is not surprising that the results of the test turn out favourably here. Nevertheless, the result shows that the coder followed their own coding guideline and within the limited scope of possibilities, a reliable and stable implementation has been demonstrated.

In the following analysis and evaluation of the coding work, all results and values are given in percent (%) because the four strategy papers differ in their amounts of coding units. Therefore, a proportionality- approach was chosen to make the papers more comparable.

Overview of the Coding Results

Categories	Sweden	Canada	Norway	Finland
Peace and Security	4,1%	5,4%	3,2%	6,8%
Human Rights and Rule of Law	7,2%	6,1%	7,5%	4,3%
Demilitarisation, Disarmament, Arms Control	4,5%	0,0%	3,0%	3,4%
Climate Justice	1,4%	2,2%	0,3%	3,9%
Development Cooperation	11,8%	26,9%	4,0%	1,0%
Migration	0,5%	0,4%	0,5%	0,5%
Global Health	4,5%	3,9%	0,3%	1,4%
Trade and Investments	5,9%	4,7%	0,3%	1,0%
Decolonisation of Foreign Policy	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%
Combating the Anti-Gender Movement	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%
Women, Peace and Security Agenda	6,3%	0,7%	0,0%	0,5%
Inclusive Communication	4,5%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%
Participation and Leadership	23,5%	2,9%	0,5%	1,0%
Cooperation with Feminist Civil Society	5,0%	1,4%	0,0%	0,0%
No Category	20,8%	45,2%	64,2%	63,8%
Total Number of Categories	221	279	371	207

Table 2 Overview of the Coding Results

This table gives a first general overview of the percentage distribution of the categories for all four states - excluding the additional category *State Security*. A first glance is directed at the total number of categories: this differs considerably in some cases. The biggest difference in coding units lies between Finland and Norway, with a discrepancy of around 160 codes. It is also striking that the non-FFP countries in particular have a share of around two thirds of *No Category*. Canada also has a high proportion here with around 45% without a specific priority on FFP. Only Sweden shows an FFP reference in every fifth coding unit on average.

What stands out is that two categories do not play a role for either FFP or non-FFP countries: *Decolonisation of Foreign Policy* and *Combating the Anti-Gender Movement*. Moreover, some categories hardly play a role for most states except for Sweden, such as *Migration*; *Women, Peace and Security*; *Inclusive Communication* as well as *Cooperation with Feminist Civil Society*.

Looking at Sweden in Detail

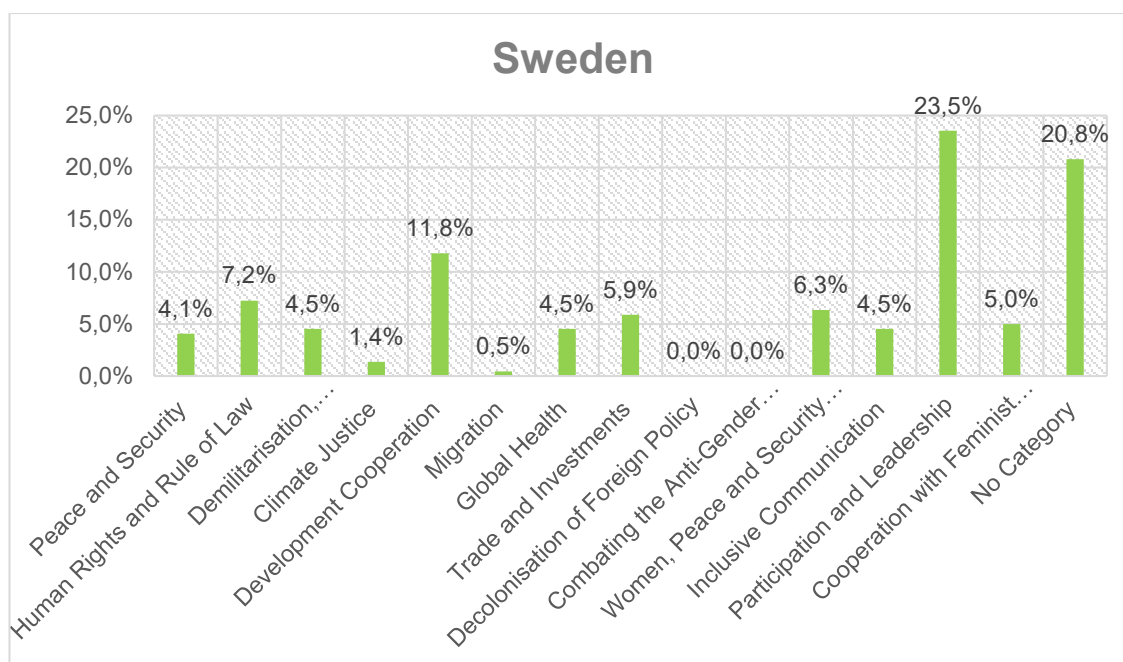


Figure 1 Looking at Sweden in Detail

Sweden's Handbook on Feminist Foreign Policy from 2018 shows a broader distribution between the categories according to the FFP definition. Here, the *Participation and Leadership* category leads with 23.5%, even ahead of *No Category* (about 21.0%). It is difficult to identify clear trends here, but *Development Cooperation* stands out with around 12.0%. It is followed by *Human Rights and Rule of Law*; *Trade and Investments* and *Women, Peace and Security Agenda* and *Cooperation with Feminist Civil Society* with over 5.0% of mentioning. As stated at the beginning for all four states, the categories *Decolonisation of Foreign Policy* and *Combating the Anti-Gender Movement* are not mentioned at all, and *Migration* and *Climate Justice* only play a minor role here.

Looking at Canada in Detail

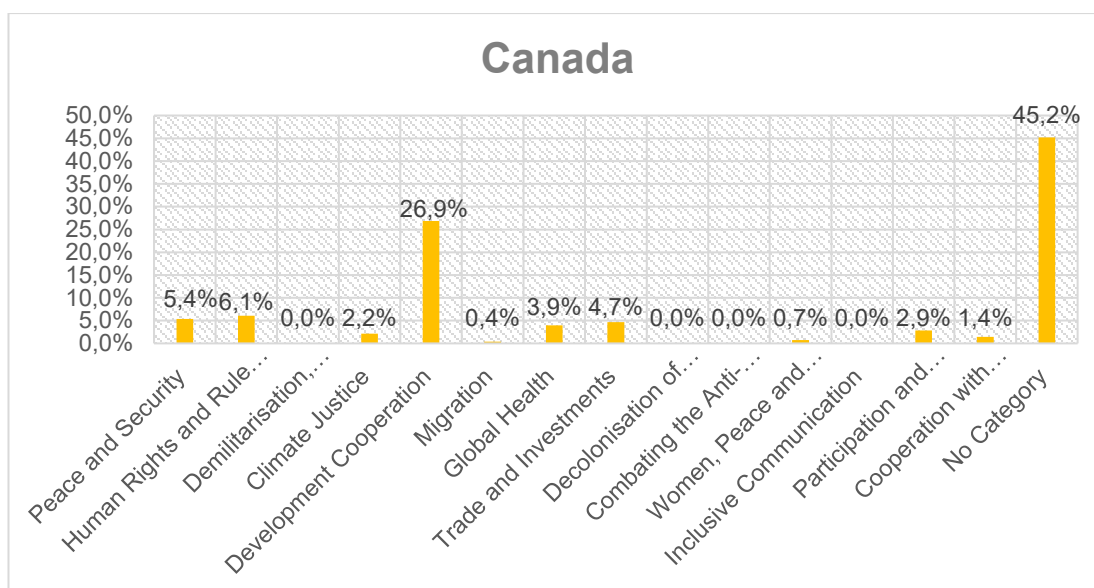


Figure 2 Looking at Canada in Detail

Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy from 2017 draws a rather clear picture: in contrast to almost half of the codes with *No Category* to be assigned, *Development Cooperation* accounts for the largest share of the strategy's political orientation, at around 27.0%. In addition to these two outstanding categories, *Peace and Security*, *Human Rights and the Rule of Law* as well as *Trade and Investments* should also be considered with at least just under 5.0% of mentioning. In line with the general analysis above, the categories *Decolonisation of Foreign Policy* and *Combating the Anti-Gender Movement* are not mentioned at all, being accompanied by *Demilitarisation, Disarmament and Arms Control* and *Inclusive Communication*.

FFP- Countries in Comparison

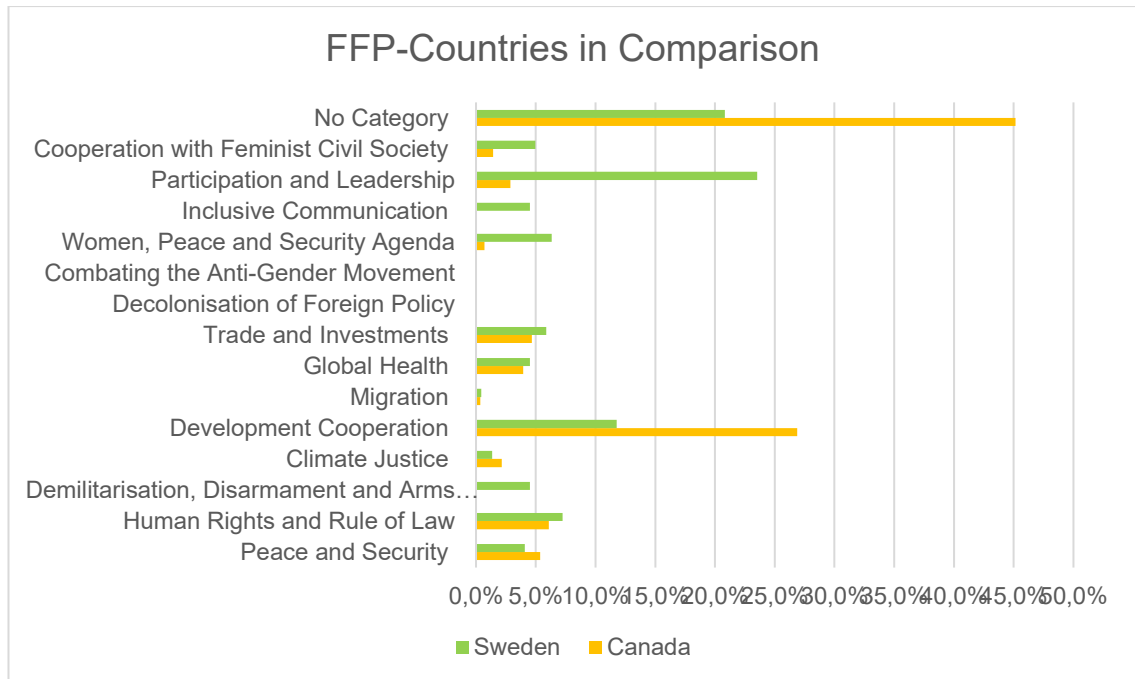


Figure 3 FFP-Countries in Comparison

Looking at both Feminist Foreign Policy countries - namely Sweden and Canada - side by side, it is also noticeable that there are differences as well as similarities in their respective foreign policy preferences. Both emphasise the policy areas *Trade and Investments*; *Global Health*; *Climate Justice* as well as *Human Rights and the Rule of Law* and *Peace and Security* comparably often, even if in some cases only to a small percentage.

It is also significant to see that Sweden addresses the topics of *Demilitarisation, Disarmament and Arms Control* and *Inclusive Communication* and Canada, in contrast, does not mention these at all. Further, a significantly higher proportion of *Development Cooperation* was coded for Canada compared to Sweden.

Sweden has a significantly higher share in *Women, Peace and Security* and *Participation and Leadership*. After all, both of them only marginally address the subject of *Migration* and as already stated in the beginning, neither mention *Decolonisation of Foreign Policy* or *Combating the Anti-Gender Movement* at all.

Looking at Norway in Detail

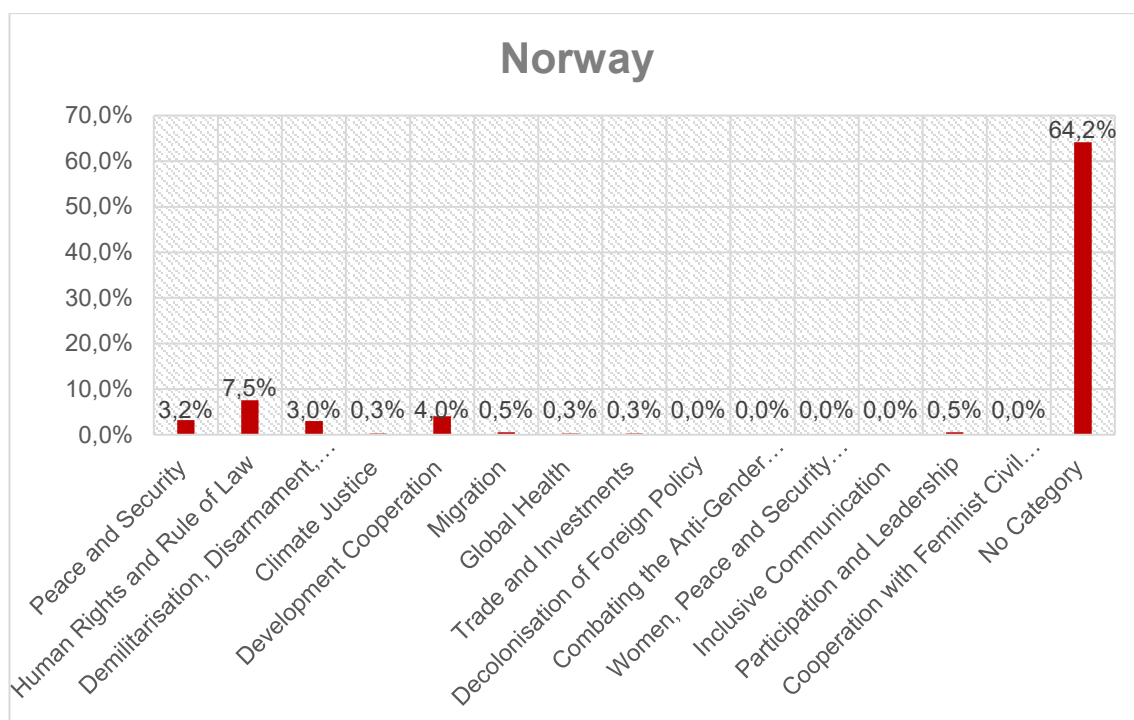


Figure 4 Looking at Norway in Detail

The Norwegian's foreign ministry strategy paper on *Setting the course for Norwegian foreign and security policy* from 2017 shows clear tendencies: two thirds of the paper have been coded with *No Category*. The percentage shares for other categories are correspondingly low. The most frequently coded category hereby is *Human Rights and Rule of Law* with 7.5%, followed by *Development Cooperation*, *Peace and Security* and *Demilitarisation* with only 4.0%, 3.2% and 3.0% respectively. The shares of the other categories are so marginal (below 1%) that they are not worth mentioning here. In total, five categories do not appear at all and another five policy fields in the range with a zero before the decimal point.

Looking at Finland in Detail

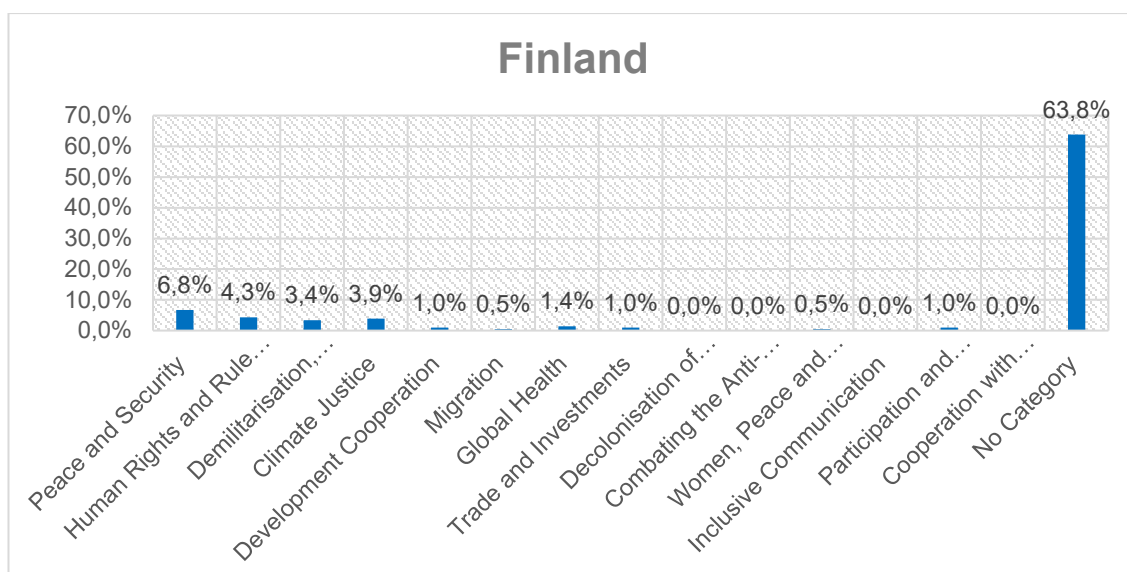


Figure 5 Looking at Finland in Detail

Lastly, looking at the results from the coding of the *Government Report on Finnish Foreign and Security Policy* from 2020, a similar trend can be seen as in the coding of the Norwegian strategy paper: around two thirds apply to *No Category*. What is different from Norway is that a few more categories are mentioned and coded - even though only to a small extent. It is worth mentioning here that *Peace and Security* is the leading category with 6.8% followed by *Human Rights and Rule of Law* (4.3%), *Climate Justice* (3.9%) and *Demilitarisation* (3.4%). Unlike Norway, at least four categories exceed the 1% -mark, but still remain largely insignificant. In addition, four categories are not mentioned at all.

Non- FFP- Countries in Comparison

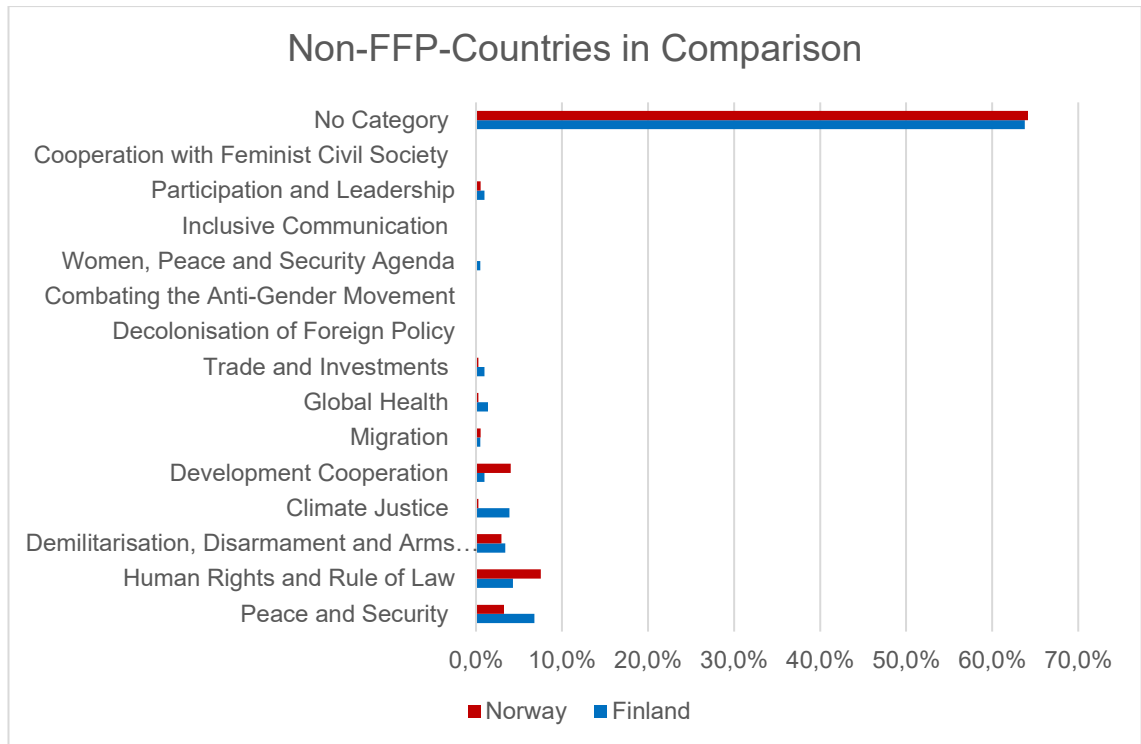


Figure 6 Non-FFP-Countries in Comparison

When comparing Norway and Finland – both non-Feminist Foreign Policy countries, the results are much more similar and unified in comparison to those of Sweden and Canada. Both countries show similar coding results for the categories *No Category* and *Demilitarisation, Disarmament and Arms Control*. It is particularly striking that in both countries a good two-thirds of the coding units are allocated to *No Category* and accordingly, the percentage shares of other categories are comparatively low for both Norway and Finland. The share of the *Peace and Security* category is noticeably higher in Finland, whereas Norway has a greater share in *Human Rights and Rule of Law* as well as *Development Cooperation*. Both have in common that they show a similarly marginal share in *Migration*, *Trade and Investments* and *Participation and Leadership* (all below 1%) and furthermore both do not mention a total of four categories at all: *Decolonisation of Foreign Policy*, *Combating the Anti-Gender Movement*, *Inclusive Communication* and *Cooperation with Feminist Civil Society*.

The Factor of State Security

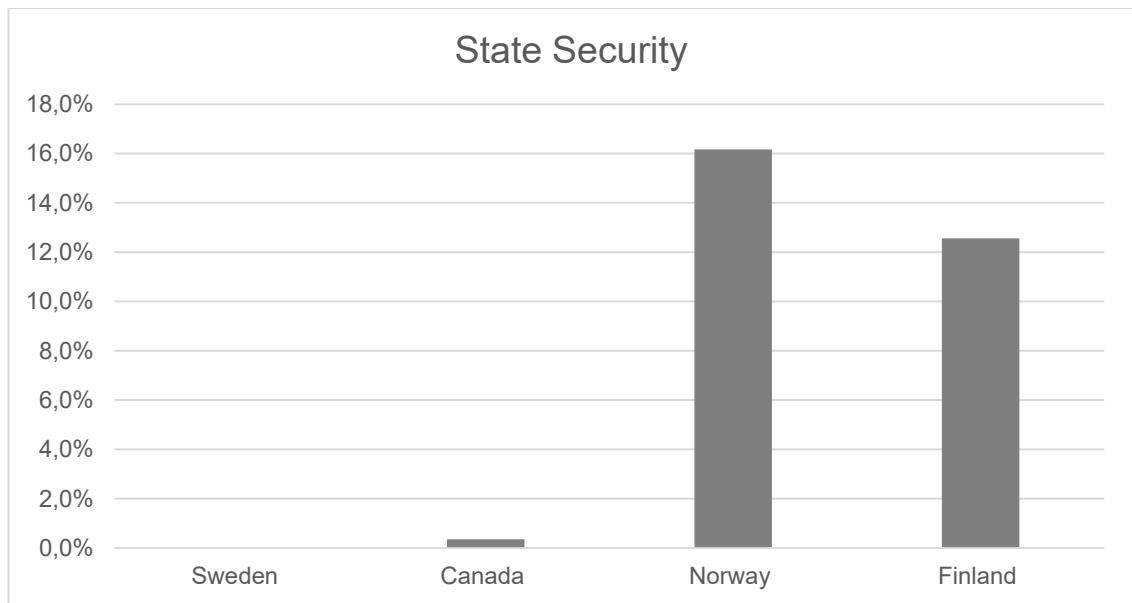


Figure 7 State Security

As already mentioned in the beginning, another category was surveyed in addition to the fifteen categories namely *State Security*. This category is an additional measure for how often the four selected countries mention conventional foreign policy features (for more detailed information, see 3.4.2 *Coding Rules* and 3.4.3 *Coding Categories*). It becomes very clear that the two countries without a Feminist Foreign Policy agenda mention conventional features to around 16.0% for Norway and around 12.5% for Finland. In contrast, the factor of *State Security* plays no part in the Swedish paper and only a very marginal role in the Canadian paper.

Most relevant Categories

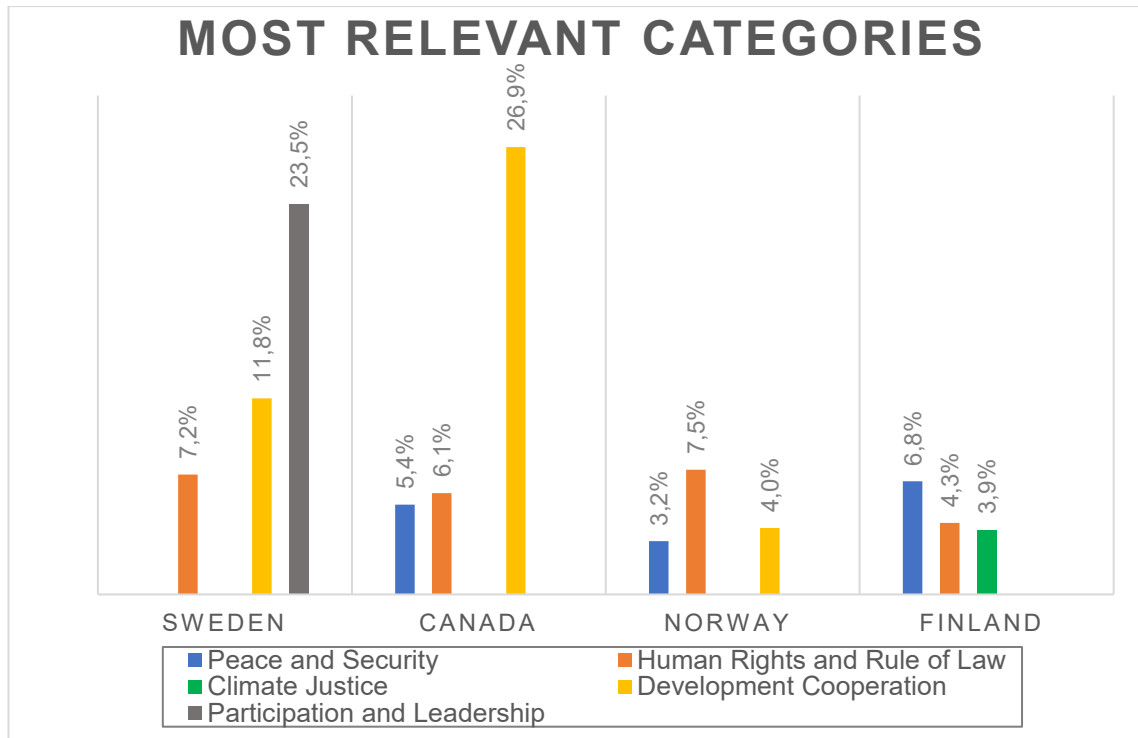


Figure 8 Most relevant FFP-Categories

This last evaluation refers to the most relevant categories that were highlighted during the coding process. It is important to note that *No Category* and *State Security* are not included here. For Sweden and Canada, there is one outstanding, predominant category in each case: *Development Cooperation* for Canada and *Participation and Leadership* for Sweden. In contrast, none of the top three categories stands out for the two non-FFP countries Norway and Finland. Interestingly, all four countries feature the category *Human Rights and Rule of Law* in first or second place. In addition, the policy fields of *Peace and Security* and *Development Cooperation* are among the leading mentions in three of the four countries.

In summary, the coding results support the hypothesis that FFP-countries and non-FFP-countries differ in their substantive foreign policy preferences when using the predefined policy fields as the analytical criteria. Two thirds of the categories for non-FFP countries were coded with *No Category*. At the same time, the number of codes for *State Security* also supports this picture. Nevertheless, there is also a category where all four countries set a priority: *Human Rights and Rule of Law*. The next step will be to further evaluate these coding results with the help of academic literature.

5. Evaluation

An evaluation of the coding results for all four countries and a comparison in their orientations, backgrounds and foreign policy preferences is only possible in a step-to-step process. It was chosen to first look at all four countries together and the category *Human Rights and Rule of Law* which connects them. Secondly, the FFP-countries Sweden and Canada will be evaluated individually before taking a closer look at both of them as a group. The next subitem will focus on the non-FFP-countries and then a new group is being considered here: the Nordics. Lastly, the differences between all four countries and the boundaries of this evaluation are being discussed to then finalize with a concluding remark.

Already at this point it is important to mention that this format cannot cover all factors that eventually influence the countries' foreign policy preferences, actions, and values. Here, attention is primarily paid to factors that stand out and are important in this respect such as milestones in the countries' commitments towards gender equality or international partnerships. In addition, the focus is predominantly on the FFP countries and their commitments and historical progress towards gender equality, since the question to be answered at the end of this paper is whether the FFP label is the path towards gender equality.

What all four countries have in common - according to the coding of the foreign ministry papers - is that the category *Human Rights and Rule of Law* is among their top three categories (excluding *State Security* and *No Category*). Outside of the coding results, this focus on human rights is also evidenced by the ratification and national implementation of international agreements and resolutions. All four states have ratified CEDAW- the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women. It is an international UN human rights treaty adopted in 1979 and ratified by Sweden in 1980, Canada and Norway in 1981 and by Finland in 1986. This Women's Right Convention lays the foundation for states to promote gender equality throughout all sectors of public life. (OHCHR, 2023a) Secondly, they all adopted the Security Council (SC) Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) which recognizes the role of women in security, conflict and peace processes. They also adopted National Action Plans (NAPs) for the WPS- implementation on national level (first NAPs: Sweden and Norway in 2006, Finland in 2008 and Canada in 2010). (National Action Plan by Region – 1325 National Action Plans, 2023)

What they also have in common is a high number of female ministers namely 48% in Canada, 49% in Sweden, 50% in Norway and Finland is leading with 64% ranking second in global comparison. (UN Women – Headquarters, 2023)

Looking at the coding results of *Sweden's Feminist Foreign Policy Handbook*, the main focus is on *Participation and Leadership*. This may be due to two key facts: first that Sweden was the first national state to introduce such a concept in 2014, second, that the then Foreign Minister Margot Wallström was appointed the first Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict by the UN shortly before the concept was introduced. (Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond, 2016) Next to these factors, Sweden's commitment to gender equality dates back to the 1960s. This might also explain the country's claim to be in a leadership position when it comes to FFP and at the same time could be decisive for the high score in the coding category *Participation and Leadership*. Aggestam and Rosamond support this assumption and claim that Sweden's commitment to strive for a Feminist Foreign Policy builds upon their overall Foreign Policy orientation. (Aggestam & Rosamond, 2018) Sweden refers back to international legal frameworks and policies which they previously ratified and their strong commitment to advance the WPS agenda and striving for global governance of gender mainstreaming. (Aggestam & Rosamond, 2018; Kouvo, 2020) Sweden was for example one of the first countries with a NAP for the WPS-Agenda and is among the largest donors when it comes to Official Development Aid (ODA) relatively to the state's income. (Bergman Rosamond, 2020; Thomson, 2020) In addition, Sweden is part of UN cooperations like *HeForShe* or *She Decides* and made WPS a priority during its seat in the UN SC 2017 to 2018. (Zhukova et al., 2022)

At the same time, Sweden has a long-standing history of commitment towards gender equality at home: all citizens have access to universal welfare, parental leave for both adults and even policies to promote women's active participation in the job market. In addition, the parliamentary representation of men and women is almost equal and since 2014 the national budget is gender mainstreamed. (Bergman Rosamond, 2020; Zhukova et al., 2022)

Next to "Sweden's sense of self-identity as a humanitarian superpower [...]" (Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond, 2016, p. 326) it remains crucial to mention its gaps of policy coherence. As Mohanty underlines, the engagement with its colonial history as being colonisers abroad and claiming Sami settlement areas remains largely untouched. This is especially reflected upon by the coding results as the Swedish strategy does not mention the topic of colonialism once. (Mohanty, 2003)

More policy coherence gaps comprise the normalisation of arms trade, the narrow definition of gender with a strong focus on women and girls only as well as their strict asylum policies. (Bergman Rosamond, 2020; Jayakumar, 2023)

The coding results for Canada draw a clear picture about the countries priority area related to their FIAP: *Development Cooperation*. This is not surprisingly as Canada's strategy is explicitly designed around the countries "international assistance" as Canada frames it. Tiessen notes that Canada counts back on thirty years of being internationally seen as a leader for promoting women's rights and gender equality policies abroad. This orientation can be underlined with the fact that Canada launched its first *Women in Development Strategy* back in 1976 addressing the specific needs and requirements for women in the field. This was followed by gender equality policies in 1995 and 1999 which are seen as the foundation and role model for many other donor countries in their respective development work. (Tiessen, 2019) In addition, a Canadian initiative during the G7 presidency in 2018 can be mentioned here. In that, a new gender equity advisory council was established under Canada's chairmanship as well as Canada being the first country in the world to host a meeting for female foreign ministers only. (Chapnick, 2019)

This out-of-country focal point could also explain why Canada, in contrast to the other three states, scores worse in the Global Gender Gap Report and why parity in parliament is not at focus. (UN Women – Headquarters, 2023; World Economic Forum, 2023a) Also, the Canadian government legally discriminates indigenous women through the Indian Act which is still in force from the colonial-era. (Väyrynen, 2021) However, a gender-balanced cabinet was a priority for the election campaign in 2015 and the country is still doing very well in this regard. (Chapnick, 2019; UN Women – Headquarters, 2023)

"The FIAP continues the rhetoric of Canada being a "good state" as stated by Zhukova draws attention to the lack in policy coherence and incompleteness of the Canadian agenda to really be defined as a feminist concept. (Zhukova et al., 2022, p. 207) It lacks as a feminist concept in the sense that Canada's focus is mainly abroad when it comes to development cooperation. It therefore lacks by being a donor-driven country only. (Cadesky, 2020) Also, the main goal of the strategy is to eradicate poverty for which gender equality is predominately used as a tool to get there. (Zhukova et al., 2022) Added to that, Tiessen et al. criticise the lack of intersectionality and "[...] of Canada doubling its sales of military weapons to Saudi Arabia." (Tiessen et al., 2020, p. 295)

According to Tiessen it remains questionable “[...] what is actually new – and different – about this policy document compared to Canada’s previous gender equality policies.” (Tiessen, 2019, p. 2) and that it is “more of the same” (Tiessen, 2019, p. 10) referring to Canada’s previous policy documents and initiatives. (Tiessen, 2019)

What both FFP-Countries have in common is their “[...] long-standing reputation as ethical powers [...]” (Zhukova et al., 2022, p. 198) and a liberal feminist approach towards their foreign policy which “[...] allows pragmatism and idealism to co-exist in a FFP.”. (Zhukova et al., 2022, p. 201) This liberal feminist approach could also serve as an explanatory factor for the coded similarities and differences in their foreign policy preferences: this interpretation of feminism allows for interpreting underlying feminist norms in different ways. This results in emphasis on some elements and categories while others are neglected or dismissed. This could possibly explain one reoccurring criticism about both countries arms trade and sale of weapons to repressive regimes resulting in significant harm to women's rights. (Zhukova et al., 2022)

Another point to make is that both FFP-countries left the coding category *Decolonisation of Foreign Policy* untouched (same accounts for both non-FFP-countries) which supports Mohanty’s argument that the engagement with postcolonial critiques remains largely absent. (Mohanty, 2003) Also Zhukova mentions that “A FFP may also become a catalyst for recognition at a multilateral arena, as evidenced by the Canadian (2018) [...] presidency in the Group of Seven (G7), and the Swedish (2017–18) [...] non-permanent seats on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) after their FFP launch.”. (Zhukova et al., 2022, p. 198)

On the other hand, one thing that stands out for Finland and Norway, is that Finland was the first country in the world to grant women the right to vote and to run for parliament in 1906 and Norway was the first country to make women political citizens. (Larsen et al., 2022) Also, Norway has frequently been cited to be a country promoting a Feminist Foreign Policy, although it has not labelled it feminist as they also pursue a foreign policy gender strategy. (Peace Research Institute Oslo, 2023; UN Women, 2022) Furthermore, both non-FFP countries scored high in the *State Security* category compared to the rest of the categories. One possible reason for this difference is that Norway and Finland do not have explicit feminist strategy papers, leading to the need to opt for more general foreign policy strategies instead.

Upon evaluating all four countries, another focal point emerges: considering Finland, Norway, and Sweden collectively as the Nordic Group. These three stand out when it comes to the share of women in parliament, their score in the Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) and their overall longstanding history as gender equality countries. These factors, however, do not appear in the coding results but are nonetheless important to mention here to draw further conclusions on if the solely decisive factor is an FFP-label or not. As the Nordic Council of Ministers itself states: “The Nordic countries of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, together with Greenland, the Faroe Islands and Åland, have a long history of cooperating and sharing knowledge on gender equality.” (Møller et al., 2021, p. 3) or as Kouvo formulates it as “[...] the tradition of Nordic State Feminism [...]”. (Kouvo, 2020, p. 68) Already in the second half of the 20th century they developed democratic welfare models based on efforts for social equality especially between men and women. (Kouvo, 2020)

Since the introduction of the first gender-equality measures in 1995 by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) these countries “[...] scored highly on almost every global measurement.” (Larsen et al., 2022, p. 625) and are seen “[...] as exceptionally gender equal, to highlight and brand themselves in the present as global pioneers of women’s rights.”. (Larsen et al., 2022, p. 624) According to the World Economic Forum and their Global Gender Gap Report (GGGR), the Nordic countries score especially high in development and welfare indicators as well as in happiness and are among the least corrupt countries globally. This results from inter alia high taxation, nationwide trust, a high level of social solidarity as well as from economic freedoms. (World Economic Forum, 2023b)

The Global Gender Gap Reports from the last four years confirm the picture of the feminist Nordics: since 2020 Norway and Finland alternate with the global 2nd and 3rd place and Sweden scores either on the 4th, or 5th place. The percentage of women in parliament is almost equal with women making up around 46% of the total seats in parliament. In addition, the three countries have launched a joint women mediation network between Nordic and Global South female mediators in 2015. (Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond, 2016; World Economic Forum, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023a)

As already briefly indicated in Section 3.2.2 *Investigation Period*, the four papers were selected to be as recent as possible, but again, the publication period varies from 2017 to 2020. The government coalitions under which the strategies were published neither show a clear pattern.

At the time of publication, a social democratic- green coalition was in power in Sweden, a liberal governing party was in power in Canada, a five-party coalition consisting of left, green, social democratic, and liberal forces was in power in Finland, and Norway was governed under a conservative coalition back then. Furthermore, new coalitions were elected during that period, some have not yet renewed their strategies to this day (see Norway and Finland) even though new governments are in power. In Canada, the liberal party is still in power, and the strategy is further pursued, while in Sweden, the newly elected right-wing conservative coalition abolished the strategy in the fall of 2022. (Global Affairs Canada, 2017; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, 2020; Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2017; Zhukova et al., 2022) Therefore, the governing coalition factor cannot explain for any correlations or commonalities, since all papers were drafted in the context of different political orientations and governing constellations. The only explanatory factor could be Canada's liberal feminism approach since the government at that time was and still has a liberal orientation.

Other differences could be due to different political priorities, international commitments, or national interests such as for example their role in fossil energy production or international trade agreements. However, no such differences emerged in the coding results obtained here. Lastly, it needs to be stressed again that this evaluation is based on the coding of four governmental papers. This means that it is impossible to take all explanatory factors into account for the states' foreign policy actions. Also, this evaluation is built on a limited time span as well as being assessed primarily in the light of the generated coding results.

In addition, the number of coding units in the papers varies, which further impairs comparability and may also be responsible for the fact that the focus of the individual countries varies greatly in some cases. It is also possible that certain thematic areas, such as development cooperation, are not located in the foreign ministries of Norway and Finland, which might explain the lack of engagement in their strategy papers. Finally, it should not be forgotten that the foreign policy actions of the states cannot be considered independently of larger ties and memberships, such as the membership of Finland and Sweden in the European Union.

All in all, the evaluation confirms some coding results, but also brings new aspects into focus. The collective emphasis of all four countries on *Human Rights and Rule of Law* is evident through their strong commitment to numerous international agreements such as CEDAW or WPS.

When literature is included in the analysis, the policy focus of the two FFP countries is confirmed. Indeed, Sweden stands out with its longstanding commitments to gender equality and thus takes on the leadership role which is also reflected in the coding results. Canada, however, only focuses on a very limited part of its foreign policy, namely development cooperation, which is reflected in both, the literature review and the coding results. Canada and Sweden follow a liberal feminist approach which allows them to balance pragmatism and idealism simultaneously. This could contribute to explaining their different emphasis on feminist norms. At the same time, it makes clear the criticism they face for the perceived gap between their moral claims on gender equality and the actual implementation of those principles in practice. This raises concerns about policy coherence, as there appears to be a discrepancy between their stated ideals and the actions taken to achieve them. However, the evaluation also spawned a new grouping: the Nordics. They all unite a long-standing reputation for gender equality and progressive policies. This grouping provides valuable insights into the significance of historical context and regional collaboration in shaping foreign policy approaches related to gender equality. Ultimately, while the FFP label may influence foreign policy preferences, other factors like historical commitments, political priorities, and international cooperation also play a significant role. Overall, the evaluation highlights the importance of ongoing critical analysis of states' foreign policy, especially about the policy coherence, regardless of the presence of a specific FFP label.

6. Discussion

This part wants to closer elaborate on what speaks for and against the concept of a Feminist Foreign Policy paving the way towards gender equality. For that, 3 strands of discussion are opened up. First, an argumentation line which supports that FFP is the way towards gender equality, a second one that tries to highlight the complications that come with the concept of FFP and lastly, a strand arguing that it is not about the FFP label of a state to work towards gender equality.

6.1 FFP as the Way towards Gender Equality

We live in a system built on nation states (now also increasingly on supranational and international institutions). Nothing will change this fundamental concept for the time being and states will remain the underlying basic form of interaction and reference point for FP. This does not mean, however, that change cannot take place within this framework. Yes, FFP can be seen as the path towards gender equality when moving away from the assumption that FFP-theory and practical implementation are fully coherent. If this premise is clear, Feminist Foreign Policy can change existing structures and enable change within the current framework. What is important, however, is that states develop an intrinsic motivation, questioning existing power relations and their own position in the international system. Otherwise it is just a label or indication for a lack in their policy coherence. Furthermore, it is crucial that states regularly reassess their national interests alongside the ethical values they proclaim to ensure that the underlying FFP strategy remains consistent with the actions taken. Apart from being consistent within foreign policy actions, the coherence with domestic policy is crucial. This serves as a genuine indicator of a country's dedication to FFP, where it should ideally reflect the structures and principles upheld domestically.

Undoubtedly, it is beneficial when countries have already integrated pro-feminist norms into their state structures beforehand. But the very fact that states officially refer to feminism can already challenge traditional policy and thought patterns. This branding also helps the public and society to uphold their governments accountable to its commitments. Also, it is important to develop performance indicators and targets to regularly evaluate, and further advance FFP-strategies. To achieve this objective, an international FFP Working Group comprising of NGO's, think tanks and governments would serve as an ideal foundation for an impartial review. (There already exists an informal FFP+ network at the UN consisting of member states and feminist civil society actors (CSW67 Side Event, 2023))

Altogether, any country that sets out to change the status quo and promote gender equality is on the right track. At the same time, there is still room for improvement, more systemic action and coherence to be taken by states. If each state was to formulate its own version of a Feminist Foreign Policy, this would inevitably drive a shift in interstate actions and confront traditional patterns. And the fact that there is no fixed FFP theory also leaves room for further development.

Working within existing structures and enabling change - this is what FFP countries should advocate for.

6.2 The FFP-Theory-Practice Gap

The theoretical concept of FFP, as it stands, may never materialize, which casts doubts about its appropriateness as a sustainable approach to achieve gender equality. The gap between theoretical considerations of FFP and practical implementation by nation states cannot be bridged. Feminist Foreign Policy criticises the current order and how national states work as often being viewed as patriarchal with deeply entrenched structures. FFP questions how these institutions can possibly become agents of progressive change.

At the same time, the theoretical framework of FFP remains underdeveloped and to what extent it can be reconciled with foreign policy. States face the challenge of presenting a comprehensive strategy in light of these considerations. This insufficient theoretical framework and definition inevitably lead to nation states implementing standards only incompletely and selectively.

Overall, the fundamental logic underlying the nation state and its structures poses significant barriers to fully realize FFP. As a consequence, Feminist Foreign Policy might remain merely a symbolic label, utilized by countries for self-distinction, positioning, and international engagement. Many nations may struggle to fully implement FFP principles, leading to the perpetuation of gender hierarchies and structural inequalities within their policies and actions. For example, in the end, it is easier to make conflict and war situations safer for vulnerable groups compared to challenging contemporary conceptions of security and defence. Achieving these objectives does not necessarily require the adoption of an FFP label then.

6.3 Advancing Gender Equality without an FFP-label

Lastly, as demonstrated by the Nordic countries, the emphasis on gender equality is not necessarily linked to the FFP label. In contrast to FFP countries such as Canada, Norway and Finland showcase that their success can be attributed to the internalization of those values domestically. The countries operate from an intrinsic motivation, implementing policies that are enforced within their own borders first. Their achievements in gender equality are further supported by robust social welfare systems and political regulations. One could argue that countries only implement the FFP label to sell an image to the outside world without having to link it to the principles internally.

And therefore, the genuine gender equality countries are those that advocate for gender equality both domestically and internationally, balancing their policy preferences at all levels. The question remains whether gender equality must and can necessarily be linked to feminism. Not even feminist theories agree on what gender equality should entail and what is needed to implement it.

The three lines of argumentation demonstrate that there is no conclusive answer to whether Feminist Foreign Policy is merely a label or the pathway to gender equality. What can be asserted is that FFP has the potential to serve as both - either just a label or an intrinsic approach with the ultimate aim of achieving gender equality. The outcome depends on how it is interpreted, implemented, and the objectives pursued.

One should also not forget that there will always exist tensions between the past, present and future. When considering FFP strategies, it is essential to recognize that the current international system is founded on state security, structures that perpetuate inequality, patriarchy, and the legacy of colonial exploitation. These deeply rooted structures are firmly entrenched in our societies, although in various ways. In the present, we have the opportunity to challenge our assumptions and actively contribute to shaping a future that acknowledges and learns from the past for the better. As advocated by the Feminist Foreign Policy Working Group: "Be Brave, Be Bold.". (Feminist Foreign Policy Working Group, 2021, p. 1)

In conclusion, FFP remains a relatively recent concept at the national level and is continuously evolving. Moreover, there is a growing number of countries in the process of adopting an FFP strategy. This indicates the potential for further development, adaptation to changing circumstances, and addressing unresolved issues associated with FFP.

These unresolved questions - which are not part of this thesis but still relevant for future research - include:

- Can the state be feminist? Must the state be feminist?
- How to achieve systemic change within existing state constructs?
- Who's definition of feminism is to be used? Who's definition of gender equality?
- How can the impact of FFP be measured and standardised with other countries?

7. Conclusion

In the course of this work, four official government papers from two FFP-countries and two non-FFP countries were coded. This was done by conducting a qualitative content analysis according to Mayring. The coding process involved the use of fourteen predetermined categories, which can be regarded as the building blocks of FFP-specific policy fields. Additionally, two further categories namely *No Category* and *State Security* emerged inductively during the coding process, enabling a more comprehensive analysis. Subsequently, the coding results were contextualized within the existing literature to draw broader conclusions from the findings.

Feminist Foreign Policy seeks to address the limitations and deficiencies of conventional and unconventional foreign policy paradigms. By broadening the concept of human security and prioritizing gender security, FFP aims to fill gaps and overcome shortcomings in traditional approaches. However, the implementation of FFP at the national level often falls short of its comprehensive principles, with countries selectively focusing on specific elements of the policy.

The coding results support the hypothesis that FFP-countries and non-FFP-countries differ in their substantive foreign policy preferences when using the predefined policy fields as an analytical criterion. Two thirds of the categories for non-FFP countries were coded with *No Category* while at the same time, the number of codes for *State Security* was relatively high. Nevertheless, all four countries set a priority in *Human Rights and Rule of Law*.

The evaluation confirms some coding results while also shedding light on new aspects. The collective emphasis on Human Rights and Rule of Law by all four countries becomes apparent through their strong dedication to numerous international agreements, such as CEDAW or WPS. When incorporating academic literature into the analysis, the policy focus of the two FFP countries is confirmed. Indeed, Sweden stands out with its longstanding commitments to gender equality and thus assuming a leadership role, which is also reflected in the coding results. Canada's foreign policy primarily centres on development cooperation, as seen in both the literature review and the coding results, showcasing a more limited scope compared to Sweden. Both Sweden and Canada follow a liberal feminist approach, enabling them to effectively balance pragmatism and idealism simultaneously. This aspect could potentially explain their differing emphasis on feminist norms. Nevertheless, concerns about policy coherence arise, as there appears to be a disconnect between their stated ideals and the actual implementation of gender equality principles.

While achieving high scores in the *State Security* category, both Norway and Finland also stand out as global pioneers in gender equality. Additionally, the evaluation sheds light on a new grouping, the Nordics. Their historical context and regional cooperation play a crucial role in shaping foreign policy concepts that lead to high achievements in the field of gender equality.

Ultimately, while the FFP label may influence foreign policy preferences, other factors like historical commitments, political priorities, and international cooperation also play a significant role. An ongoing critical analysis of states' foreign policy and their policy coherence, regardless of the presence of a specific FFP label, remains crucial.

While exploring FFP strategies, it is also essential to acknowledge the persisting tensions between the past, present, and future. The current international system is built on past structures that perpetuate inequality, patriarchy, and the legacy of colonial exploitation. To create a better future, these deeply entrenched structures must be challenged and actively contributed to transformative change. The growing number of countries considering FFP adoption demonstrates that the concept is continually evolving. This indicates the potential for further development and adaptation to changing circumstances. However, several unresolved questions persist, such as whether the state can and must be feminist, how to achieve systemic change within existing state constructs, and whose definitions of feminism and gender equality should prevail. Additionally, measuring and standardizing the impact of FFP alongside other countries remain challenging tasks.

In future research, it would be intriguing to expand the coding process to include not only FFP policy field categories but also conventional categories. Unfortunately, due to the limitations of this thesis, such an extensive analysis could not be undertaken. Furthermore, conducting a comparative analysis with other countries, especially those from the Global South, would be a captivating prospect. This could offer valuable insights into the foreign policy approaches of a more diverse set of nations. Furthermore, it could provide a more comprehensive understanding of how different regions approach issues related to gender equality and feminist principles.

The analysis reveals that there is no definitive answer to whether FFP is solely a label or a genuine pathway to achieving gender equality. Instead, FFP's potential lies in its interpretation, policy coherence and pursued objectives of states. It can be used as a mere label or an intrinsic approach toward gender equality, depending on how it is enacted by each country.

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Declaration of Honour

I hereby confirm that I personally prepared the present bachelor thesis, without assistance or use of any resources other than those declared. All formulations and concepts adopted literally or in their essential content from printed, unprinted or internet sources have been cited according to the rules for academic work.

I declare that the submitted assignment wholly my own. I also confirm that the present academic work has not been submitted in identical or similar form in any other seminar.

Lüneburg, 31.07.2023

Antonia Pohl

Appendix

Calculation of Krippendorff's Alpha

```
#Pakete installieren und aktivieren
→ install.packages("irr")
→ library(irr)
→ install.packages("lpSolve")
→ library(lpSolve)

#Datensatz im CSV-Format in R öffnen
→ mydata <- read.csv(file = "Krippendorff/Alpha.csv", header = TRUE, sep = ";")

#Percentage Agreement berechnen
→ agree(mydata[,c(2:3)], tolerance = 0)
→ Percentage agreement (Tolerance=0)
  Subjects = 100
  Raters = 2
  %-agree = 94

#Daten formatieren
→ Matrix<-as.matrix(mydata)
→ Matrix1<-Matrix[,c(2:3)]
→ Matrix1<-t(Matrix1)

#Krippendorffs Alpha berechnen
→ kripp.alpha(Matrix1[c(1,2),],"nominal")
  Subjects = 100
  Raters = 2
  alpha = 0.901
```

Appendix 1 Code for RStudio

Paragraph	First Coding	Second Coding
S1	15	15
S2	15	15
S3	15	15
S4	15	15
S5	2	2
S6	13	13
S7	13	2
S8	15	15
S9	13	13
S10	13	13
S11	13	13
S12	13	13
S13	13	13
S14	15	15
S15	15	15
S16	13	15
S17	2	2
S18	2	2
S19	7	7
S20	2	6
S21	1	1
S22	15	15
S23	15	15
S24	13	13
S25	14	14

Appendix 2 Krippendorff's Alpha Sweden

Paragraph	First Coding	Second Coding
C1	15	15
C2	5	5
C3	1	5
C4	5	5
C5	5	5
C6	15	15
C7	1	5
C8	7	7
C9	8	8
C10	4	4
C11	2	2
C12	1	1
C13	5	5
C14	15	15
C15	15	15
C16	15	15
C17	15	15
C18	5	5
C19	15	15
C20	15	15
C21	15	15
C22	15	15
C23	15	15
C24	15	15
C25	15	15

Appendix 3 Krippendorff's Alpha Canada

Paragraph	First Coding	Second Coding
N1	15	15
N2	15	15
N3	15	15
N4	15	15
N5	15	15
N6	15	15
N7	15	15
N8	15	15
N9	15	15
N10	15	15
N11	15	15
N12	15	15
N13	15	15
N14	2	2
N15	15	15
N16	15	15
N17	15	15
N18	15	15
N19	2	2
N20	3	3
N21	15	15
N22	15	15
N23	15	15
N24	15	15
N25	2	2

Appendix 4 Krippendorff's Alpha Norway

Paragraph	First Coding	Second Coding
F1	15	15
F2	15	15
F3	2	2
F4	15	15
F5	2	2
F6	1	1
F7	15	15
F8	15	15
F9	15	15
F10	15	15
F11	4	4
F12	4	4
F13	15	7
F14	15	15
F15	15	15
F16	15	15
F17	6	6
F18	15	15
F19	15	15
F20	15	15
F21	1	1
F22	15	15
F23	15	15
F24	15	15
F25	15	15

Appendix 5 Krippendorff's Alpha Finland

Category	Sweden I	Sweden II	Canada I	Canada II	Norway I	Norway II	Finland I	Finland II
Peace and Sec	7	9	15	15	14	12	15	14
Human Rights	16	16	18	17	30	28	10	9
Demilitarisatio	9	10	0	0	11	11	7	7
Climate Justice	4	3	7	6	1	1	9	8
Development	26	26	72	75	13	15	1	2
Migration	1	1	2	1	3	2	1	1
Global Health	9	10	11	11	1	1	5	3
Trade and Inv	14	13	15	13	1	1	3	2
Decolonisatio	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Combating th	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Women, Peac	14	14	2	2	0	0	1	1
Inclusive Com	11	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
Participation	51	52	7	8	1	2	1	2
Cooperation	10	11	5	4	0	0	0	0
No Category	49	46	124	126	237	238	130	132
State Security	0	0	1	1	59	60	24	26
Total Number	221	221	279	279	371	371	207	207

Appendix 6 Overall Coding Results Pre-Test & Coding

Detailed Coding Guide

1. Peace and Security

FFP concepts for Peace and Security go beyond the security of states and put human security in the focus of their actions. Hereby, they aim to transform military and power relations to decrease military expenditure and prioritize arms control, crisis prevention and support for stabilisation and peace.

Keywords: crisis prevention, stabilisation, peace support, peace agreement(s), strategy for peace, human security, protection of civilians, gender-sensitive peacebuilding, national peace and security strategy, gender-sensitive relief and recovery, feminist security, humanitarian concerns, conflict prevention, mediation

Example: “To help strengthen global Peace and Security we will support greater participation of women in peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction efforts, help to increase women’s representation in the security sector and enforce a zero-tolerance policy for sexual violence and abuse by peacekeepers. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, 2020, p. 7)

2. Human Rights and Rule of Law

Inclusive and intersectional international human rights law (IHRL) stands at core for FFP. It emphasises exercising the same values within the countries borders as well as practicing them in their foreign policy.

Keywords: international human rights law (IHRL), prohibition of discrimination, women’s rights, children’s rights, Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), European Convention on Human Rights, legal amendment, human rights standards, human rights defenders, international humanitarian law, International Criminal Court (ICC), judicial accountability, Istanbul Convention, human rights obligations, compliance with international law , strengthening international institutions, rules-based international system, realisation of human rights, combating gender-based violence

Example: “The key elements of the set of values Finland applies in its foreign and security policy include the promotion of human rights, the rule of law, democracy, peace, freedom, equitable treatment and equality in all its international activities. The Finnish foreign and security policy is based on human rights, which means that the human rights impacts of all actions taken in foreign and security policy are assessed.” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, 2020, p. 10)

3. Demilitarisation, Disarmament and Arms (Export-) Control A core aspect for FFP is investing in peace instead of war. Hereby, international demilitarisation, arms (export) control and disarmament are put in focus.

Keywords: disarmament (efforts), arms (export) control, Treaty of the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), (international) demilitarisation, end arms production, Arms Trade Treaty, prohibition/ ban of autonomous weapons, nuclear disarmament

Example: “Sweden has also promoted a gender equality perspective in processes on international weapons inspections and disarmament, such as the UN Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). The ATT is an important tool in the work to combat illicit and irresponsible trading in conventional weapons. Sweden is working for the application of the Arms Trade Treaty (article 7.4) and that state parties should take into account the risk of exported materials being used for – or facilitating – gender-based violence or violence against women or children. Ahead of the ongoing review of the NPT, Sweden contributed to a discussion on report highlighting the disproportionate biological and social impact on girls and women of detonating and testing nuclear weapons. The study also problematised the unequal representation in disarmament contexts.” (Government of Sweden, 2018, p. 72)

4. Climate Justice

The climate crisis is one of the biggest existing threats globally. Wealthy and industrialized countries being the main polluters must realize their great responsibility for strengthening climate justice. They must commit to mitigation and support adaptation processes. At the same time, climate legislation and climate goals are essential.

Keywords: mitigation, adaptation, climate goals, Paris Agreement, climate legislation, climate finance, climate strategy, CO2 tax, climate sensibility, sustainability, The Green New Deal, planetary boundaries, climate diplomacy, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), functioning ecosystems, carbon pricing, Global Environment Fund (GEF), Climate Investment Funds (CIF), Green Climate Fund (GCF)

Example: “Canada is committed to combatting climate change and its impacts (SDG 13: Climate Action). That is why Canada is providing \$2.65 billion in climate finance to help the most vulnerable countries adapt to and mitigate climate change and make the transition to low-carbon, climate-resilient economies.” (Global Affairs Canada, 2017, p. 44)

5. Development Cooperation

Development Cooperation is still permeated with colonial thinking and power inequalities. FFP prioritises an intersectional cooperation putting financial commitments to reduce inequalities and focusing on gender specific spending at the forefront.

Keywords: ODA spending, Development Assistance Committee (DAC), feminist development policy, feminist development cooperation, eradicating inequalities, DAC-Marker, gender- sensitive cooperation, decolonising development cooperation, multilateral support, gender equality analysis for projects, gender-targeting, gender-equality target, unearmarked funding, support Least Developed Countries, partnerships on eye-level

Example: “Canada’s feminist international assistance will help protect and promote the human rights of all vulnerable and marginalized groups and increase their participation in equal decision making. This will help women and girls achieve more equitable access to and control over the resources they need to secure ongoing economic and social equality.” (Global Affairs Canada, 2017, p. 6)

6. Migration

FFP understands (forced) migration as a militarised security issue that reinforces unequal power relations and disproportionately affects marginalised people. FFP demands a radical reform of asylum and migration practices and policies.

Keywords: asylum policies, reform migration policy, safe and legal routes, decriminalisation, civil sea rescue, safe havens, end border externalisation, rescue system, Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, integration of asylum seekers

Example: “Sweden works to ensure that refugee and migrant women and girls can enjoy human rights, including through engagement in the processes to draw up two global frameworks: one for refugees and one on migration. Within the context of the negotiations on the global migration framework, Sweden has worked to increase the number of support offices along the main migration routes and in major transit countries. These support offices can provide humanitarian support and advice, and carry out specific initiatives for women and girls. [...]. (Government of Sweden, 2018, p. 83)

7. Global Health

FFP is guided by the human right to health. It puts the secure access to health resources at its centre both – in domestic and global health policies.

Keywords: global health, global healthcare system, human right to health, global health policies, domestic health policies, well-being for everyone, secure access to health, barrier-free health structures, Universal Health Coverage, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), legal abortion, sexuality education, public health, mental health services, preparedness for pandemics, strengthening of WHO, Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA)

Example:” Certain issues meet with more resistance than others. One such issue is sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), including the issue of abortion. Sweden is a leading defender of SRHR, at global, national and local levels. The ongoing dialogue with both states and multilateral organisations and other relevant actors is an important tool that makes a difference.

Sweden is also a major donor to SRHR work at all levels, and continuously emphasises the link between SRHR and human rights, gender equality, health, combating HIV and sustainable development etc.” (Government of Sweden, 2018, p. 106)

8. Trade and Investments

A Feminist Trade Policy sets the goal to overcome structural inequalities by redefining the purpose of trade, the understanding of prosperity and its measurement methods to achieve economic justice.

Keywords: economic justice, redefining prosperity, alternative GDP-measurement, transformative economy, gender-sensitive trade policies, supply chain law, extraterritorial responsibility, UNCTAD Trade and Gender Toolbox, women entrepreneurs, economic mobility, due diligence rules, WTO Reforms, fair trade policy, combat unpaid care work, job skills and training for women

Example: “Pursuing a feminist foreign policy includes a feminist trade policy. For example, Sweden has contributed to a gender perspective in the agreements on the Global Goals and on financing for development, and to central recommendations from leading economic forums such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank emphasising the importance of including growth and women’s participation in the labour market.” (Government of Sweden, 2018, p. 86)

9. Decolonisation of Foreign Policy

Former colonial powers have to take full responsibility and need to face their racial histories. At the same time, foreign policy needs to decolonise, and postcolonial structures need to be actively tackled and reprocessed.

Keywords: colonial responsibility, tackle postcolonial structures, return stolen objects, decolonising foreign policy, counter colonial structures, recognize colonial crimes, official apology, overcome colonial patterns, challenging white supremacy, fighting racism, decolonisation of International Relations, decolonise language

Example: there is no associated code in this category

10. Combating the Anti-Gender Movement

FFP actively commits resources to counteract anti-gender groups and activities on all levels whether domestically or abroad. It promotes knowledge-building on topics around gender.

Keywords: counter anti-gender movements, promote gender, knowledge-building on gender, raising gender-awareness, pro-gender alliances, LGBTI Core Group, counter-narratives

Example: there is no associated code in this category

11. Women, Peace and Security Agenda

FFP underlines the original WPS objectives of decreasing militarisation and conflict prevention. At the same time, National Action Plans (NAP) are essential to institutionalize the WPS agenda on domestic level.

Keywords: National Action Plan (NAP), institutionalization of WPS, domestic WPS Implementation, UN Resolution 2467, UN resolution 1325, evaluation of NAP, Institutionalization of NAP consultations

Example: “CANADA’S NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY (2017-2022): Canada’s national action plan takes a whole-of-government approach to ensure that women are fully included in the development of sustainable interventions in fragile and conflict-affected states. It includes targets and activities for development assistance, humanitarian action, and peace and security initiatives. Annual public reports and close collaboration with civil society organizations will help us report on progress.” (Global Affairs Canada, 2017, p. 58)

12. Inclusive Communication

FFP demands clear and accessible communication for everyone that is gender-responsive, inclusive, and free from discrimination and power relations. It tries to change the current tone of foreign policy formulation.

Keywords: inclusive language, gender-responsive language, accessible communication, clear communication, changing foreign policy formulation, changing language narratives, barrier-free access to language, anti-racist language, accessible publications, discriminatory-sensitive language, diverse forms of communication, sign language, prioritise translation, demilitarise language, gender-based research

Example: “Communication is of great importance for a normative impact. The Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs’ Communications Department and other relevant departments produce information materials on a regular basis to support the work on the feminist foreign policy. Hashtags and other social media messages have proven to be a successful way of reaching out, even in countries with relatively little internet access. Embassies arrange events including Twitter sessions on the theme of gender equality to communicate with various target groups about gender equality and women’s rights. Another important platform is the www.swemfa.se website, where articles and blog posts about the feminist foreign policy are among the most commonly shared materials.” (Government of Sweden, 2018, p. 53)

13. Participation and Leadership FFP puts the change in structural power hierarchies and the fair and equal division of power across all levels and especially in institutions at the core. FFP strongly supports that equal and diverse representation results in more inclusive policies which serve the society as a whole- internally and externally.

Keywords: changing structural power hierarchies, equal representation, fair distribution of power, diverse perspectives, women quota, financial resources, gender budgeting, internal

Example: “Representation: The Swedish Foreign Service promotes women’s participation and influence in decision-making processes at all levels and in all areas, and shall seek dialogue with women representatives at all levels, including in civil society.” (Government of Sweden, 2018, p. 13)

14. Cooperation with Feminist Civil Society

A FFP acknowledges the important part that civil society plays for social cohesion. Therefore, it supports and cooperates with the work of civil groups and organisations through accountability, the promotion of dialogue and long-term funding.

Keywords: civil organisations, civil groups, dialogue between civil society and government, funding for activists and movements, long-term funding, cooperation with civil society, feminist civil society organisations, accountability towards civil society, support civil society, feminist funding practices, funding cross-issue work, protect civil engagement

Example: “We will also provide \$100 million over five years in dedicated funding for small and medium-sized Canadian civil society organizations so they can develop and implement innovative programming in partnership with local organizations to support the six action areas, notably Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls.” (Global Affairs Canada, 2017, p. 73)

15. No Category

This category applies when none of the above-mentioned policy fields are addressed in their predefined way or a topic is only discussed but not in a country-specific context.

Keywords: There are no specific keywords related to this category.

Example: “Parliament has arranged the parliamentary monitoring of the Foreign and Security Policy Report and will give its statement on the report. When preparing the report on foreign and security policy, the Government has taken into account Parliament’s comments on the Government report on foreign and security policy during the 2016 parliamentary session. The Government reports and the comments given by Parliament define Finland’s foreign and security policy. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, 2020, p. 9)

16. State Security

This category was added inductively after the pretest. It is conducted in addition to the existing fifteen categories to see how much these four states focus on conventional features of foreign policy.

Keywords: defence capability, internal security, state sovereignty, territorial integrity, military defence, enhance defence cooperation, state's competition, national defence, secure independence, security threat, increase defence expenditure, threats to security

Example: "Strengthening Norway's security is one of the Foreign Service's key tasks. Unless our basic security is assured, we will not have the freedom to promote other interests. In order to follow developments and safeguard Norwegian interests, Norway needs an appropriate presence around the world with the necessary skills and knowledge. The Foreign Service must adapt in the face of rapid change, and continue to enhance its ability to deal with unforeseen developments. The Government will also continue to restructure the Foreign Service to ensure that Norway is as well equipped as possible to address foreign and security policy challenges." (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2017, p. 43)