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A POSITIVE CASE: TO WHAT EXTENT CAN THE CURRENT EUROPEAN UNION MEMBER STATES, THAT EMPLOY A FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY, BE THE FORERUNNERS FOR A EUROPEAN UNION NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE?

MASTER'S THESIS

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Abstract

Feminist foreign policy is a framework that has gained ground over the last decade since Sweden implemented one in 2014. Such a framework towards foreign policy takes certain ethical factors into consideration, applies a gender approach, and aims to analyse the feminine and masculine underpinnings of how foreign policy is carried out, as well as its impacts. In this paper, this framework will be used to analyse nuclear disarmament in the European Union. Therefore, our research question is, "*A positive case: to what extent can the current European Union member states, that employ a feminist foreign policy, be the forerunners for a European Union nuclear-weapon-free zone?".* This paper will use the first two steps of the policy cycle to analyse the potential of France, Sweden, and Luxembourg's feminist foreign policies in being a driving force in achieving a nuclear-weapon-free European Union zone. There will be a cross level analysis between the national and international settings of our cases, as well as a comparative discussion to aid in answering our research question.

Key Words: *Feminist Foreign Policy, Nuclear Disarmament and Non-proliferation, European Union, Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone*

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Table of Contents

A POSITIVE CASE: TO WHAT EXTENT CAN THE CURRENT EUROPEAN UNION MEMBER STATES, THAT EMPLOY A FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY, BE THE FORERUNNERS FOR A EUROPEAN UNION NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE?

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List of Acronyms

CEDAW: Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

CFFP: Center for Feminist Foreign Policy

CSDP: Common Security and Defence Policy

CSFP: Common Foreign and Security Policy

EAEC or Euratom: European Atomic Energy Community

ECSC: European Coal and Steal Community

EEC: European Economic Community

EES: European Security Strategy

EU: European Union

FFP: Feminist Foreign Policy

ICAN: International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons

INF Treaty: Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty

IR: International Relations

LGBTQ+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer + Community

NATO: Northern Atlantic Treaty Organization

NPT: Non-proliferation Treaty

NWFZ: Nuclear-weapon-free zone

PNND: Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament

P5 Countries: Permanent members of the United Nations Security Council

OSCE: Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

TPNW: Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons or The Ban Treaty

UN: United Nations

UN's 2030 Agenda: United Nations Sustainable Development Goals or SDGs

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

UNSCR 1325: United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325

WILPF: Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

WPS: Women, Peace and Security

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Introduction

Over the next ten years, it is predicted that over 1 trillion dollars, globally, will be spent on the development and proliferation of nuclear weapons (Move the Nuclear Weapons Money, 2021). This is a substantial amount of money to be spent on weapons of mass destruction, that theoretically should never be used, especially amid a global pandemic, growing gaps in equality, the impacts of climate change, and a worldwide economic crisis. Furthermore, the effects of a nuclear war would be irreversible, with dramatic consequences concerning the environment, health, the economy, agriculture, and societies across the globe.

Despite the existing knowledge of the devastating nuclear weapon detonations caused by the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, nuclear disarmament efforts are being scaled back, and nuclear weapons are being developed to be more powerful and more numerous by the nuclear powers. International treaties, such as the Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Open Skies Agreement, are being broken and abandoned. For example, on March the 16th, 2021, the United Kingdom announced a 40% increase in their nuclear weapons stockpile, thus violating the NPT, which they have signed and ratified (ICAN, 2021). Therefore, it is now more important than ever to work towards nuclear disarmament. However, it is not all bad news. Efforts are being made to disarm. For example, October 24th, 2020, was a historic milestone for the nuclear disarmament movement. Honduras became the 50th country to ratify the *UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons* (TPNW), allowing it to come into force as international law on January 22, 2021. The treaty outlaws nuclear weapons use, the threat of use, testing, development, production, possession, transfer, and the stationing of nuclear weapons in a different country (ICAN, 2021).

Currently, only three countries in the European Union (EU), out of its 27 member states, have signed onto the TPNW: Austria, Ireland, and Malta (ICAN, 2021). Considering the overall lack of participation from EU member states regarding the TPNW, this paper primarily examines why so few EU member states have not fully committed to a nuclear-weapon-free EU. Secondly, the paper seeks to present a positive case about how the European Union member states can use a feminist foreign policy to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free European Union zone. Therefore, our research question is: "*A positive case: to what extent can the*

current European Union member states, that employ a feminist foreign policy, be the forerunners for a European Union nuclear-weapon-free zone?". This will be achieved by analysing how feminist foreign policy is applied in various EU member states: Sweden, Luxembourg, and France, and how such an approach can help in leading the European Union towards nuclear disarmament.

Nuclear Disarmament Under International Law

A pivotal path to ensuring a nuclear-weapon-free world is through international law, which comprises the legal rules, customs, and norms governing relationships between states and associations of states, namely through international organizations like the United Nations (UN). This is primarily done through treaties and conventions, such as the UN's NPT and the TPNW treaties. The NPT entered into force in 1970 with three main pillars, aiming "to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, to promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to further the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament" (United Nations, 2021).

The TPNW entered into force in 2017, as aforementioned, and takes its stance a step further with the objective of complete global nuclear abolition (UNODA, 2021). The NPT has 191 signatories, including most nuclear-armed states apart from India, Pakistan, North Korea, Iran and Israel. Nonetheless, the global political sphere continues to change. Countries such as Pakistan and Israel are believed to be developing nuclear weapons and will need to be part of the discussion when creating new treaties on nuclear disarmament. The TPNW, a more recent and extreme treaty, currently has 86 signatories, none of which are nuclear-armed states. Therefore, there is a debate in and of itself on the effectiveness between the two treaties. This paper takes the stance that both treaties are essential tools in achieving worldwide nuclear disarmament and can be adopted alongside one another.

Customary law is the general rule or practice that all states follow and is a significant part of international law. International treaties and conventions only apply to those who sign up to them, and intergovernmental organizations cannot force treaties on any given state (Kierulf, 2017, p. 35). Nevertheless, legally binding treaties are necessary as they have verification measures and enforcement of compliance rules so that states that break the rules

can be held accountable. For example, Kierulf reasons that the TPNW is vital because, for the first time in history, nuclear weapons have been stigmatized and outlawed, which he claims is a particularly crucial factor, as a new norm has been established on the international stage (Youth Fusion, 2021).

Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones

A nuclear-weapon-free zone (NWFZ) is a region free from nuclear weapons wherein countries part of the region do not produce, acquire, stockpile, test or possess nuclear weapons. Creating nuclear-weapon-free zones is an important regional approach to security in creating norms around nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. Nuclear-weapon-free zones exist today in Latin America, the South Pacific, Africa, Southeast Asia and Central Asia. (Stocker, 2015, p. 10). Such nuclear-weapon-free zones are the product of disarmament processes and treaties, such as the 1996 Treaty of Pelindaba that made Africa a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Therefore, it is important to showcase that it is possible to achieve nuclear disarmament on a regional level, such as the aforementioned regions. Henceforth, one of the cornerstones of this paper will be exploring the potential for the European Union, as a region, to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Moreover, it is important to distinguish between a nuclear-free zone and a nuclear-weapons-free zone, as the former also includes nuclear energy. However, this paper will only be dealing with nuclear-weapon-free zones as the focus is not on nuclear energy.

Feminist Foreign Policy and Nuclear Disarmament

A feminist foreign policy is a relatively new approach to foreign policy. Various states have, in the past, adopted similar approaches to how they practice their foreign policy. For example, there have been efforts to promote more equitable policymaking, such as establishing women's ministries, implementing gender mainstreaming policies, and gender quotas and affirmative action schemes adopted by governments before (Krook and Mackay, 2011, p. 324). Moreover, feminist foreign policy is interlinked with the Women, Peace and Security agenda (WPS). It centres itself around women's rights on the international stage and "the role that individual states have in furthering this agenda within their foreign policy through national action plans" (Thomson, 2020, p. 428). As an official definition, this paper will employ the Center for

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Feminist Foreign Policy's definition as stated:

"As implemented by governments, feminist foreign policy (FFP) is a political framework to centre gender equality policies across certain areas of foreign policy. We, however, believe its potential extends well beyond this and define it as follows: FFP is the external action of a state that defines its interactions vis-a-vis states, supranational organisations, multilateral forums, civil society, and movements in a manner that prioritises equality for all, enshrines the human rights of women and other politically marginalised groups, and wholeheartedly pursues human security and feminist peace. By offering an alternate and intersectional rethinking of security from the viewpoint of the most marginalised, FFP functions as a framework that elevates the everyday lived experience of marginalised communities to the forefront and centres their needs in political processes and policy. FFP scrutinises the destructive forces of patriarchy, capitalism, racism, and militarism across all issue areas, such as the climate crises, migration, and trade, as well as its practices, including policymaking, diplomacy, and aid. By doing so, FFP interrogates domestic and foreign policy decisions to push for a more just global order and significantly resources feminist civil society to achieve its goals." (CFFP, 2020, p. 1)

Sweden was the first country to explicitly adopt a feminist foreign policy as part of their national action plan in October 2014 under the then foreign minister, Margot Wallström. Alongside Sweden, Canada, France, Luxembourg, Mexico, and Spain have also expressed interest in adopting a feminist foreign policy. After Sweden, Canada announced their Feminist International Assistance Policy in 2017. While in 2018, the United Kingdom's labour party launched a feminist development policy, alongside the Equality Party voting on adopting a feminist foreign policy. In 2019, France, Luxembourg and Mexico expressed intentions to develop a feminist foreign policy and, in 2021, Spain announced their newly adopted feminist foreign policy national action plan (Center for Feminist Foreign Policy, 2021). Advancing from the aforementioned states' efforts to implement and adopt a feminist foreign policy, it has become a policy agenda in and of itself (Thompson, 2020, p.428).

This paper seeks to use feminist foreign policy as a vehicle to work towards nuclear disarmament. We believe that a feminist foreign policy that values human security and feminist

peace, which will be elaborated on below, cannot support the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Therefore, a key contention of this paper is the notion that it is essential for a states' feminist foreign policy to work towards nuclear disarmament and sign the TPNW.

Human Security and Feminist Peace

In defining a feminist foreign policy approach, human security and feminist peace will be conceptualized. Traditionally, international security has focused on the security of states and viewed national security as "the protection of a state from external threats to its territorial integrity and political independence" (Sens & Stoett, 2014, p. 195). From a realist perspective, the most significant challenge has been the military threat posed by other states. However, this state-centric interpretation of global politics remains a restrictive view. Therefore, security studies have moved towards including threats that are not state-centric or military and increasingly focused on actors and forces other than the state (Sens & Stoett, 2014, p. 195). After the Cold War, a range of security concerns moved to the centre stage. Although many were not new concerns, the Cold War brought them forward with efforts towards group security, the spread of conventional weapons, nuclear weapons safety and proliferation, and human security.

There is no single unified concept of human security, which origins rose from the 1960's-1980's general dissatisfaction of development and security at the end of the Cold War. There was a high demand for a new way of thinking about security matters. As a result, the *Human Development Report* that the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), published in 1994, broadened the traditional notion of security. The report "focused on military balances and capabilities to include economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and political security." (Acharya et al., 2011, p. 1). In the late 1990's, a Canadian approach to human security focused on 'freedom from fear', thus "calling for the safety of people from both violent and non-violent threats" (p. 2). To broaden the definition of human security, "a life of dignity" was added to the freedom from want and freedom from fear. Human security regards the individual, as opposed to the state, as the 'referent object of security', which entails that the security of

individuals is above state sovereignty and territorial integrity, especially if a state is unwilling or unable to provide for the human security of its population (Sens & Stoett, 2014, p. 261).

Feminist peace is closely related to human security but goes a step further. The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) has shaped the concept of feminist peace. It stands for "feminist peace for equality, justice and demilitarised security", therefore aiming to stigmatize war and violence. WILPF seeks to achieve this by transforming gendered power and promoting a feminist political economy (Confortini, 2012, p. 23-30). A fundamental approach to WILPF's concept of feminist peace, which this paper will employ, is demilitarisation, specifically advocating for nuclear disarmament.

Security and Defence within the Foundation of the European Union

To comprehend the European Union's (EU) position in relation to security and defence, one needs to understand the creation of the EU as we know it today. Therefore, before explaining the origins of today's EU, a good starting point is to define what the EU is and how it differs from states and other international organizations. First, the EU is an organization made up of national states, and while these states have combined their authority and sovereignty in the EU, each state remains free to leave it at any time. Second, the EU is an economic and political intergovernmental organisation that functions through supranational independent institutions and intergovernmental negotiated decisions by the member states (Kubicek, 2017, p. 72). Another key role of the EU is integration, which refers "to a process of sustained and institutionalized interaction among states, and social actors that foster a harmonization of policies… [I]t implies that states pool their powers or sovereignty together in such a way to create a larger whole (the EU) out of the sum of its parts (member-states)" (p. 73). Moreover, supranationalism refers to a view of European integration that emphasizes the powers the EU has gained over nation-states to compel them to act in certain ways. In contrast, inter-governmentalism refers to a view of European integration that argues that the guiding force behind integration is the interest and power of individual nation-states.

The efforts to promote European integration happened immediately after World War II. The EU started as an arms control agreement in 1951 formed by six countries, known as the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). The idea behind the creation of the ECSC was

to limit the independent capacity of Germany and its neighbours to produce armaments. Through placing coal and steel production under common management, another war between the two former rivals, Germany, and France, became quite impossible (Kubicek, 2017, p. 77). In 1957, two treaties were signed. First, the Treaty of Rome established the European Economic Community (EEC), creating an "ever closer union" of European peoples through a common market for goods, labour, and capital (p. 77). Secondly, the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC or Euratom) was signed with the original purpose to explore cooperation in the field of nuclear power in Europe (Grip, 2020). In the 1950's, several EU member states were acquiring nuclear power, "and a few states in Europe, including France, the United Kingdom and Sweden, were developing nuclear weapon programs" (Grip, 2020).

However, between the 1950s and the early 1990s, national policies on nuclear power developed in diverse ways. France and the United Kingdom continued to develop their nuclear weapon programs, while other states, such as Sweden, gave up their programs and promoted nuclear disarmament (Grip, 2020). With the signing of the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992, the EU established the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The goal of the CFSP is "to safeguard the values and strengthen the security of the EU, preserve international peace, promote international cooperation, and develop democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights" (Kubicek, 2017, p. 401). In the same year, while France consented to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the EU started formulating a common foreign policy on nuclear non-proliferation.

However, the EU was missing a common guiding strategy. This led the EU to develop the first European Security Strategy (EES) in 2003, clarifying its security strategy intending to secure Europe and identify the union's threats. It is also the first strategy against the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) (Grip, 2020). France and the EU's former member, the United Kingdom, are the only nuclear powers in Europe. This has created divisions in the EU's nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. The nuclear powers have differing views on the matter instead of the non-nuclear states, namely those of the Nordic region, with the nuclear powers relying on nuclear deterrence for their security. This has led the EU member states to be divided on the high-profile issue of nuclear disarmament

(Keukeleire & Delreux, 2014, p. 149). Despite such differing views, since 2003, the EU has managed to remain engaged and supportive of WMD non-proliferation within and beyond its borders (Grip, 2020).

It is important to mention, especially in terms of security and foreign policy, that the EU differentiates between internal and external EU policy, which can be observed through the actions, or inactions, by the EU and EU members within and beyond its borders. As previously mentioned, the EU is partly an intergovernmental organization and partly a supranational organization. This can create tension "between intergovernmentalism, which emphasizes the interests, rights, and powers of states, and supranationalism, which wants to take power away from states and invest in the EU with greater authority" (Kubicek, 2017, p. 73). Therefore, the CFSP was implemented to create systematic cooperation between member states and the "implementation of joint actions in areas where the member states have important interest in common" (Kubicek, 2017, p. 402). Nonetheless, the individual states hold on to their sovereignty in "the conduct of their respective foreign and security policy" (p. 402). Thus, cooperation is intergovernmental, where each state has the final say in their policy. Nonetheless, when it comes to defence issues, European states remain divided.

Theory

The theory section begins with an overview of realism, a theory used to describe the context and dynamics of various state's arguments for nuclear weapons, namely their reliance on nuclear deterrence. It then provides a theoretical grounding in feminist international relations theory to put our notions of gender into context. Building on feminist International Relations (IR) theory, feminist institutionalism theory will be explained to aid in theorising feminist foreign policy, as it deals with institutions. This foundation will then take departure into exploring a feminist foreign policy theory rooted in an ethics of care approach to supplement the theorization of feminist foreign policy further and feminist institutionalism. To further put the European Union into context, a section on Europe and a feminist foreign policy ethics of care approach will also be employed. Together, these theories will be used to understand the current realist approaches of states' nuclear weapons possession and reliance, the role of gender

and international relations and will, furthermore, theorise feminist foreign policy, namely in the context of the European Union and its member states.

International Relations and Realism

As an intergovernmental and supranational organization, the EU is supposed to ensure that countries abstain from any action that is "contrary to the interest of the EU or likely to impair its effectiveness as a cohesive force in international relations" (Kubicek, 2017, p. 402). However, can we talk about a *European foreign policy?* The CFSP is a crucial part of the EU as it supplies a stronger, united approach to foreign policy and security issues by EU member-states. Especially as some member states are too small to have a dominant presence on the world stage, however, collectively, the member states can have "more of a global role and exercise more influence" towards non-EU member states (p. 403).

Foreign policy and defence breaches upon traditional power of state sovereignty as the right "to defend territory and the ability to raise and deploy military forces are fundamental attributes of state" (Kubicek, 2017, p. 405). This stance of having the right to defend and the ability to use military forces can be traced back to realism. From a realist perspective in the field of international relations, which strongly believes that "political relations between human groups revolve around conflict and seek to protect or advance their own collective self-interest" (Sens & Stoett, 2014, p. 14). In global politics, realists presume that the primary actors in global politics are states and that "military power is the most important expression and guarantor of survival" (p. 15). Furthermore, they believe that international politics is a zero-sum struggle for power and that the only way to achieve order is by the balance of power system (p. 73).

Additionally, realists believe that the most important kind of power is hard power, which emphasizes traditional measures of power, economic capability, resource endowment and military strength. As opposed to liberals, who argue that the most effective deployment of power also relies upon soft power, which includes elements such as ideological attractiveness, culture, and education. Soft power has traditionally been overlooked, especially by realists, favouring military or economic strength (p. 20).

Building on the realist perspective in the field of international relations, it is argued that in the absence of an effective security system, states take the stance to arm themselves for

protection against the probability of war based "on the advice of the Latin phrase *Si vis pacem, parabellum* - "If you want peace, prepare for war" (Sens & Stoett, 2014, p. 17). Nonetheless, this stance can lead states to find themselves in what is referred to by scholars as the security dilemma. This refers to when states take unilateral measures to warrant their security and decrease the security of neighbouring states. In turn, neighbouring states recognize these measures as threatening and will take countermeasures to promote their security (p. 18). In other words, it is argued that this action-reaction cycle happens when states increase their military capabilities with no actual gains in the way of security.

Furthermore, realists believe that military power and alliances are at the core of the ordering mechanism of global politics: the balance of power. The term balance of power can be used in numerous ways, although for this paper, we will use the term described as "a particular policy of states that may be actively seeking to balance the power of others" (Sens & Stoett, 2014, p. 73). States can balance in one of two ways. States can increase their power, which is through military spending, or they can engage in alliances with other states (p. 73). The latter is referred to as collective defence arrangements, as alliances are created when two or more states "share a perceived threat and agree to coordinate their efforts to meet that threat" (p. 74).

The EU hosts two of the most important security institutions in Europe that have been founded on the principle of alliances. Firstly, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which is the military and political alliance of thirty independent member countries in Europe and Northern America. Secondly, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which is a pan-European security organization comprised of fifty-seven member states (Kubicek, 2017, p. 408). Based on this, states that create alliances based on common goals and shared interests will build a stronger cohesive alliance, which increases their position in global politics.

Realism and Nuclear Weapons: Nuclear Deterrence

States' possession of nuclear weapons is due to realist thinking of the Cold War, wherein the two superpowers, the United States and the former Soviet Union, maintained a balance of power by having weapons of mass destruction that could wipe the other out in minutes. This

approach, referred to as nuclear deterrence, assumes that having weapons of mass destruction ensures security by deterring other nuclear-armed states from attacking or possible mutually assured destruction on both sides (Finnis et al., 1987, p. 26). However, this paper takes the stance that nuclear deterrence is flawed as it does not consider human error, provides a false sense of confidence and voluntarily risks killing hundreds of millions of people. Furthermore, mutually assured destruction would cause long-lasting impacts around the globe, such as the likes of a 'nuclear winter' that could lead to global crop failure and irreversible human health effects due to ionising radiation, which can be fatal (Turco et al., 1984, p. 43-45).

Gender and International Relations

"While mainstream IR theory largely tends to view states, nations, sovereignty and identities as given entities, feminist IR scholars argue that such categories are socially constructed and framed within gendered practices and power relations. For instance, polarised gendered binaries are frequently utilised in the political rhetoric that emerges from conflict and war as a way to call on citizens to support their nation when faced with perceived security threats and conflict." (Sjoberg, 2006, p. 29). Based on this understanding, this paper will be based on IR's gender and international relations stream and will use theories that have stemmed from this school of thought.

International relations scholar Goldstein (2001) states that while all societies throughout history have engaged in war, overwhelmingly, they have been fought by men. Furthermore, Goldstein argues that to date, state decision-makers, who have been charged with creating and implementing military and security policies, have been men, too. However, it is not only the decision-making process and militaries that are male-dominated. The discipline of international relations (IR), founded at the beginning of the twentieth century, has been male-dominated. Realism is the approach within IR that has had the most influence on security studies by focusing on the attributes of power, autonomy, self-reliance, and rationality, which are deemed desirable for a state to survive and prosper in the 'anarchical' international system (Tickner, 2004, p. 44). In other words, international relations is a man's world, a world of power and conflict in which warfare is a privileged activity (Sjoberg, 2009, p. 183). Therefore,

this section will explain what it means to approach IR from a feminist perspective to position it within the field of international security.

Feminist IR is "likely to being a productive debate involving international relations scholars, feminist thinkers, and others concerned about security in the most inclusive sense" (Sjoberg, 2009, p. 183). Within IR, security is a field that has illustrated "a gendered estrangement that inhibits more sustained conversation" between feminist scholars and IR scholars (p. 184). Hence, in many ways, the theory and practice of international security continue to exist as a man's world. However, the implementation of international resolutions and phenomena show the significance of women in international security and the importance of gender as a factor in comprehending and addressing security matters (p. 185). It has been argued that scholars approach their specific subject matter "with lenses that foreground some things, and background others" (p. 186). Therefore, scholars will begin their investigation with the variables they find relevant in global politics. This thesis will, therefore, use the gender lens. According to Jill Steans, "to look at the world through gendered lenses to focus on gender as a particular kind of power relation, or to trace out the ways in which gender is central to understanding international processes" (Steans, 1998).

To comprehend feminist work in IR, it is vital to mention that gender is not the equivalent of membership in biological sex classes. Instead, gender is defined as a "system of symbolic meaning that creates social hierarchies based on perceived associations with masculine and feminine characteristics" (Sjoberg, 2009, p. 187). Furthermore, it is important to mention that all people experience gender differently and that "it would be unrepresentative to characterize a 'gendered experience' as if there were something measurable that all men or all women shared in life experience" (p. 187). Thus, we argue that there are many gender-based experiences or perspectives on IR or international security. Additionally, as we apply a gendered lens, we find it essential to mention that there is not one feminist approach to international relations theory (p. 187).

As other IR theorists, feminists can approach global politics and international relations from different perspectives such as realist, liberal, postcolonial or constructivist. When looking at the different perspectives, feminist work from a realist perspective is focused on the role of

gender in strategy and power politics between states. Whereas liberal feminist pay attention to the "subordinate position of women in global politics and argues that gender oppression can be remedied by including women in the existing structure of global politics" (Sjoberg, 2009, p. 188). Having various feminist perspective within IR shows the complexity of international security. However, it simultaneously emphasizes the importance of including women within the domain. Feminists studying global politics share a normative and empirical concern that the current international system remains gender-hierarchical (p. 189). In the field of IR, "feminist theories being with a different perspective and lead to further rethinking. They distinguish 'reality' from the world as 'men' know it" (p. 191). Additionally, looking through a gendered lens will allow us to look at "what assumptions about gender, as well as race, class, nationality, and sexuality, are necessary to make particular statements, policies, and actions meaningful" (p. 191).

Feminist Institutionalism

Feminist institutionalism is born from new institutionalism, which views institutions as core explanatory components in political analysis, thus providing a valuable perspective in analysing political dynamics and their outcomes and how they shape everyday life. Such an approach examines structure vs agency, putting more emphasis on the structural insights. Additionally, it examines the co-constitutive nature of politics in how actors create or resist change within institutions and, in turn, how institutions shape various actors' behaviours through the construction of rules, policies and social norms (Mackay et al., 2010, p. 573). Predominantly, there are four common approaches to new institutionalism: historical institutionalism, rational choice institutionalism, sociological or organizational institutionalism and discursive or constructivist institutionalism (p. 374).

New institutionalism, throughout its history, has been largely gender blind. Feminist institutionalism, therefore, aims to examine the strengths and limitations of new institutionalism's approaches. Moreover, it adds a gender lens to the approaches by addressing their gender blindness, emphasising increasing women's political and academic participation in the field and, ultimately, strives to gender institutionalism. Mackay et al. (2010) argue that a "dialogue across the approaches […] provides important new insights for understanding and

answering real-world questions about power inequalities in public and political life as well as institutional mechanisms of continuity and change" (p. 573). Therefore, feminist institutionalism, with its transformative agenda, seeks to use a gender perspective to implement a 'fresh approach' to the analysis of institutions, and their core preoccupations, to achieve institutional reform that is beneficial for all genders and overall outcomes (pg. 579-580).

Drawing on sociological institutionalism, feminist institutionalism emphasizes the importance of rules and norms within institutions. Olsen (2009) builds on this notion by highlighting that even though institutions are primarily stable and fixed, they have the capacity to change and that change is achieved through internal forces rather than external ones (p. 9). Chappell et al. (2006) argue that every institution is gendered in that there are certain notions of masculinity and femininity wherein political and policymaking institutions are structured by underpinnings of the assumptions and dispositions of gender. Consequently, such assumptions and tendencies are translated into policies, legislation, and rulings. Thus, institutions are affected by gender norms and produce gender norms themselves in society, thus illustrating how structure and agency are both gendered (Makcay et al., 2010, p. 583).

While masculine and feminine constructions are both present in political institutions, it is the masculine ideal that is more valued and, because of this, has the most influence in shaping 'structures, practices and norms, the ways of valuing things, ways of behaving and ways of being' (Duerst-Lahti and Kelly, 1995, p. 20). On the other hand, feminine traits tend to result in women being less valued and, therefore, lead them to have fewer resources, power, and influence. Thus, as an approach that aims to shift such gender norms and be more inclusive of women, "feminist institutionalism has considerable potential to enhance our understanding and analyses of institutional dynamics, gender power and the patterning of gendered inequalities in political life" (p. 583).

The Ethics of Care Approach and Feminist Foreign Policy

Aggestam et al. (2019) states that "[…] feminist scholarship provides insight into the ways in which gendered power hierarchies, privileges and institutions impede on such things as gender equality, justice and bodily integrity, all of which are key impediments to global gender justice." (P. 24). Therefore, through using feminist institutionalism as a theoretical framework

to help better understand feminist foreign policy, like the EU, foreign ministries and embassies are institutions, this section will build on that foundation and add to it a feminist foreign policy ethics of care approach.

In theorising feminist foreign policy, through a feminist lens, Aggestam et al. (2016) contend that it is "to all intents and purposes, ethical". This is because it positions inequalities and violence, gendered discrimination and the lack of inclusion and representation of women, as well as other marginalised groups, at the centre of its agenda (p. 327). Such an approach to feminist foreign policy takes inspiration from feminist international relations (IR) theory and the ethics of care approach in its theorising of feminist foreign policy. This aims to build on an ethical framework and relational ontology, which focuses on women and various marginalised groups' stories and lived out experiences, who are on the receiving end of foreign policy, thus taking situatedness into account.

The ethics of care approach, which is influenced by social psychology, is an approach that aims to augment feminist foreign policy within this theoretical framework. Aggestam et al. (2019) state that "[e]mbedded in feminist notions of foreign and security policy is an ethical commitment to the care and nurturing of distant others, who reside beyond the confines of one's political community." (p. 30). Therefore, the ethics of care approach and feminist foreign policy supplement one another.

Drawing on feminist IR theory, which focuses on the role of women in global politics, the feminist foreign policy ethics of care approach takes intersectional relevance into account, on a global scale, through 'inclusive and localised dialogue' (Shepherd, 2015, p. 29). Furthermore, the ethics of care approach promotes 'open and inclusive feminist-inspired dialogue', which Aggestam et al. (2019) argue "provides fruitful ground for theorising the significance of local stories and experiences in the making of feminist foreign and security policy" (p. 24-25). However, there can be tensions between normative and interest-driven aspects of a feminist foreign policy. For example, when foreign policy agendas consider implementing soft power or hard power diplomacy. Therefore, it is crucial to question how states, who claim to pursue a feminist foreign policy, deal with such tensions regarding their ethical considerations and their national military security interests.

A POSITIVE CASE: TO WHAT EXTENT CAN THE CURRENT EUROPEAN UNION MEMBER STATES, THAT EMPLOY A FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY, BE THE FORERUNNERS FOR A EUROPEAN UNION NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE?

During the first generation of ethics of care, which was largely based on notions from *realpolitik,* women were portrayed as being inherently peaceful, particularly mothers. Feminist IR scholarship, however, rejects this notion (Åhäll, 2015, p. 45). The second generation of ethics of care was then particular not to essentialise all women into being depicted as peaceful and thereafter recognizes their differences, thus understanding the ethics of care approach in broader terms. In this light, Joan Tronto defines this approach as "everything we do to maintain, continue and repair our world so that we can live in it as well as possible" (Hartount, 1996, p. 543). As an alternative approach to ethics, the ethics of care approach is unique in its field as it goes beyond the role of woman in the family and considers the global context of social life (Robinson, 1997, p. 121). Aggestam et al. (2019) argue that Robinson's approach "is a useful approach to critically unpack the moral ambitions of a feminist and gender-based foreign policy-making" (p. 31).

Aggestam et al. (2019) draw on Andrew Linklater's work on 'good international citizenship', wherein he created a 'conceptual yardstick' to measure good and ethical international citizenship, namely focusing on how states' ethical efforts in foreign policy can be critically evaluated. Foreign policy, through these measures, can then be assessed in terms of their respect for "human rights, humanitarian international law and courts, the laws of war, the right of non-sovereign communities and minorities" (Linklater, 2006, p. 243). However, despite such measures' usefulness in ethical considerations within foreign policy, Linklater's work does not include gender justice within his framework, thus depicting the gender blindness of the ethics field concerning foreign policy. As such, existing contentions on ethical foreign policy and notions of good international conduct are largely gender blind.

Thus, the addition of a feminist foreign policy approach to the ethics of foreign policy approach aims to remedy the gender blindness of the latter in the ethics of care approach. Regarding the ethics of care approach, Aggestam et al. (2016) refer to feminist foreign policy as a more 'rigorous ethical yardstick' to critically evaluate "the normative and feminist contents of states' international orientations, identities, and concrete policies" (p. 332). Furthermore, Aggestam et al. (2019) proclaim that traditional approaches to foreign policy "do not consider the situatedness of the state within distinct cultural, political and ethical settings nor the

intersectional subjectivities and moral preferences of the citizens inhabiting that sphere" (p. 31). Therefore, their theorization of an ethics of care approach to feminist foreign policy serves as a new 'normative yardstick' that enables a critical evaluation of various states' approaches to their claimed Feminist Foreign Policies.

Ethics of Care Approach and Pragmatism

The ethics of care approach emphasises morality and ethics as its key approach. Still, it is important to recognize pragmatism as another critical element to argue for a feminist foreign policy, especially considering feminist institutionalism. Drawing from Gene Sharp's (1973) notions of nonviolent peace, which aims to target and convince those in power of nonviolent approaches to peace, it is imperative to view nuclear disarmament as the practical thing to do. Brown (2020) explains Sharp's approach: "[t]he primary intention is to present an impressive and robust body of evidence to these power holders, and to assume that this empirically-substantiated form of struggle will be taken up by government, not because it is the right or ethical thing to do, but because it is the practical or, to use Russell's term, the "common sense" thing to do.

In this approach, political and military elites are asked to adopt nonviolent defence to defend the country and its borders. Still, there is minimal, or no, attention given to other social, political and economic issues within which the military paradigm is entwined" (p. 39). Taking Sharp's views into account, this paper will consider ethics, morality and pragmatism throughout the analysis. This is because we believe both approaches are necessary and can be used alongside one another as they are not mutually exclusive when it comes to nuclear disarmament and feminist foreign policy, especially as the latter is top-down and largely pragmatic.

Feminist Foreign Policy and an Ethics of Care Approach in Europe

Lisbeth Aggestam (2008) notes that "the conduct of ethical foreign policy builds on a commitment to transformative change of global politics through the pursuit of good international citizenship, which requires sensitivity to the needs and wants of 'others' in foreign policy practice". In doing so, this highlights how ethics and foreign policy consider how states constitute and relate to otherness (p. 6). Aggestam further critiques Europe's role as an 'ethical

power', reflecting on the overarching discourse that the European Security Strategy perpetuates. Therefore, Aggestam argues that the European Union is a global ethical power and should be more responsible and capable in areas such as foreign aid, thus contributing to areas of crisis management, humanitarian assistance, development, peacekeeping, state-building and reconstructing failed states (Lisbeth Aggestam, 2008, p.1). In this vein, nuclear disarmament is also added to the list of the EU's responsibilities in this paper.

The European Union, Feminist Institutionalism, Feminist Foreign Policy Ethics of Care Approach and Nuclear Disarmament

As stated in the introduction, establishing the CFSP has provided the EU with a security policy that embodies aspects of human security, such as respect for human rights and international cooperation. Additionally, the CFSP supplied the EU with four instruments for its security policy: Common Positions, Joint Actions, Common Strategies, and Declarations. For example, a common position implies that EU members are obliged to comply with the EU position regarding their foreign policy. In contrast, joint action is designed to put into operation or support a common position. These new instruments provided the EU member states, "with the opportunity to agree on such things as common statements in international conferences and funding to international organizations" (Kubicek, 2017, p. 404). While the EU has its economic and diplomatic position to carry out foreign policy, it lacks in military capabilities.

As we have presented, the balance of power can be achieved through military spending or alliances between states. However, in the past, the EU has only been able to offer diplomatic or political support, as opposed to other NATO members. Therefore, the EU agrees that it must have "the capacity for autonomous action, backed by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and the readiness to do so" (Kubicek, 2017, p. 405). Thus, creating a Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) to increase its military capability and the needs for the EU for its projected peacekeeping. Furthermore, the EU recently expanded its definition of security based on its core values, such as human dignity, equality, and human rights, by adopting the European Security Strategy (EES), as well as updating the CSDP in the Lisbon Treaty of 2009 (Tamminen, 2016. Pp. 18-19).

A POSITIVE CASE: TO WHAT EXTENT CAN THE CURRENT EUROPEAN UNION MEMBER STATES, THAT EMPLOY A FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY, BE THE FORERUNNERS FOR A EUROPEAN UNION NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE?

Building on the EU's adherence to and implementation of human security policies, we argue that feminist institutionalism and the feminist foreign policy ethics of care approach can be coupled with this to employ a gender perspective on the EU's approach to human security, namely in the field of nuclear disarmament. The ESS focuses on five security threats: terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), regional conflicts, state failure, and organized crime (Tamminen, 2016. Pp. 20). As nuclear disarmament is on the ESS's agenda, we argue that EU member states that have already adopted a feminist foreign policy are, therefore, prime candidates in leading the European Union towards nuclear disarmament. Primarily, we argue that this should be done through an ethics of care approach in their respective feminist foreign policies and that they must turn away from realist approaches, such as nuclear deterrence.

Methodology

The methodology section will discuss the approach we decided to take through our choice of theories and how we will apply them throughout our analysis and discussion. Additionally, we will present the methods we used to select our case studies, our choice of data, a discussion on the limitations and challenges we faced during our research, and a source evaluation that will be included at the end. This will be done to provide as much clarity and transparency as possible. Therefore, the following sections will highlight our theoretical considerations, research design and approach, epistemological and ontological positions, and methods and data.

Research Design

The research design of this project will be founded on a qualitative approach. The qualitative data will be analysed through a collective case study based on our theoretical framework (Punch, 2014, p. 121). However, the collective case studies will be exploratory as feminist foreign policy is a relatively new area within academia. With the introduction section providing the relevant context and historical background to our case, the collective case studies will be that of France, Sweden and Luxembourg's feminist foreign policies, namely in their approaches to nuclear disarmament within an EU context. Therefore, each case will be analysed through the appropriate qualitative data, collectively, and compared in the discussion section,

where the cases will be looked at under the EU context to answer the research question. Therefore, the analysis, viewed through the lens of the theoretical framework section, will be organized through a collective case study of each country, their respective feminist foreign policies and their approach to nuclear disarmament. The discussion section will, thereafter, deliberate about the findings of the collective case studies, compare them within a broader context of nuclear disarmament, and further supplement our analysis with secondary data and a questionnaire to add more nuances to the discussion section from a first-hand perspective.

Research Approach

The puzzle this paper sets out to explore is to what extent a feminist foreign policy, employed by EU member states, can be a driving force to achieve an EU nuclear-weapon-free zone. Therefore, the research approach is exploratory, wherein an interpretivist epistemology stance will be employed throughout the paper as there is an intrinsic belief that researchers cannot be separated from the environment that they are researching (Lamont, 2015, pp.17-20). Regarding the ontological stance, Bryman (2016) points out that 'people and their institutions' should be approached differently from approaches related to matters of the natural sciences (p. 26). Therefore, a constructivist ontology will be employed in that there is an adherence to social constructivism, wherein the social world can be constructed and reconstructed (pp. 28-30). The paper deals with institutions that are socially constructed and created by people. Therefore, it is important to distinguish between natural science and social science approaches through the ontological approach. Thus, we acknowledge that we focus on a great deal of interpretation, epistemologically speaking.

Generalisability of the Case Studies

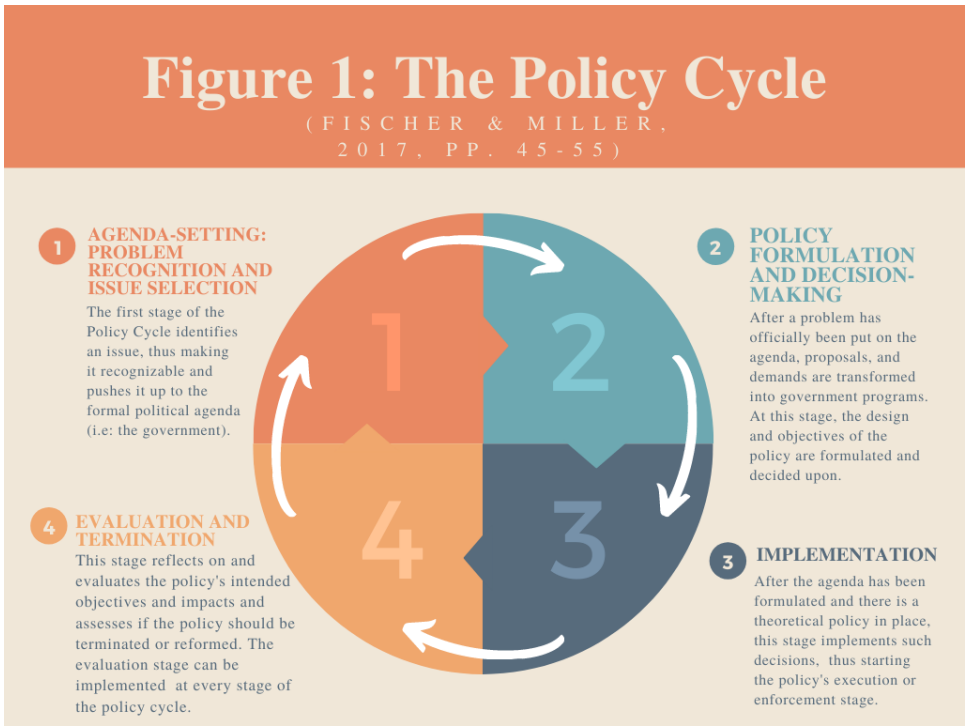
This project aims to conceptualise and compare our collective case studies through an intrinsic case study approach, thus aiming to understand our cases in their complexity and their entirety, as well as in their context (Punch, 2014, p. 122). The aim is not to make a general case for the whole of the EU's approach to foreign policy and nuclear disarmament. The purpose is rather to generalise and compare the collective case studies by conceptualising them in relation to the EU and the chosen member states' approaches to feminist foreign policy and, based on such approaches, explore and generalise the potential of the member states' feminist foreign policies

in achieving an EU nuclear-weapon-free zone. Therefore, through the analysis, a generalisation of the cases will explore feminist foreign policy's potential to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free EU. Furthermore, this approach will aid in understanding why these collective comparative case studies are unique in their given context.

We argue that the results processed by this collective comparative case study can be applied to other cases on feminist foreign policy and nuclear disarmament as the findings can be used to understand the matter through a comprehensive approach. This is achieved through Stake's approach, which defines this method of inquiry on the generalisability of case studies as a 'naturalistic generalisation'. Therefore, general understandings are furthered by case studies and experience in individual events (Punch, 2014, p. 124). Furthermore, based on Firestone's three levels of generalisation: generalisation from sample to population, case-to-case transfer, and analytic or theory-connected generalisation, the results generated in this study are generalisable to a great extent as they fall under two of the three levels, one being the case-to-case transfer, and the other, the analytic or theory-connected generalization (Punch, 2014, p. 124). Lastly, there is a certain level of abstraction in the findings from our analysis, therefore enabling it to be generalized in its context (p. 123).

The Policy Cycle

The analysis section will be guided, in part, by the policy cycle. The analysis will only focus on the first two stages of the policy cycle, 'Agenda-Setting: Recognition and Issue Selection' and 'Policy Formulation and Decision Making', as seen in *Figure 1*. Therefore, stages three and four will not be core parts of the analysis and will not be explained in-depth in this section. This is because our focus is on feminist foreign policy's agenda-setting and policy formulation to potentially achieve a nuclear-weapon-free EU, in line with our data.



The first stage of the policy cycle is the agenda-setting stage wherein an issue, or an undesirable social condition exists, is brought to light and is selected to form a policy around. Therefore, there is a presupposition that there is a policy problem to be recognized and that it is deemed important enough to be put onto a formal, top-down agenda (Fischer & Miller, 2017, p. 45). This paper will primarily focus on the public sector and government apparatuses (e.g. foreign policy) as the primary entities wherein policies are formed, which happens when there has been an expression from society for the state to intervene. Therefore, the first step is to recognize and select a policy issue and thereafter push it forward to the formal political agenda wherein a top-down approach of a policymaking process will follow.

Agenda-setting is influenced and shaped by actors and stakeholders, both within and outside the government, who collectively work together to shape the agenda through various means. For example, by taking advantage of the rising attention their policy issue is receiving, making the problem seem more dramatic or framing and defining the issue in a certain way. Therefore, at this stage, a key element to examine is how an agenda and its policy issues are defined, recognized and presented. In addition, questions as to how a policy got onto a government's agenda are important to enquire into, as well as "issue attention cycles and tides

of solutions connected to specific problems", which "are relevant aspects of policy-studies concerned with agenda-setting" (Fischer & Miller, 2017, p. 46).

The second stage, policy formation and decision making, is where "the policy cycle, expressed problems, proposals, and demands are transformed into government programs" (Fischer & Miller, 2017, p. 48). During this stage, the issue has been recognized and selected and put onto the government's official agenda. Therefore, the next step is to define the policy's objectives, which involves questioning what the policy sets out to achieve and taking various alternative approaches into account. Thus, policy formulation and decision making are interlinked as they tend to go hand in hand with one another.

At the second stage, implementation has not yet taken place. Thus, this paper will focus on the stated objectives of the feminist foreign policies of our chosen cases. Therefore, our analysis will focus on the agenda of feminist foreign policy, namely regarding nuclear disarmament, how it came to be, and the policy's objectives and what they aim to achieve through their policy formulations and decision making. Therefore, the first two stages of the policy cycle will be implemented to guide our analysis to process our cases' feminist foreign policies and foreign policy documents.

Theoretical Framework

Our theories were chosen to explain the realist nature of various states' possession of nuclear weapons; to understand feminist IR and how to employ a gendered lens to nuclear disarmament issues; to theorise feminist foreign policy; and to, furthermore, understand feminist foreign policy, security and nuclear disarmament in an EU context. The introduction explained the relevant history and concepts to support the theoretical framework and are, thus, interwoven into some of the theories and will be used in the analysis section. Furthermore, we chose the EU context as the central focus to apply our theoretical framework to as it is the region that has the most countries with a feminist foreign policy. Therefore, we selected it as it gave us the most abundant data to work with and the broadest understanding of feminist foreign policy and its implications. Regarding nuclear disarmament, we reasoned that because the EU was founded on peacebuilding and building towards security, not only for the state but also the

individual. Therefore, we argue that the whole region would be a prime candidate to be world leaders in nuclear disarmament and, ultimately, complete nuclear weapons abolition.

Data

The data used in this project will be mainly qualitative. As stated, our research approach is exploratory, where we will be investigating France, Sweden and Luxembourg's feminist foreign policies and their potential to drive nuclear disarmament within the EU. Our primary data will be comprised of foreign policy documents from the relevant official government websites to make such interpretations. For example, feminist foreign policy action plans and foreign ministry approaches to nuclear weapons issues, as seen in *Figure 2*. We will be supplementing such data with official convention and treaty documents, such as UN nuclear disarmament treaties like the NPT and the TPNW, and official documents about nuclear disarmament from NATO, the EU, and their nuclear disarmament strategies. This will be done to put the analysis of our chosen countries into a greater context, as respective member states of the EU, NATO and the UN.

Figure 2: Analysis Primary Data

Country // Institution	***Feminist Foreign Policy Document***	***Date***
Sweden	Ministry for Foreign Affairs Sweden: Handbook: Sweden's Feminist Foreign Policy	2019
France	Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Étrangères: "Feminist foreign policy", Op-Ed by Jean-Yves Le Drian and Marlène Schiappa	2019
Luxembourg	Le Gouvernement du Grand-duché de Luxembourg: Foreign Policy Address	2019
European Union	European Commission: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 European Parliament: Treaty on the prohibition of nuclear weapons — The 'Ban Treaty'	2020 2021

Secondary academic sources will also be used to supplement our primary data in the discussion section. Furthermore, we will also conduct a qualitative questionnaire to supplement the discussion section from an expert in the nuclear disarmament field. The questionnaire will be carried out by Alyn Ware, the incumbent Global Coordinator of Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (PNND). Ware has been in the nuclear disarmament field for decades, as well as being a well-established gender equality advocate throughout his career. In terms of the relevance of our data, we will only be using sources, namely documents from foreign policy websites and treaty documents, that are currently in effect. Therefore, we will not be using any outdated documents as our timeline focuses on existing policies and treaties. This will aid in enriching our analysis as many of the policies and treaties we will be analysing will be relatively unexplored as of yet, such as the TPNW and some of the newly adopted feminist foreign policies, such as Luxembourg, for example.

Limitations and Challenges

One of the main challenges arose in the theory section as feminist foreign policy is so new, and the countries that employ a feminist foreign policy all do so in diverse ways. Additionally, a feminist foreign policy will always be different within each respective country that implements it. The objectives aimed to achieve by implementing a feminist foreign policy will depend on the country's political, social, and economic situation. Thus, there will never be a clear definition of feminist foreign policy or a single way to implement it. Most literature conceptualizes feminist foreign policy and define it but does not necessarily theorise it.

The ethics of care approach was the only paper that attempted to theorise feminist foreign policy; however, it still lacked a concrete, pragmatic theoretical framework and was more abstract and still, very conceptual. Therefore, a concrete theorization of feminist foreign policy was hard to find and had to be supplemented with the use of feminist institutionalism and feminist IR theory. Moreover, concerning feminist foreign policy, another limitation is our EU perspective in the Global North. Despite our focus, this is a limitation as Mexico, in the Global South, has adopted a feminist foreign policy and signed the TPNW, which would be an interesting case to compare and contrast with (ÜNLÜ, 2020, p. 94).

A POSITIVE CASE: TO WHAT EXTENT CAN THE CURRENT EUROPEAN UNION MEMBER STATES, THAT EMPLOY A FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY, BE THE FORERUNNERS FOR A EUROPEAN UNION NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE?

In terms of the data, Sweden is the only country with an official handbook on feminist foreign policy. The primary data we obtained from France and Luxembourg were from government official foreign policy addresses or articles from their respective foreign policy websites. This was the data available, and it allowed us to carry out an adequate analysis and added some insight into how far along the different countries are regarding their feminist foreign policies, nonetheless. Moreover, our questionnaire could have been an interview. Still, we decided to choose a qualitative questionnaire format because then the participant could take the time and think about what he/she is writing and not have to answer on the spot in a time-bound setting. The benefits of carrying out an interview would have been to have a back-and-forth dialogue. However, the participant agreed to answer any questions we might have had from the questionnaire if need be.

As our research approach is fundamentally exploratory, that is a limitation in and of itself. We are exploring if the EU member states with a feminist foreign policy can be the drivers of an EU nuclear-weapon-free zone, based on the government's official strategy documents, among other data. Therefore, it is essential to keep in mind the nature of this research as it is and not expect a clear-cut answer. Nevertheless, the collective comparative case study research and exploration will still be beneficial and add to the literature on gender and nuclear disarmament issues. Simultaneously, it will further explore the potential of using a feminist foreign policy to achieve an EU free of nuclear arms. Furthermore, our research is based on official government and intergovernmental documents, therefore only focusing on the first two stages of the policy cycle. In some cases, implementation and evaluation stages have not yet occurred.

Source Evaluation

The theories we used were chosen for a specific purpose and aided us in our understanding of our three main elements: feminist foreign policy, Nuclear Disarmament, and the EU. As stated before, feminist foreign policy is a new area within academia, and there is a gap in its theorisation. The Aggestam et al. (2019) text on theorising feminist foreign policy through an ethics of care approach was useful in understanding the concepts within a feminist foreign policy, such as intersectionality, situatedness and the ethics involved in foreign policy matters

through a gender lens. However, it was too abstract to use as a standalone tool. Therefore, the sources on IR theory and feminist institutionalism were employed to supplement the text to add a more pragmatic aspect to support our analysis. Furthermore, since we are exploring the use of a feminist foreign policy, Sharp's (1973) notions on pragmatism in peacebuilding were instrumental in balancing our more abstract notions of the feminist ethics of care approach.

The nuclear disarmament and gender field is another area where there is a gap in research. Therefore, most of our data on nuclear disarmament were used to explain the status quo of nuclear weapons: nuclear deterrence, which is an approach from the Cold War. Therefore, some of the sources on this seem outdated. However it is reflective that the predominant discourse on nuclear weapons has not changed much since the Cold War. This paper, standing on the shoulders of the key research in feminist foreign policy, feminist IR, nuclear disarmament and feminist institutionalism, intends to fill that gap.

Data wise, we only used official documents in our analysis section. These are primary sources that are the most up to date data sets we could find, as government and official intergovernmental documents are easy to access and are updated often, namely in an EU member state context. The secondary data we used to augment our analysis in the discussion was also academic, peer-reviewed and current. The discussion section sources were incredibly useful in adding a broader context to our analysis. The literature and discourse on the EU and feminist foreign policy are up and coming, with primary and secondary sources making such links, such as the EU's 'A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025' document and ÜNLÜ's (2020) text. However, literature on the EU and a feminist foreign policy about nuclear disarmament is much less, although briefly mentioned in some literature, but not as a central focus.

Analysis

We have previously mentioned that there is no single definition of a feminist foreign policy. However, there are many commonalities and differences between the various policies that have been implemented to date, specifically concerning how each policy is framed according to the countries' current foreign policy, the stated goals and objectives of each policy, how they are formulated and the implementation process. Currently, all the states that have announced an

implementation of a feminist foreign policy have applied it to both the external work of the relevant agencies and their internal policies and practices. During this analysis, the EU and feminist foreign policies of Sweden, France and Luxembourg will be analysed, namely regarding their general approach and the context of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The analysis will also put the countries' feminist foreign policies into a greater context of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts on the international stage. Furthermore, the analysis will primarily consider the agenda-setting and policy formulation stages of the policy cycle.

The European Union and Feminist Foreign Policy

EU member states, such as Sweden, France, Luxembourg, Spain, Cyprus, Germany and Denmark, have implemented some form of a gender perspective into their foreign policies. That is, whether via a proclaimed feminist foreign policy on their agenda or through other gender equality efforts (ÜNLÜ, 2020, p. 94). Furthermore, the EU has formulated various strategies and policies regarding its external actions that aim to incorporate a gender perspective or promote gender mainstreaming within their institution over the past decade. Such developments have been moving toward an EU feminist foreign policy, namely with the incumbent president of the EU Commission, Ms Von der Leyen, who spearheaded the EU Commission's 'A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025' gender strategy (European Commission, 2021). However, the lack of EU member states adopting a feminist foreign policy hinders the EU from putting a fully-fledged feminist foreign policy on their agenda and implementing it. Thus, this reflects how the member states still retain most of their control regarding their foreign affairs (ÜNLÜ, 2020, p. 96).

Therefore, concerning a feminist foreign policy within the EU, the weight of the balance comes from the EU member states as foreign policy is still very much a sovereign matter. In the same vein, any push for a feminist foreign policy at the EU level will have to come from the EU member states. The approval of an EU feminist foreign policy will affect all member states, whether it is intergovernmental or supranational. An important question is if the EU adopts a feminist foreign policy, will all member states have to adopt one within their national foreign policy, or would they have one by default under the EU's feminist foreign policy?

A POSITIVE CASE: TO WHAT EXTENT CAN THE CURRENT EUROPEAN UNION MEMBER STATES, THAT EMPLOY A FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY, BE THE FORERUNNERS FOR A EUROPEAN UNION NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE?

There is not enough information or development on this matter to answer this as of yet. Therefore, it is imperative to analyse the role of the EU and feminist foreign policy and the relationship between the EU and its member states as they are interlinked when agency is concerned. Therefore, based on ÜNLÜ's text (2019), we believe that the EU member states will have to be the agents of change within the EU structure to produce the norms of a feminist foreign policy from their national foreign policies (p. 95-96).

Ms Von der Leyen's Union of Equality strategy is viewed as a point of departure for an EU feminist foreign policy that lays down a five-year strategy including gender equality on all levels and all areas of the EU and primarily advocates for gender mainstreaming within the institution. Therefore, the strategy is "based on the dual approach of targeted measures to achieve gender equality, combined with strengthened gender mainstreaming" (European Commission, 2020). The strategy also takes an intersectional approach, thus taking peoples' identities and background into consideration and their intersections. Therefore, the EU is at the beginning stages of putting a feminist foreign policy on its agenda. According to the strategy, the EU is sticking to gender mainstreaming as their main approach, as opposed to changing the very structures of their institution (European Commission, 2020). From a feminist institutionalism perspective, the strategy does use a gender lens but does not put a gender perspective at the core of their overall foreign policy approach. However, these are still necessary steps to have been made.

The EU also has a Women, Peace and Security agenda, which was largely inspired by their member state's adoption of the 2008 "Comprehensive Approach to the EU Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and 1820 on Women, Peace, and Security" (ÜNLÜ, 2020, p. 95). This had a significant impact on how the EU approaches their foreign policy as it was the first framework of its kind to change the norms on gender and security within the EU. Thereafter, in 2019, the EU Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2019-2024 was drafted and outlined how the Strategic Approach should be implemented (p. 96). In light of such efforts towards putting a feminist foreign policy onto the EU's agenda, which has been progressing, the EU is still critiqued for having an 'add women and stir' approach to its gender equality efforts. For example, "the neo-liberal foundations of

the EU permeate the way the EEAS incorporates the principle of equality, leading to a shallow understanding that focuses on adding women into existing structures" (Chappell & Guerrina, 2020, p. 12). For example, the EU has gender mainstreaming policies and makes great efforts towards gender equality within the union. However, the neoliberal individualisation of women to be on par with men does have pitfalls. Such a pitfall is the example of welfare policies that aid with childcare being stripped, with neoliberalism acting as a double-edged sword for women (Young, 2000, p. 92). Therefore, the individualisation of women, due to neoliberalism within in EU, is not in line with a gender-sensitive approach.

The European Union and Nuclear Disarmament

As stated in the introduction, the 2003 European Security Strategy (EES) was the first strategy to officially put nuclear disarmament on the EU's agenda. Alongside other efforts, the EU has been working on putting nuclear disarmament on the agenda since most of their member states signed the NPT in the 1970's. Thus far, only three EU member states have signed onto the TPNW, who are not NATO members (European Parliament, p. 5). These member states are Ireland, Cyprus and Malta. The European Parliament has not released an official stance on the TPNW. Still, critiques from the EU on the TPNW claim the treaty undermines the NPT, that the nuclear-armed states were not part of its 'hastily drafted' process and is 'lacking rigorous verification and enforcement provisions' (p. 5).

France, and the former EU member state, the United Kingdom, still have nuclear weapons and use them as a central part of their security and defence strategy, which affects the EU as a whole. Furthermore, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany and Italy currently station tactical United States nuclear weapons on their soil (European Parliament, 2021). Therefore, if these member states signed onto the TPNW, they would not be allowed to have nor host nuclear weapons. As such, the EU is pro disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation and highly endorses the NPT. However, most of its member states still pertain to a predominantly realist approach to security and defence by having or hosting nuclear weapons or being a NATO member. These factors are a significant barrier in EU member states signing onto the TPNW and entirely abolishing nuclear weapons within the EU and, ultimately, creating an EU nuclear-weapon-free zone. Therefore, we argue that the EU does not take an ethics of care approach

within its foreign policy as we have not found any evidence that the EU's attempt at an EU feminist foreign policy will make any strides to work towards a nuclear-weapon-free EU as of yet. Furthermore, the EU had not made any explicit links between their feminist foreign policy and nuclear disarmament. Therefore, the EU does not use a gender-sensitive 'ethical yardstick' regarding their foreign policy and nuclear disarmament.

Sweden's Feminist Foreign Policy

As stated in the feminist institutionalism theory section, institutions are mostly stable and fixed entities. Nonetheless, they have the capacity to change, namely through internal forces. This notion has been proved right when it comes to Sweden's foreign policy. In 2014, Sweden became the first country to announce and adopt a feminist foreign policy, which has created a baseline for understanding the concept. Sweden's approach was put on their foreign policy's agenda after the continuous "discrimination and systematic subordination that still mark the daily lives of countless women and girls around the world" (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2019). Sweden identified how institutions, which are still very gender blind, have shaped the various actors' behaviours through the construction of rules, policies, and social norms, which have impacted women and girls unequally throughout society. Hence, we can argue that Sweden has applied a feminist institutionalism perspective to address the gender blindness within their institutions and seeks to improve the position of women and girls within society, especially by increasing the position of women in politics and academic participation.

Therefore, Sweden implemented a "fresh approach" to the analysis of institutions by creating the baseline for a feminist foreign policy. This allowed Sweden to create the first definition around the concept that is committed to gender equality as the central goal of their foreign policy, as well as carrying out a gender lens across all areas of their work and operations (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2019). The core of the Swedish feminist foreign policy is situated in the context of relevant international agreements on human rights and gender equality. These include CEDAW, the Beijing Platform for Action and the UNSCR 1325 on women peace and security, and more recently, the UN's 2030 Agenda (International Women's Development Agency, 2020). Therefore, Sweden puts their feminist foreign policy at the core of their foreign policy, thus taking a feminist institutionalism approach that uses a gender approach throughout

their whole foreign policy. Sweden's feminist foreign policy has recognized that the predominant masculine norms that underpinned their foreign policy were not ethical. Therefore, they changed their institution's structure by implementing a gender lens at its core that then translated such an approach into their policymaking processes, thus shaping various actors' behaviours and changing social norms within their foreign policy, and around the world.

As stated by Aggestam et al. (2019), a feminist perspective provides insight into the ways in which gendered power hierarchies and institutions obstruct gender equality, justice, and bodily integrity (p. 24). Therefore, Sweden created a working method and a perspective, which takes into the consideration three Rs as its starting point and is based on a fourth R. The Swedish feminist foreign policy works towards strengthening all women's' and girls' 'rights' and combatting all forms of discrimination while increasing their 'representation' through promoting their participation and influence in decision-making at all levels and in all areas. This is accomplished by ensuring that 'resources' are allocated to promote gender equality and equal opportunities for all women anchored in 'reality' (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2019). Through an ethics of care perspective, the three R's, as well as the fourth, ensure that a gender approach is applied in their policymaking, that an intersectional approach is taken and that they apply an ethics of care approach to distant others that are affected by their decision making within their foreign policy, thus using a gender-sensitive 'ethical yardstick'.

Through a feminist IR perspective on foreign policy and the ethics of care approach, which promotes an open and inclusive feminist-inspired dialogue, the three previously mentioned Rs are based on the final R, which looks at the 'reality' in which the girls and women live. Therefore, as Aggestam et al. (2019) presented, this ensures that local stories and experiences are taken into consideration when formulating a feminist foreign and security policy. Finally, the policy is framed around human rights and an intersectional perspective, which considers the living conditions, levels of influence, and needs of everyone, in line with a human security approach to security (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2019). Thus, the application process of the policy is both applied internally and externally across all foreign policy with links to domestic policy, emphasizing the importance of foreign policy agendas

that implement both soft and hard power diplomacy while taking into consideration the ethical aspects of human security.

Sweden's Feminist Foreign policy and Disarmament

As stated on Sweden's foreign ministry website, "[t]he objective for Sweden's work is to reduce and eliminate weapons of mass destruction, and prevent their proliferation" (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2021). Therefore, nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation is stated explicitly on their foreign policy agenda. Sweden's approach to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, which largely falls under their general approach towards disarmament issues in a broader sense, focuses heavily on gender mainstreaming efforts and specific initiatives targeted at women and girls (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2019, p. 72). Based on the three Rs, rights, representation, and resources, as well as the fourth R, reality, Sweden's approach to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is, in accordance, established on a foundation that puts gender at the core of their foreign policy. This is done namely in the context of their agenda-setting and policy formulation and decision-making stages.

The Swedish foreign ministry acknowledges and takes issue with the fact that women are underrepresented in disarmament and non-proliferation forums, within diplomatic, technical and academic spaces, as well as within civil society organizations (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2019, p. 72). As part of their agenda setting, Sweden has been highly effective at putting gender on their defence and security agenda when it comes to their feminist foreign policy approach towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and makes explicit links between gender and nuclear disarmament. Their policy formulation and decision making also puts gender at the centre of their policy making on this issue as they have "worked to develop and disseminate knowledge about how access to and proliferation of weapons affects women, men, girls and boys differently. This involves highlighting the different effects of using and testing nuclear weapons" (p. 72). Furthermore, Sweden's feminist foreign policy approach also highly values negotiation tactics as a method in working towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation through 'alliance building' and 'dialogue', which have a positive impact on issues concerning gender equality perspectives, multilaterally and bilaterally (p. 73). A feminist institutionalism approach is also seen here as gender is at the core of Sweden's feminist foreign

policy approach to nuclear disarmament, as well as an ethics of care approach wherein Sweden acknowledges that the distant others are negatively affected by nuclear detonations.

Considering such an approach towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, when it comes to Sweden's agenda setting, policy formulation and decision-making processes, Sweden's feminist foreign policy is primarily inspired by gender and IR theory and feminist institutionalism. This is because they put gender at the core of their foreign policy agenda, which has spilt over to their approach towards disarmament issues. Furthermore, although not explicitly referred to, an ethics of care approach is also an underlying basis of their approach to feminist foreign policy as there are notions of Sweden being aware of their situatedness and, thus, having an ethical commitment towards the care and nurturing of distant others. Sweden's objective to work towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and examine the gendered effects of nuclear weapon detonations, as well as their political and financial support of gender mainstreaming efforts, is an example of such a distant care for others and a gender-sensitive 'ethical yardstick' (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2019, p. 73).

Another ethics of care approach inspired perspective that Sweden's feminist foreign policy has on its agenda is 'open and feminist inspired dialogue'. Such dialogue is alluded to as a significant tool in achieving disarmament in the most recent edition of their feminist foreign policy handbook (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2019, p. 72). This form of soft power, commonly associated with a more feminine approach, has significantly impacted their policymaking approach (p. 73). Moreover, Sweden's 'ethical yardstick' explicitly aims to remedy gender blindness within their institution by including gender justice, alongside a human rights framework, onto their agenda and policy formulations. As such, the core belief of Sweden's feminist foreign policy is that everyone deserves equal value and human rights, everywhere and all the time (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2019, p. 70). Therefore, when it comes to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, Sweden also recognizes the masculine and feminine underpinnings of their approach and puts more value on the latter within its agenda-setting and policy formulation, as seen in their handbook. This shapes its foreign policy's structure as well as the social norms around nuclear disarmament and various agents' behaviours.

A POSITIVE CASE: TO WHAT EXTENT CAN THE CURRENT EUROPEAN UNION MEMBER STATES, THAT EMPLOY A FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY, BE THE FORERUNNERS FOR A EUROPEAN UNION NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE?

Sweden's Feminist Foreign Policy and Nuclear Disarmament in Context

On the international stage, Sweden advocates a gender equality perspective within nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation treaties, such as the NPT (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2019, p. 72). For example, Sweden contributed towards a discussion concerning the ongoing review of the NPT, shedding light on how nuclear detonations disproportionately affect women and girls socially and biologically and highlighted the unequal representation of women in disarmament within various contexts (p. 72). When it comes to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, Sweden also has policy formulations that give both financial and political support to various actors. In doing so, this ensures that there is attention given to the evidence-based links between the proliferation of weapons and gender-based violence, as well as ensuring gender mainstreaming within operations they have a stake in (p. 73).

Tarja Cronberg is a distinguished fellow at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) and expert on nuclear disarmament issues. Cronberg has reflected that it is peculiar that none of the Nordic countries, as members of the NPT, have signed onto the TPNW. This is because they all generally share the same stance on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation issues and have a strong history of being against nuclear proliferation (Youth Fusion, 2021). Sweden and its fellow Nordic neighbours were involved in the early phases of the *TPNW* during 2 Open-Ended Working Groups; the first one dealt with multilateral negotiations to achieve a nuclear-weapons-free world, and the second one dealt with the legal aspects of the TPNW. Out of the Nordic countries, Sweden was the only country that fully participated in the negotiations and voted in favour of the *TPNW* in 2017. However, this effort was short-lived as the United States Secretary of Defence pressured Sweden into not signing the *TPNW* and, as a result, Sweden retreated from signing the treaty. According to Cronberg, Margot Wallström, the then Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs, resigned because of this (Youth Fusion, 2021).

Based on this, it is important to consider that Sweden is a part of NATO and has a close relationship with the United States. Among all the Nordic countries, according to Cronberg and Kierulf, there is a pattern of a lack of a signature onto the TPNW because of the Nordic countries' membership of NATO, as well as their relationship with the United States (Youth

Fusion, 2021). This is because Sweden, and its Nordic neighbours, still partly adhere to on the international stage when it comes to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The United States and NATO, which by and large depend on and profit from a nuclear deterrence approach, offer the whole Nordic region a great deal of security and economic benefit, to which they have sided with as opposed to the TPNW.

Although Sweden's feminist foreign policy is based mainly on an ethics of care approach, feminist institutionalism, and follows a gender and IR theory perspective, in the broader context of their security and multilateral relations, there are still elements of a realist approach that they adhere to for political, economic and security reasons on the international stage. Therefore, Sweden's feminist foreign policy agenda and policy formulation, when it comes to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, is more of an ethical issue as opposed to a pragmatic one, from our point of view, as the agenda-setting and policy formulation of their feminist foreign policy clearly states that their objective is for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Still, it is not pragmatic enough to sign onto the TPNW and potentially damage their relationship with the United States or their NATO membership.

NATO's approach to security is collective security, wherein an attack on one NATO member is an attack on all members, as stated in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty (NATO, 2021). As NATO relies on nuclear deterrence for defence, this means that Sweden, as a member, does too. Sweden's membership and adherence to NATO policies and security approach is conflictual with the EU's human security approach and a significant roadblock in achieving a nuclear-weapon-free EU zone. As analysed, Sweden employs soft power tactics such as feminist-inspired dialogue and internal NATO alliances and has the potential to put pressure on NATO from the inside and influence their reform to adopt their feminist foreign policy. As Sweden is the pioneer of such an approach, they would be the best candidate to achieve this. This is highly necessary as NATO's 2030 Agenda explicitly states their adherence to nuclear deterrence and has a shallow Women, Peace and Security agenda that is mostly focused on their public relations strategy (NATO, 2020, pp. 36 & 43). As such, NATO's social norms around nuclear weapons, mainly their reliance on nuclear deterrence, overpower

A POSITIVE CASE: TO WHAT EXTENT CAN THE CURRENT EUROPEAN UNION MEMBER STATES, THAT EMPLOY A FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY, BE THE FORERUNNERS FOR A EUROPEAN UNION NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE?

Sweden's feminist foreign policy and their approach towards nuclear disarmament, confirming that masculine norms overpower feminine ones.

Sweden's Feminist Foreign Policy Critiques

There have been critiques of Sweden's feminist foreign policy, as Sweden is a leading arms exporter, which is inconsistent with such an agenda (Aggestam et al., 2019, p. 23). Furthermore, Aggestam et al. (2019) further critique that "a recurrent theme in Swedish feminist foreign policy is the assumption that many distant other women beyond national borders are in need of Western masculine protection" (p. 28). This is a point to consider in light of the feminist foreign policy's ethics of care approach which, in theory, takes Sweden's situatedness into account through an intersectional approach. Despite such progress and ethical considerations on the part of Sweden's feminist foreign policy, it is important to keep such critiques in mind during this analysis and not turn a blind eye to them and point out such flaws as room for improvement in the agenda-setting and policy formulations. These points will not be elaborated or analysed further as they align with the policy cycle's implementation phase. However, they are imperative to keep in mind regarding the agenda-setting and policy formulation stages.

France's Feminist Foreign Policy

France has developed its policy approach over several years, from an international development policy focused on gender equality, to a "female/feminist diplomacy", to an explicit commitment to feminist foreign policy that comprises international development and diplomacy (Thompson & Clement, 2019). The High Council for Equality (*Haut Conseil à l'égalité*) wants the equality between women and men to be reflected in France's foreign policy. According to the High Council for Equality, the primary objective of "feminist diplomacy" is to promote universal feminism against all forms of relativism, whether religious, cultural, or political (Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Étrangères, 2019).

However, universal does not mean uniform. Thus, France's feminist foreign policy is framed around multilateral frameworks and agreements, human rights, gender mainstreaming and an intersectional perspective that includes the diversity of histories, social practices, and struggles, deeming fundamental human rights non-negotiable (International Women's

Development Agency, 2020; Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Étrangères, 2019). Furthermore, the High Council goes further by stating that such diplomacy must, by definition, aim to "sustainably modify, if not abolish, the unequal structures of patriarchal power" (Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Étrangères, 2019). Therefore, in accordance with feminist institutionalism, the French state has been a powerful agent of change in the structure of their foreign policy through gendering their institution and translating such change into their policies and, moreover, constructing gender norms through their feminist foreign policy.

France's approach is outlined in its international strategy for gender equality (2018 – 2022) and refers to relevant international frameworks such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Aid Effectiveness statements, CEDAW and the UN's 2030 Agenda. Finally, the approach is guided by three principles: comprehensive, rights-based, and gender-based to "bolster France's action in favour of gender equality" and to be pursued through five areas of intervention: leading by example, bolstering political support for gender issues, better financing for actions for equality, making, action for equality more visible and supporting civil society and sharing results (International Women's Development Agency, 2020). When looking at the application process, France "favours a pragmatic and evolutionary approach", while working towards a "transversal diplomacy" that focuses on the internal and external application of international development policy. Thus, it connects this to its broader foreign policy commitments and approaches, which would infuse all areas of security and defence (International Women's Development Agency, 2020; Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Étrangères, 2019). France created a five-year strategy, which outlines baseline, targets and an "accountability framework with specific outcomes, indicators, relevant stakeholders and time-bound commitments" (International Women's Development Agency, 2020). Therefore, France does use a gender-sensitive 'ethical yardstick' regarding its feminist foreign policy and shows a distant care for others, for example, by funding actions for equality abroad and taking a pragmatic approach.

Furthering a feminist foreign policy in France would need to consider its position as a G7 country. France, in the context of its G7 Presidency in 2019, launched the Biarritz Partnership for Gender Equality initiative where the Heads of State and Government adopted

a Declaration on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Étrangères, 2019). In this declaration, States shared their desire to form a global alliance dedicated to achieving complete female empowerment around the world. Additionally, they acknowledge that successful adoption and enforcement of gender equality legislation can be a powerful force for women's and girls' empowerment (Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Étrangères, 2019). However, France is part of the G7, NATO, and the United Nations Security Council. Therefore, France adheres to a realist approach within IR, and there is strong reason to believe that France will remain strong regarding their military power to defend territory and seek to protect and advance their collective self-interest. The Generation Equality Forum in Paris in June 2021 will allow us to observe if progress has been made regarding their commitments to achieving gender equality and women's empowerment and, most importantly, if the issues surrounding security and nuclear disarmament will be addressed.

France's Feminist Foreign Policy and Nuclear Disarmament

Gender equality is a priority for the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE), which is believed to be accomplished through its feminist foreign policy announced in 2019. Their feminist foreign policy aims to achieve gender equality in international forums and wants this goal to be taken into consideration in all issues from "inequality reduction to sustainable development, peace and security, defence and promotion of fundamental rights, and climate and economic issues" (Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Étrangères, 2021). Furthermore, France actively contributed to adopting and implementing the Security Council resolutions on Women, Peace and Security. Therefore, aiming to strengthen the protection of women and girls during conflict and increase the participation of women in peace negotiations and decision-making procedures (Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Étrangères, 2021).

As France has adopted two national actions plans to implement the WPS agenda, its feminist foreign policy, therefore, falls in line with increasing the representation of women in foreign policy and the strengthening of peace, security and democracy (Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Étrangères, 2021). As mentioned previously, this sentiment was echoed by the High Council for Equality that seeks to make the equality of men and women be reflected in all of France's foreign policy. The French feminist foreign policy is based around multilateral

frameworks and agreements, human rights, gender mainstreaming, and an intersectional perspective that considers the realities of the people they seek to protect. As such, the French feminist foreign policy takes into consideration the ethics of care approach, as they are including gender justice in as many fields and policies as possible. Additionally, by officially declaring a feminist stance within diplomacy and foreign policy and acknowledging the current gendered inequalities within institutions, the French government has applied a feminist IR stance when developing this policy approach for the last few years.

President Macron gave a speech on France's defence and deterrence strategy in February 2020, emphasizing the daily reality of how countries, such as France, deal with the direct and indirect impact of globalization on their sovereignty and their security. He highlighted how the current nuclear multi-polarity cannot be compared to the main approach of the Cold War and that the power balances between states have become unstable. Additionally, in his speech, he called for Europeans to "realize that without a legal framework, they could quickly find themselves exposed to the resumption of a conventional or even nuclear arms race on their soil. It would not be acceptable for them to become the battleground for non-European nuclear powers" (Élysée, 2020).

Furthermore, in the address on defence and deterrence strategy, while suggesting an international arms control agenda for the European Union, the President did not mention any direct links between disarmament and gender. Even though he did not mention those specific links, he called for a clear European position, considering both the development of contemporary weapons, particularly Russian ones, which could have an impact on their soil, and the interests of the European Union (Élysée, 2020). Though it seems that France seeks to improve their security and defence policy internally and externally by adopting a feminist foreign policy, it cannot be ignored that France applies its foreign policy from a realism approach as they have nuclear weapons.

Moreover, France has a history of testing its nuclear weapons in its former colonies, such as Algeria and French Polynesia. According to the French Ministry of Defence, France's nuclear tests have affected the lives of 27,000 Algerians, with some statistics suggesting it to be over double that figure. To date, France has not dealt with the consequences of their actions

that still impact Algerians and French Polynesians today (Center for Feminist Foreign Policy, 2020, p. 10). Therefore, even though France is a signatory to the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, we argue that France cannot claim to have a genuine feminist foreign policy or an ethics of care approach, so long as they have nuclear weapons. This is due to a fundamental lack of a distant care for others, for both women and men, because if they ever use their nuclear weapons, thousands of people will die and hundreds of thousands more will suffer from the irreversible health effects, environmental effects, and negative infrastructural, economic, and societal effects a nuclear detonation would cause. Thousands of people have already suffered from their nuclear testing in the 1960's, without any compensation from France's part. Moreover, France's feminist foreign policy has not considered nor dealt with the masculine underpinnings of their adherence to nuclear deterrence and how such an approach undermines their feminist foreign policy.

France's Feminist Foreign Policy and Nuclear Disarmament in Context

While France has decreased its stockpile of nuclear weapons from an approximate high of 450 to its current arsenal of around 290 (Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, 2021) and adheres to the principle of "strict sufficiency", it is far from complete abolition. When looking at France's history of nuclear weapons, since Charles de Gaulle's administration, France has been firmly against being nuclear-weapon-free as they have stated that nuclear weapons are only for self-defence purposes. As a founding member of NATO, a permanent member of the Security Council and a founding member of the EU, France has a certain responsibility to preserve its strategic autonomy, help to build a stronger Europe and protect and bolster international peace and security. Additionally, France's nuclear forces are not part of the NATO integrated military command structure. Therefore, France holds independent decision-making responsibilities.

Furthermore, the discussion on the strength of Europe's nuclear deterrent has been called into question after the United Kingdom has left the EU on January 31, 2020, and former President Donald Trump's attacks on the NATO alliance. As France has become the only remaining nuclear-weapon state in the EU, President Macron has quickly responded by stating that "France's vital interests now have a European dimension" (Center for Arms Control and

Non-Proliferation, 2021). The previously mentioned positions on nuclear weapons highlight that France applies a realism perspective in regard to having the right to defend themselves and the ability to use military forces, which is referred to as the so-called security dilemma. This refers to when states increase their security to be in a higher power position than their neighbouring states (Sens & Stoett, 2014).

France is a signatory of the NPT, but not the TPNW. Despite not being part of the TPNW, it strongly supports the NPT, as mentioned in the defence and deterrence speech by President Macron where he called States to join France in a "simple" agenda in accordance with article VI of the NPT. Even though France presents itself as a strong advocate for the NPT and is committed to step-by-step nuclear disarmament, they consider nuclear weapons an essential part of its current security strategy. Therefore, France has decided not to sign the TPNW as they believe the Treaty is unsuited for the international security context, especially with the new threats of the use of force from Russia and China (Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Étrangères, 2021). The current French government is committed to pursuing policy designs and agenda formulation that will consider creating a world without nuclear weapons as long as it ensures global stability and security. France stands with further implementation of their feminist foreign policy and seeks to push for nuclear disarmament. However, concerning its international responsibility and position in various important international institutions, it is challenging to adopt a feminist foreign policy to its full potential. This is especially challenging as there are no explicit links between gender and nuclear disarmament in its feminist foreign policy or an ethics of care approach.

France's Feminist Foreign Policy Critiques

According to the French government, France's nuclear power is vital to guaranteeing European security. Thus, France will most likely not rid itself of their nuclear weapons any time soon as they feel the responsibility to protect the EU. Through this narrative, the French nuclear security design is European and therefore furthers a Eurocentric discourse of security. While France advocates for gender equality and women empowerment, it is clear that France's defence and security policy design relies on nuclear power as the ultimate means to keep a militarised foreign policy. French foreign policy is thus distinguished by nuclearism, the

"celebration of nuclear weapons as the ultimate symbol of western technological progress" (Shaughnessy, 2014). This stance undermines the possibilities of gender equality, or a feminist centred foreign policy since nuclearism and militarism hinders such aspirations. France being resistant towards signing the TPNW emphasises that France's position on nuclear weapons is framed from a realist perspective. Yet this kind of rationalisation is an "outcome of sex and gender system that reinforces 'masculine' domination over the 'feminine' and continues to strengthen the gendered institutions (Muravyeva, et al., 2020, p. 10)." Therefore, we are sceptical about France's feminist foreign policy and a call for nuclear disarmament and, ultimately, working towards a nuclear-weapon-free EU.

Luxembourg's Feminist Foreign Policy

In March 2019, Luxembourg announced their commitment to developing a feminist foreign policy following the coalition agreement between the three governing coalition members (Democratic Party, Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party and Green Party) after the 2018 elections (International Women's Development Agency, 2020). This coalition emphasizes the importance of rules and norms within institutions, as the concept of a coalition is a group of political parties coming together to achieve a common goal. However, suppose the goal of each political party varies within the coalition. In that case, it can lead to changes within policies, legislation, and rulings, especially as political and policymaking institutions are designed by underpinnings of the assumptions of gender.

As stated by Olsen (2009), even though institutions are considered stable and fixed, they have the capacity to make change. That change is accomplished through internal forces rather than external ones (p. 9). Even though the masculine ideal remains predominantly valued within the political sphere, it remains crucial to acknowledge the importance of applying a gender lens within foreign policy. Thus, the announcement of the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, Jean Asselborn, towards "the commitment to gender equality and the protection of the rights of women and girls has long been among the priorities of Luxembourg foreign policy" (Chronicle.lu, 2021) is the basis for a feminist and gender-based foreign policymaking. Asselborn continued by stating that implementing a feminist foreign policy will strengthen the representation and participation of women within foreign policy and defence

establishments and implementing the women peace and security agenda (International Women's Development Agency, 2020). Therefore, Luxembourg has reflected on its institutional structure and decided to implement a gender lens within its foreign policy. Moreover, it has recognized its policymaking's masculine and feminine underpinnings, in line with a feminist institutionalism approach.

Additionally, the Foreign Minister highlighted Luxembourg's thematic priorities in this area, namely "the promotion of women's rights as an integral part of human rights, strengthening the representation and participation of women, as an under-represented sex, at all levels of society, as well as the promotion of an active policy of gender equality within the very structures of Luxembourg diplomacy" (Chronicle.lu, 2021). It is important to highlight that since the announcement of its commitment to a feminist foreign policy, Luxembourg has not yet updated its General Development Cooperation Strategy. However, the current strategy does include "enhancing socio-economic integration of women and youth" as one of their four goals, and it includes gender equality as a cross-cutting priority along with human rights and creating an inclusive governance (Directorate for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs, 2018). Thus far, Luxembourg's feminist foreign policy is still at its agenda-setting phase and a handbook or an official policy document has not been released. Therefore, there is a limitation in this regard. Still, there is a recent foreign policy address that has given us enough information to carry out an analysis, albeit not to the extent of the other cases.

Luxembourg's Feminist Foreign Policy and Nuclear Disarmament

In Luxembourg's Minister of Foreign and European Affairs recent Foreign Policy Address in 2019, the country's feminist foreign policy was announced. A women peace and security agenda was selected as an issue and put onto their foreign policy's agenda. The WPS agenda mentioned the importance of strengthening the representation and participation of all women regarding security matters, which is viewed in the address as "a means to strengthen peace, security and democracy in the world, as stipulated in UN Security Council resolution 1325" (Le Gouvernement du Grand-duché de Luxembourg, 2019, p. 41). Therefore, Luxembourg's feminist foreign policy directly links the representation of women in their foreign policy and a strengthening of peace, security, and democracy. In this vein, Luxembourg views their feminist

foreign policy as "acknowledging women's rights as human rights and systematically defending the fundamental rights of women and girls" above all (p. 40), therefore adhering to an ethics of care approach within their feminist foreign policy by including gender justice in their 'ethical yardstick' measurements and caring for distant others' wellbeing and rights. Furthermore, this approach is inspired by feminist IR and feminist institutionalism as gender has been officially declared to be on their foreign policy agenda on a structural level.

Nuclear disarmament was also mentioned in the foreign policy address, but there were no direct links between gender and disarmament. Asselborn highlighted the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, which was the first treaty that was agreed upon between the United States and the Soviet Union to work towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The treaty was designed so that the United States and the Soviet Union could give up their nuclear and conventional ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges between 500 to 5,500 kilometres and is responsible for the termination of over 1,200 nuclear devices (Arms Control Association, 2021). Having a clear collective security view of the European Union, Asselborn stated: "[w]e Europeans are directly affected by the termination of the INF Treaty because it puts our collective security at risk. This is why, in the roughly five months remaining before the agreement is fully abrogated, we must do all we can to persuade Russia and the United States to resume talks. What was possible during the Cold War must be possible today! Responsibility clearly lies with Russia, as Moscow has to prove that it is respecting the terms of the treaty" (Le Gouvernement du Grand-duché de Luxembourg, 2019, p. 35). Asselborn had the same sentiments about the New START Treaty between the United States and Russia, which was renewed under the Biden administration (U.S. Department of State, 2021). Therefore, Asselborn and Luxembourg's foreign ministry view Russia as the main problematic actor and nuclear power that needs to be stopped.

Luxembourg is pro disarmament, namely nuclear disarmament, and advocates for an approach "that includes modern technologies and is supported by all international actors", which is also in line with Germany's agenda (Le Gouvernement du Grand-duché de Luxembourg, 2019, p. 36). Therefore, Luxembourg's foreign policy also believes in multilateral efforts to push towards arms control within Europe and is already part of the fight

to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free Europe within its agenda and policy formulations. Furthermore, Luxembourg's efforts towards European arms control and its Women, Peace and Security agenda, under its feminist foreign policy, give it the potential to be a significant player in achieving an EU nuclear-weapon-free zone. This is because they are in the beginning phases of gendering their institution and changing social norms within their foreign policy, which is traditionally a heavily masculinised space.

Luxembourg's Feminist Foreign Policy and Nuclear Disarmament in Context

Luxembourg is a signatory of the NPT, but not the TPNW. However, despite not being part of the TPNW, it strongly supports the NPT and has a strong history of nuclear disarmament advocacy on the international stage. For example, the International Luxembourg Forum on Preventing Nuclear Catastrophe, which was founded in 2007. The Forum's goals are to facilitate arms limitation and reduction of nuclear weapons; to prevent any threats towards nuclear non-proliferation, such as the erosion of the NPT; to prevent nuclear terrorism; to promote international peace and security through new approaches; and to provide policy advice on practical solutions regarding nuclear disarmament and arms control (International Luxembourg Forum on Preventing Nuclear Catastrophe, 2021).

Despite Luxembourg's explicit stance on pushing for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, it has not signed the TPNW. Luxembourg did not attend or participate in the treaty's preliminary stages and even voted against the UN General Assembly resolution that allowed the negotiations to occur in 2016 (ICAN, 2021). Furthermore, prior to the TPNW negotiations, the United States sent a document to its members that 'strongly encouraged' them not to sign the TPNW instead of abstaining or signing it. Furthermore, if NATO allies did sign onto the treaty, others should 'refrain from joining them' (ICAN, 2017). Therefore, despite Luxembourg's adherence to feminist IR, its feminist institutionalism approach to its feminist foreign policy and overall anti-nuclear weapons stance, it still does not escape the power structures and influence of the United States and NATO on this issue. This is because Luxembourg supports the use and threat of use of nuclear weapons as a part of NATO's collective security approach, thus adhering to a dominant masculine norm when it comes to its NATO membership and overall reliance of nuclear deterrence. Furthermore, Luxembourg's

A POSITIVE CASE: TO WHAT EXTENT CAN THE CURRENT EUROPEAN UNION MEMBER STATES, THAT EMPLOY A FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY, BE THE FORERUNNERS FOR A EUROPEAN UNION NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE?

NATO membership and reliance on nuclear deterrence contradict its feminist foreign policy and ethics of care approach regarding its foreign policy and its efforts towards nuclear disarmament.

Luxembourg's Feminist Foreign Policy Critiques

Luxembourg's feminist foreign policy is still in the early stages of its development and has not had many critiques yet. Nonetheless, since Luxembourg is a NATO member, the country will adhere to a highly militarised security approach and nuclear deterrence. Thus, we believe in keeping a critical eye on Luxembourg and its implementation of a feminist foreign policy and stance on nuclear disarmament. Furthermore, Luxembourg's NATO membership undermines its efforts towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Asselborn's recommendations for the United States and Russia to respect various nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation treaties, such as the INF, are hypocritical considering its adherence to NATO's nuclear deterrence policy.

Discussion

We have presented three different feminist foreign policies from different countries, according to their current foreign policy and their stance on nuclear weapons and disarmament, which allows us to present the commonalities and differences between them. The similarities and differences within the respective feminist foreign policies highlight that there is not one single way to formulate or implement a feminist foreign policy. Hence, the policy cycle for each country will always be different. Through this discussion, we will present our findings from the analysis, compare and contrast the cases by looking at the feminist foreign policy of the countries chosen and their stance on nuclear weapons and disarmament. Finally, we will also include a section on alternative approaches to nuclear disarmament, as opposed to the TPNW, and discuss some of the recommendations we feel the respective feminist foreign policies should implement in order to achieve nuclear disarmament within the EU.

Similarities and Differences

We created the following table, as seen in *Figure 3,* to offer a better visual presentation of the similarities and differences we found between the countries we selected for our analysis within the context of their feminist foreign policies and nuclear weapons and disarmament.

A POSITIVE CASE: TO WHAT EXTENT CAN THE CURRENT EUROPEAN UNION MEMBER STATES, THAT EMPLOY A FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY, BE THE FORERUNNERS FOR A EUROPEAN UNION NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE?

	Sweden	**France**	**Luxembourg**
Feminist foreign policy (FFP)	Announced a FFP in 2014	Announced a FFP in 2019	Announced a FFP in 2019
NPT	Signed in 1968	Signed in 1992	Signed in 1968
TPNW	Is not a signatory	Is not a signatory	Is not a signatory
Nuclear weapons states / nuclear sharing	No	Nuclear-weapons state; host nuclear weapons	No
NATO member	Yes	Yes	Yes
Member of the Security Council	No	Yes	No
Stage of the policy cycle	Fourth stage: Evaluation and termination	Second stage: Policy formulation and decision-making	First stage: Agenda-setting: Problem recognition and issue selection
Women, Peace and Security Agenda	Linked their FFP to Women, Peace and Security Agenda	Linked their FFP to Women, Peace and Security Agenda	Linked their FFP to Women, Peace and Security Agenda
Lens used/applied in FFP	Clear use of gender and intersectional lens in their FFP	Clear use of gender lens in their FFP	Less clear use of gender lens in their FFP

Realist approach on global politics?	Realist approach dominates their nuclear disarmament approach	Realist approach dominates their nuclear disarmament approach, especially with their position at the international level	Realist approach dominates their nuclear disarmament approach
Applied ethics of care approach and feminist institutionalism	Yes, on a national level and slowly more on an international level	A little but mostly at the national level	A little but mostly at the national level
Gender and nuclear disarmament	Clear link between their feminist foreign policy and nuclear disarmament	No clear link between their feminist foreign policy and nuclear disarmament	No clear link between their feminist foreign policy and nuclear disarmament

Figure 3: Table comparing Sweden, France and Luxembourg

As seen in *Figure 3*, and as highlighted through our analysis, the three countries have announced a feminist foreign policy as part of their agendas. Some have started to implement such policies. Sweden, as mentioned previously, was the first country to announce and actively implement a feminist foreign policy throughout various fields. It accomplished this by applying a gender lens in their policymaking and uses a clear intersectional approach. Therefore, based on the policy cycle, Sweden is the most advanced from the three countries when it comes to their feminist foreign policy as they have had it implemented the longest. Hence, Sweden has been able to evaluate the impacts of its feminist foreign policy. Furthermore, Sweden is the case that has followed an ethics of care approach the most when it comes to its feminist foreign policy and nuclear disarmament. The main reason being, they explicitly link the two and

acknowledge that disarmament is ethical and takes a pragmatic approach to this, on a national level.

As the theory on feminist institutionalism has outlined, Sweden puts gender at the core of their feminist foreign policy and their general approach to security matters, in large part. As examined during our analysis, France remains at the second stage of the policy cycle, slowly stepping into the third stage. While Luxembourg, having only announced a feminist foreign policy recently, hasn't clearly stated how it will influence their decision-making process and is still at the beginning of the policy cycle. Therefore, France and Luxembourg have followed some aspects of an ethics of care approach and feminist institutionalism. However, neither state has made an explicit link between its feminist foreign policies and nuclear disarmament. This could also reflect how far they have come with its feminist foreign policies, as Sweden's has been around for a more extended period.

Looking at the position of each country regarding their stance on nuclear disarmament, they have all signed onto the NPT, as presented throughout our analysis and in *Figure 3*. This showcases their commitment to the international objective to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology and achieve nuclear non-proliferation. Each country has expressed a strong commitment to the NPT, but neither country has signed onto the TPNW. As explored in our analysis, the main reason for not signing the TPNW is based on the political disagreements between countries regarding how to advance their nuclear disarmament agenda and to what extent. An example of this is the strong pull the United States has over NATO members, which we have seen through the analysis of Sweden when they nearly signed onto the TPNW in 2017 but didn't end up signing the treaty as the United States threatened to withdraw their security agreements with them.

The NPT does not demand that countries completely abolish nuclear weapons, the hosting of nuclear weapons or any dealings with nuclear weapons, whereas the TPNW does. Therefore, all three cases, as NATO members, share a common pattern in that they have not signed onto the TPNW due to their NATO alliance and strong relation with the United States. As the EU countries examined in our cases are all part of NATO, they agree to be part of a collective defence and military alliance whereby the independent member states agree to

mutual defence, adopting nuclear deterrence as a main strategy, in response to an attack by any external party. In other words, if a NATO ally is attacked by an external party, every other member of the NATO alliance will consider the attack as an act of violence against all members and take actions that are deemed necessary to assist the ally attacked. The NATO alliance emphasizes that such an alliance between states is at the core of the balance of power and that it remains a vital element for survival and security within global politics.

A discussion on the TPNW and the NPT is relevant to understanding why the analysed EU member states don't join the TPNW. Alyn Ware, the Global Coordinator of PNND, explains such reasons below, as found in our questionnaire:

"The nuclear-armed states have no reason nor incentive to join the TPNW. They were not included in the negotiations. The TPNW does address any of their security issues regarding nuclear disarmament. These include the threat of nuclear attack from other nuclear-armed countries who stay outside the treaty, and the TPNW's lack of confidence-building, verification and enforcement procedures, even for any other nuclear-armed states that might theoretically (but not realistically) join the TPNW. For the nuclear-armed states, the most likely approach once they agree to join a nuclear disarmament process, will not be to join the TPNW, but will involve negotiations between themselves on a phased approach to nuclear disarmament that is verified and enforced through an agency established for this purpose." (Ware, 2021).

Therefore, coupled with the member states' relationship with the United States and their NATO membership, there are other reasons, as mentioned above, as to why they don't sign onto the TNPW and abolish nuclear weapons. Furthermore, Ware pointed out that the NPT and the TPNW have a strained relationship as "proponents and opponents of the TPNW alike have created a toxic and counter-productive environment by the ways they have framed the TPNW. The opponents of the TPNW (primarily nuclear-armed and allied states) have framed the TPNW as 'undermining the NPT'." (Ware, 2021). There are complex political reasons as to why the two treaties are viewed as undermining the other as the two treaties have differing approaches that fit different countries' agendas. The signatories are the main actors in signing the treaties and putting them on their agendas, so it is important that treaties, like the NPT and the TPNW, ensure that their strategies can be as accommodating to as many states as possible.

A POSITIVE CASE: TO WHAT EXTENT CAN THE CURRENT EUROPEAN UNION MEMBER STATES, THAT EMPLOY A FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY, BE THE FORERUNNERS FOR A EUROPEAN UNION NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE?

This is tricky with the TPNW as there have been critiques as to its effectiveness as not one nuclear power or host country has signed onto the treaty. However, the social stigmatization the TPNW has created against nuclear weapons on the international stage does serve a significant and effective purpose. Therefore, we believe that both treaties are necessary and of great value and should not be pitted against one another.

When looking at the patterns around a feminist foreign policy and nuclear disarmament, we have observed some differences, especially when looking at them from an international and national level. For example, France is the only nuclear power of the three cases and has the most invested in nuclear weapons. However, an obvious pattern is that all the states' NATO membership which has created an international alliance towards defence and security that the states highly value. Therefore, at a national level, states are not willing to sign the TPNW as it would potentially compromise their NATO membership, their relationship with the United States, and limit or decrease their political and military power, thus giving the image to the external world they are 'weak' and 'unable' to protect themselves. This can be explained further by using France as an example. We consider France to be a powerful country on many levels. On an international level, they have a permanent seat on the UN's Security Council, are one of the founders of NATO and are currently the only EU country recognized as a nuclear weapons state. Whereas on a national level, France, being a state hosting nuclear weapons, believes that they bear the responsibility to protect the European Union and maintain a strong front towards the external parties and its allies. Therefore, despite Sweden, Luxembourg and France's feminist foreign policies on a national level, there is still a predominant adherence to a realist approach on the international stage, as they all fall under NATO's nuclear deterrence strategy, especially by France.

A common theme among the cases is that Sweden, France and Luxembourg have all adopted a feminist foreign policy and have linked it to a Women, Peace and Security agenda. The states have been agents of change regarding their foreign ministry institutions, which we recognize as an imperative step. Yet, Sweden is the only country that has explicitly made a clear link between its feminist foreign policy and nuclear disarmament. France and Luxembourg have made no such connection. Sweden and Luxembourg have done the most

regarding its nuclear disarmament stance on the national level. Nonetheless, when it comes to the international level where their United States and NATO relations are concerned, nuclear disarmament becomes less important.

Therefore, we argue that at the national level, all countries have adopted a feminist foreign policy ethics of care approach, as well as a feminist institutionalism approach, to different degrees. Still, on the international level, a realist approach dominates their nuclear disarmament approach. Through their United States and NATO relations, we can see the politics behind the NPT and the TPNW and, ultimately, their lack of signature onto the TPNW. Why otherwise would countries like Sweden and Luxembourg, who are against nuclear weapons on a national level, not sign onto the TPNW or support it? It is clear to see why France would not sign on to the TPNW as a nuclear power, but Sweden and Luxembourg aren't. Furthermore, the only three countries that have signed the TPNW within the EU, Ireland, Malta and Austria, are not NATO members, which illustrates the power of NATO in the member state's decision-making process.

In this discussion, it is critical to address that Ireland, Malta and Austria do not have feminist foreign policies but have signed the TPNW. As aforementioned, the reason for this is that they are not NATO members and have nothing to lose in their signature of the treaty. Furthermore, there is a point to be made that the EU countries who have signed onto the TPNW do not have feminist foreign policies but have been able to commit to being nuclear-weapon-free and not profiting from them. However, it is essential to acknowledge the 'reality' of the situations in their context and how being a NATO member is a noteworthy reality that our cases face. Therefore, we argue that it is even more important to use a feminist foreign policy, based on feminist institutionalism and an ethics of care approach, to work towards nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament in their given context.

The Future of Feminist Foreign Policy

Feminist foreign policy remains a very new concept and, as a framework, is still 'under construction' and constantly evolving. We have mentioned previously that a feminist foreign policy will never have one single definition or way of implementation as it needs to be done according to where the country currently stands, the resources available and what they seek to

achieve. This flexibility allows each country to announce and implement a feminist foreign policy in line with their agenda and policy decision making process. Nonetheless, this flexibility can potentially cause further misunderstandings around the concept of a feminist foreign policy as there remains a flawed understanding of gender and gender equality around the world.

Despite having acknowledged in 2008 that gender is a social construct and "not only about women" (Council of the EU, 2008, p. 5), throughout the EU external action, gender remains commonly understood to be synonymous with (white, heterosexual) women (Davis, 2018). The Strategic Approach to Women, Peace and Security (Council of the EU, 2018) as well as the newly launched Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 (EU Commission, 2020), both refer to the equality between women and men in their introduction, thus outlining the debate and discussion in these terms. To their credit, both documents mention the intersecting sexism that many women face, as the Gender Equality Strategy communicates the importance of using intersectional viewpoints in gender equality strategies. Nonetheless, unfortunately, sexual minorities and gender nonconforming people remain excluded in the Strategic Approach, and they are only mentioned in passing as a reference to another EU policy paper. Thus, by continuing to frame gender narrowly, the EU, its institutions and its external actions reproduce an exclusive and binary conception of gender-based on traditional ideas of women and men by attempting to frame gender narrowly (Muehlenhoff, 2017). Finally, this flawed understanding overlooks "gender power relationships" (Davis, 2018, p. 4), as well as gender as "a way of categorizing, ordering, and symbolizing power, of hierarchically structuring relationships among different groups of people, and different human activities symbolically associated with masculinity and femininity" (Cohen, 2013, p. 4).

Therefore, we argue that for countries to implement a feminist foreign policy, they will need to address their understanding of gender and gender equality and deconstruct their understandings around gender dynamics. An example of the gender dynamics in the debate about nuclear disarmament could be observed on the occasion of the negotiations on the TPNW in the United Nations General Assembly. The then United States Ambassador Nikki Haley argued that "as a mom, as a daughter, there is nothing I want more for my family than a world

without nuclear weapons. But we have to be realistic… you have to be asking yourself, are they [who are advocating for the ban treaty] looking out for their people?" (McCaskill, 2017). Through her statement, she reinforces the gendered conception of disarmament as feminine, fragile, and optimistic. At the same time, armament is practical, strong and male by contrasting her wish as a women/mother for a nuclear-weapon-free world with a realistic approach to security in which nuclear weapons are unfortunately required (Bernarding & Lunz, 2020, p. 38). Additionally, for countries to take leadership in feminist foreign policy, it is essential that countries shift their stance on nuclear weapons and acknowledge that their current practices undermine their articulated aims of a feminist foreign policy framework.

Furthermore, it is vital that a feminist foreign policy is not just an 'add women and stir' approach. As Ware stated in the questionnaire, "we have to 'feminise' the political dynamics in addition to working for equal participation of women. Such an approach elevates cooperation as compared to competition, diplomacy rather than aggression, common security as compared to military security." (Ware, 2021). This is an important concept as one of the core beliefs of this paper, in line with feminist institutionalism and notions of feminist peace, is a 'feminisation' of politics, especially in the context of nuclear disarmament. We do not want to fall into any traps that essentialise women and men into their binary or stereotyped gendered roles. However, we acknowledge what a feminised approach is in the current discourse and have adopted such a view. For example, a more feminised approach would be a valuable tool in the cooperation between the NPT and the TPNW in their respective but common goals of nuclear disarmament. Furthermore, we believe a genuine feminist foreign policy is one that takes a feminised approach through the likes of demilitarisation and disarmament efforts.

As our analysis ascertained, despite Sweden, France and Luxembourg's feminist foreign policies, there are still barriers to their nuclear disarmament efforts and, ultimately, a nuclear-weapons-free European Union. The premise of our arguments is based on the view that a feminist foreign policy and nuclear disarmament go hand in hand. This is because we argue that any possibility of a nuclear detonation exploding anywhere, even in the name of defence and security, is not ethical. Feminism has a strong history of anti-militarism and disarmament and is explicitly against the use of armed force, the use of weapons of mass destruction or any

form of violence to resolve conflicts (Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy, 2020, p. 7). By having, hosting, or supporting any form of using nuclear weapons as a security strategy, states contradict and undermine their feminist foreign policies. A realist, 'masculinised' approach is antithetical to feminist foreign policies.

Furthermore, Ware also stated that the "EU can play a role in assisting to manage and/or resolve some of the regional and security issues that give rise to nuclear deterrence. This includes Iran, Middle East and North Korea. But EU is limited as it continues to be dominated by nuclear-armed and allied states (France and the NATO countries) that remain reluctant to move." (Ware, 2021). Therefore, Ware further confirms our findings in the analysis that EU member states have an obstacle in their NATO membership when it comes to achieving nuclear disarmament and having France as a nuclear power.

For example, by being a nuclear power, France proves that it has a militarised foreign policy as its defence and security strategy relies on nuclear weapons. A feminist foreign policy and a militarised foreign policy contradict one another. Moreover, by Sweden and Luxembourg's NATO membership which means they adhere to NATO's nuclear deterrence strategy, they are also supporting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons that undermine their feminist foreign policies. A feminist foreign policy that is adopted in a country that has or hosts nuclear weapons, such as France, has "a superficial focus on gender equality that focuses mainly on representation, protection against sexual violence, and women's participation in traditional areas of international politics does not necessarily seek transformation of the gendered system" (Center for Feminist Foreign Policy, 2020, p. 12). Furthermore, they do not follow an ethics of care approach, as previously discussed. It is imperative to acknowledge the good work and progress Sweden, France and Luxembourg have done within their feminist foreign policies, and the aim is not to undermine such efforts. Rather, the point is to highlight that the full potential of their feminist foreign policies cannot be achieved fully until they disarm and take incremental steps towards demilitarisation and adopt a genuine 'feminised' approach within their respective feminist foreign policies.

We argue that signing the NPT is not enough. The NPT is highly essential and has had a significant impact on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation processes, but it still leaves

room for countries to develop and use their nuclear weapons. The TPNW is the only current legally binding treaty that can achieve a European nuclear-weapon-free zone. The TPNW is also highly compatible with feminist foreign policy as it has feminist and anti-military roots. However, we are aware of the aforementioned obstacles in EU member states' signing onto the TPNW. Therefore, we argue that the actors negotiating on behalf of the NPT and the TPNW need to take a more 'feminised approach' and work together instead of against one another to meet their ultimate shared goal of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

When asked if a feminist foreign policy could aid the P5 countries in giving up their nuclear weapons, Ware stated: "Totally. If the P5 developed a genuine FFP, it would help them phase out their reliance on nuclear deterrence, as a genuine feminist foreign policy elevates common security approaches to security rather than military approaches. If non-nuclear countries also developed a genuine feminist foreign policy, it would help them engage better with the nuclear-armed countries, instead of their current masculine, aggressive, 'we are right and they are wrong' approach." (Ware, 2021). Therefore, Ware sums up the notion that a feminist foreign policy, a genuine one that takes a 'feminised' approach to disarmament issues, is a significant and effective tool in achieving nuclear disarmament. Furthermore, Ware also highlights how a feminist foreign policy is not living up to its full potential without tackling disarmament.

Perspectivisation

Feminism has a variety of strains and means different things to different people. Nonetheless, most of us can agree that it is a set of values that prioritises, at minimum, gender equality and apply an intersectional lens to target all forms of oppression, which includes a distant care for others. Therefore, the importance of taking a feminist approach to every aspect of foreign policy, including foreign assistance and humanitarian response, diplomacy, defence and security, military, immigration, and accountability mechanisms, will ensure that human rights and equality are at the centre of a country's foreign policy. Thus, creating the conditions for a safer and more prosperous country and world. Nonetheless, throughout the paper and our analysis, we have mentioned that a feminist foreign policy is a framework to be adapted and implemented according to the country's current foreign policy, which is where differences will

arise. As a feminist foreign policy needs to clearly state what outcomes the policy seeks to advance and specify the timelines for change, while consulting with the people they are intended to help. We, therefore, believe that recommendations or practices for countries to consider when formulating a feminist foreign policy in the current agenda will vary according to their current reality and position within global politics.

Currently, as many countries are a nuclear power, a NATO member or have strong relations with the United States, we argue that it undermines their articulated aim to implement a feminist foreign policy in the future or hinders the countries who have a feminist foreign policy. In order to take leadership in feminist foreign policy, it is vital that many countries adopt some recommendations or practices on short- and long-term interventions. A first recommendation would be to adopt a no-first-use policy that demonstrates a legal and political commitment that nuclear weapons will only be deployed in response to an initial attack and only as a last resort. Additionally, putting a halt the modernisation agenda and recommit to reducing warheads would also be a significant step towards nuclear disarmament.

When looking at France's nuclear arsenal, it is a lot smaller compared to the United States. Nonetheless, that does not decrease the lethality of these weapons. Furthermore, it glosses over the violence, consequences, and many impacts they can cause, which goes against an ethics of care approach within their feminist foreign policies. An obvious recommendation for us would be to sign and ratify the Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty (TPNW) as this legally binding instrument would ensure accountability to the whole of the international community, and particularly marginalised groups that have been affected by nuclear programmes. However, we do recognize that this might not be the 'reality' for EU member states. Therefore, we encourage more feminised dialogue between EU member states, the NPT and the TPNW to cooperate on their common goal of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free EU.

Additionally, we argue that adopting a post-nuclear feminist foreign policy goes beyond gender equality. Nuclear arms must be eliminated as part of a comprehensive feminist foreign policy that goes beyond token gestures to gender equality. The gendered and even racialised power hierarchies needed for countries to practice their gender roles have shown this

incompatibility in nuclear weapons ownership and operation. If we look at France, in taking a genuinely feminist approach to foreign policy, it must be anti-colonial, anti-racist, and anti-militarist, and work to change the structures that perpetuate gender hierarchies. For example, it must deal with the consequences of its nuclear testing programs in French Polynesia and the Marshal Islands. Finally, we believe that to one day have a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the European Union, countries need to take a position of power to lead the way to disarmament and eventual the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. Therefore, as part of our analysis, we believe that NATO members, such as Sweden, should advocate for a change in NATO policy regarding NATO's reliance on nuclear deterrence. EU members are actors with legitimate agency within their institution, and therefore have the power to change policy. NATO members must push for nuclear disarmament.

By systematically integrating gender mainstreaming and an intersectional feminist perspective as guiding fundamentals of EU external action, we believe that countries can adopt and claim to have implemented a feminist foreign policy. However, given they are actively working towards integrating gender mainstreaming and an intersectional feminist perspective in other policy areas, such as climate change, migration and within the LGBTQ+ community. We argue that by improving other policy areas, this will have a domino effect on other areas, as they are all interconnected. Nonetheless, we contend that countries will never fully embrace a genuine feminist foreign policy if they do not address their defence and security policy to the fullest, specifically their nuclear weapons and stance on nuclear disarmament.

Finally, we believe it is important to mention that it is hard to imagine countries getting rid of their nuclear weapons with the current global political sphere, thus risking their political and military power and fully implementing a feminist foreign policy. Especially when we think about the P5, the question arises if they would ever give up their power in terms of nuclear arms, militarization and making profit from these fields. According to Alyn Ware, it is possible:

"Nuclear weapons are a dead-end game. It's a game that the nuclear-armed and allied states are currently playing primarily because they don't have vision or confidence in an alternative game. But there are growing political forces in these countries challenging this framework and calling for something better."

Thus, it is possible for the P5 countries to give up their nuclear power if an alternative is provided to them to ensure the sense of power and security it currently gives them on a national and, most importantly, international scale. Even though a feminist foreign policy might not be the alternative the countries seek, we believe it is a first step in the right direction for countries, such as the P5, to demilitarize. Alyn Ware agrees by stating that:

"If the P5 developed a genuine FFP, it would help them phase out their reliance on nuclear deterrence, as a genuine FFP elevates common security approaches to security rather than military approaches. If non-nuclear countries also developed a genuine FFP it would help them engage better with the nuclear-armed countries, instead of their current masculine, aggressive, 'we are right and they are wrong' approach".

Implementing a genuine feminist foreign policy will take time and require a lot of work from all countries, political actors, and international institutions involved in external actions. As stated by Alyn, the race for nuclear disarmament does involve not only nuclear countries but also non-nuclear countries. It remains an international issue that concerns us all. Nonetheless, it remains striking how little sustained attention we continue to give it.

Conclusion

Over the last decade, the European Union has developed various initiatives, policies, and strategies within its external action that has implemented, to a certain extent, a gender perspective that has actively aimed to foster gender equality. In saying that, the European Union still has a long way to go to effectively use gender mainstreaming or an intersectional perspective within its institutions. Especially in the field of security and defence, the European Union needs to comprehend the consequences of nuclear weapons and halt the continuous funding in the development and proliferation of such weapons of mass destruction. The existing knowledge of the impacts of nuclear war shows that if not addressed, there will be irreversible and dramatic consequences concerning the environment, health, the economy, agriculture, and societies across the world.

Yet, the discourse on nuclear weapons and gender, how and why the two are connected, and how they influence global agendas, such as security and defence and sustainable

development, remains limited and dominated by 'technostrategic' language. Moreover, the gender and nuclear weapons discourse continue to neglect the emotional aspects and vulnerability of human lives, as they are marked as 'feminine'. Therefore, the 'masculine' discourse continues to contribute to the current lack of nuclear disarmament progress as it has only recently begun to apply a feminist intersectional perspective within the policy making process. Thus, not allowing us to comprehend the connection between efforts in the nuclear weapons domain with other policy areas, such as those related to gender equality. Hence, this paper explored how this connection between gender and nuclear disarmament can become more apparent and help EU member states achieve an EU nuclear-weapon-free zone.

Through using feminist foreign policy as a main point of departure, we analysed the national and international level of nuclear disarmament within the cases of Sweden, Luxembourg and France. Furthermore, on the international level, we analysed the greater context of nuclear disarmament through two international treaties, the Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). This paper aimed to explore to what extent a feminist foreign policy, employed by EU member states, can aid in pushing countries to achieve an EU nuclear-weapon-free zone. Therefore, we analysed three countries, Sweden, France and Luxembourg, that have announced an implementation of a feminist foreign policy and their current position on nuclear weapons to move towards nuclear disarmament. Through our analysis and table comparing Sweden, France and Luxembourg, we offered a better presentation of the similarities and differences within the context of their feminist foreign policies and nuclear weapons. We establish that the countries aim to make a feminist foreign policy part of their foreign policy agenda and apply it throughout their external actions through our analysis and discussion.

Nonetheless, we firmly believe that if countries do not work towards a total elimination of nuclear weapons and remain adamant about their NATO alliance to stay in a position of power, they will never have a genuine feminist foreign policy. As highlighted through our interview with Alyn Ware, there is the possibility to achieve an EU nuclear-weapon-free zone, but member states will have to actively make changes within their current foreign policy to achieve it. We strongly believe that a feminist intersectional perspective is useful and highly

relevant in order to understand the impact, discourse and actors dealing with nuclear weapons. Therefore, we conclude that a feminist foreign policy, while being a new and controversial concept, is a goal of any foreign policy to achieve, as it puts the role and the rights of women and minority groups at its core, and most importantly, adopts a feminist peace approach when used to its full potential.

In answering our research question, we conclude that a feminist foreign policy has great potential in achieving a nuclear-weapon-free European Union zone. However, it needs to be a feminist foreign policy that lives up to its full potential and links its gender perspective with nuclear disarmament. Furthermore, feminist foreign policies should not be undermined on the international stage or by multilateral agreements, such as NATO's nuclear deterrence strategy. Thus far, only Sweden has made such links but still has not fully committed to nuclear abolition, namely on the international stage. Therefore, we believe that countries can use a feminist foreign policy as a blueprint that will help them to maintain peace, security, human rights and development on a national and international scale. Yet, we need to keep in mind that the biggest challenge to a feminist foreign policy with the EU is the growing interest in further defence and militarism cooperation and strengthening military capacity, such as the likes on NATO. Thus, not only do we need structural changes, but we need to adapt the discourse and practices around nuclear weapons within the EU.

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