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Supervisor: James Pamment
Examinators: Howard Nothhaft
Henrik Merkelsen

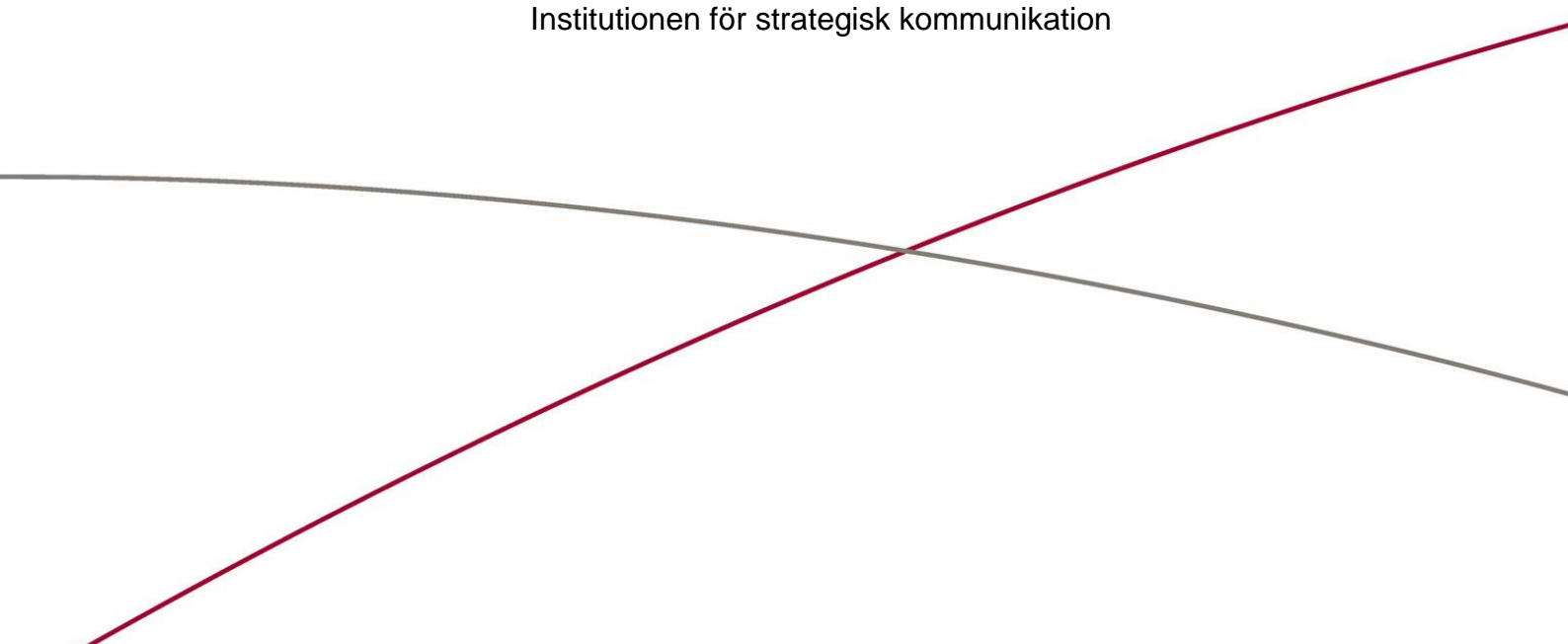
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Are you Closing your Borders?

*A study on the impact of the migration crisis on the work with
promoting the image and interests of Sweden abroad*

ALEXANDRA OLOFSSON

Lunds universitet
Institutionen för strategisk kommunikation



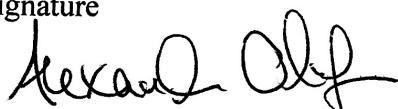
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ABSTRACT

The Image of Sweden abroad usually comes with positive connotations. Some of Sweden's perceived strengths, e.g. being *open, authentic, caring, and innovative*, are represented in the *Strategy for the Image of Sweden* (2013). However, changing circumstances, such as the implementation of internal border controls as a result of the *migration crisis* beginning in autumn 2015, along with a changing political landscape in Sweden, might be contesting this image, showing a less tolerant side to this "open nation". Through a framework of public diplomacy and nation branding, the purpose of this case study is to explore how the migration crisis has impacted on the work with promoting the image and interests of Sweden abroad at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs units UD-KOM and UD-FH, and the Swedish Institute. The findings show that Swedish public diplomacy actors are currently faced with the challenges of balancing several aspects: an image discrepancy between being open and closed; a self-image that does not fully correspond to the 'Swedish identity'; short-term and long-term time frames; and international and domestic audiences. The study argues that the MFA and SI have shown an unpreparedness in promoting the image and interests of Sweden abroad when struck with a potential image 'crisis'. It locates a lack of short-term focus among the Swedish Institute and UD-FH, the long-term actors not primarily 'hit' by the potential impact of the migration crisis on the Image of Sweden. Insufficient coordination and cooperation between actors furthermore aggravates the promotional work, which can be seen in contradictive messaging communicated in relation to the migration crisis. As the study has the form of a case study on Swedish public diplomacy, one must be cautious when attempting to generalise from the findings.

Keywords: nation branding, public diplomacy, migration crisis, Brand Sweden, the Image of Sweden, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Swedish Institute, strategic public relations

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MFA – The Ministry for Foreign Affairs

UD – Utrikesdepartementet (the MFA in Swedish)

UD-KOM – Enheten för kommunikation, the Department for Communication at the MFA

UD-FH – Enheten för främjande och hållbart företagande, the Department for Promotion and Sustainable Business Enterprise at the MFA

SI – The Swedish Institute

PD – public diplomacy

NB – nation branding

SOU – Statens offentliga utredningar, Swedish Government Official Reports; a series of investigations commissioned by the government.

1. DEFINITION OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.1 Introduction

We humans use as the heart as much as we use the brain [...] when we choose which country to study or travel in, do business in or be inspired by when it comes to politics and the construction of the society. Therefore, a country's reputation and standing is important. Everything that Sweden and Swedes say and do, and what others say about us, can impact on the overall picture. (Svenska Institutet, 2014b)

These words set the scene for the nation brand Sweden in the *Strategy for the Image of Sweden* ['Sverigebildsstrategin']. Presented in 2013, the strategy revolves around Swedish strengths in the four profile areas *creativity, society, sustainability* and *innovation*, and focuses on the four core values *open, authentic, caring, and innovative* (NSU, 2014; Svenska Institutet, 2014b; Pamment, 2011b; Pamment, 2012).

Sweden is but one of many nations having developed a strategy for enhancing a certain image or competitive identity in the global 'marketplace'. From an *economic* perspective, branding a nation is a means to promote economic competitiveness and growth within tourism, trade, investment and export, and attract talent such as students and competent workers. On a *political* dimension, promoting a nation is seen to increase international credibility and political influence; a strong brand could improve a nation's 'soft power'. Furthermore, from a *social* perspective, a 'unified' national image can help create a feeling of integration within a community, and enhance national solidarity and self-esteem (Varga, 2013; Browning, 2016; Dinnie, 2016).

Critical scholars are not late to point out challenges involved in nation branding, such as the non-democratic approach of having an elite decide what

the nation brand should be (Aronczyk, 2013; Varga, 2013). Scholars and practitioners of a more supportive stance do acknowledge that certain challenges are inherent in nation branding, but still stress its importance by pointing to the benefits (Dinnie, 2016; Olins, 2002). Anholt (2010) questions whether the image of a nation can be managed in the first place, and instead claims that positive images can neither be created nor altered by communications, but only be earned through “good governance” which is communicated effectively (p. 51). Others view nation branding as a change management tool that *can* impact on the national reputation of a country (Szondi, 2008), for instance when the image of a nation has been damaged due to e.g. negative attention after unpopular domestic decisions (Aronczyk, 2013; Manor & Segev, 2015). Nations are advised to work strategically with their image, especially when it does not correspond with reality. Thus, a nation should modify its brand according to the current ‘zeitgeist’, i.e. ‘spirit of the time’ (Dinnie, 2016).

1.1.1 THE IMAGE OF SWEDEN AND THE MIGRATION CRISIS

Sweden has a mainly positive image abroad and usually ranks high in different indexes. The further away you go and the younger the target group, however, the less clear the picture gets. Where Sweden *is* known, it tends to be for qualities such as responsibility, openness and tolerance; for its gender equality and progressive values; and its welfare society (Svenska Institutet, 2014a; Regeringen, 2009). In order to have an updated and balanced image, however, communication also revolves around promoting an image of Sweden as e.g. a digital forerunner (Hjort, 2016).

In the fall of 2015, there was an increased flow of (mainly) refugees and asylum seekers fleeing from conflict areas in Syria and other parts of the Middle East to Europe. In 2015, Sweden accepted 163 000 asylum seekers, out of which 35 000 were unaccompanied minors. In October and November alone, nearly 80 000 persons arrived (Justitiedepartementet, 2016). In relation to the migration crisis¹, updated images and narratives of Sweden began circulating in international media. In January 2016, the British tabloid the *Daily Mail* initiated what can be interpreted as a campaign against European countries' 'liberal and naïve' migration and asylum policies; Sweden and Germany being the main 'victims' of articles portraying societies in downfall due to migration. In the case of Sweden, the murder of a social worker at a centre for unaccompanied minors is perceived as the event that set off the campaign (see e.g. Andersson, 2016; Reid, 2016; Malm & Mezzofiore, 2016). Furthermore, media such as the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Washington Times* and the *Courier Mail* have referred to the Swedish xenophobic site *Avpixlat* when reporting about a fight in the Stockholm suburb Rinkeby (Svedjetun, 2016).

Even though the articles can be perceived as racist and angled (Perlenberg, 2016), the breadth of the migration crisis was underestimated by the Swedish government, and the situation impacted on the functionality of the Swedish society locally, regionally and nationally (Ekberg, 2016a; Justitiedepartementet, 2016). As a result, the tolerant migration policy received domestic criticism and was referred to as a 'project of the elite' that failed to take into account opinions among citizens (Esaiasson, 2016). Even

¹ In this paper, this term will be used instead of e.g. *the refugee crisis*, as it is viewed as more inclusive.

though the (online) public debate around the issue included viewpoints of an open stance, it was also characterized by opinions of a xenophobic kind. During the autumn, several accommodations intended for asylum seekers burnt down, many of which the police suspects to have been intended fires (Sveriges Radio, 2015). On November 12, 2015, the Swedish refugee- and migration policy made a U-turn by initiating border controls at internal borders as a means to maintain public order and internal security. On 4th January, 2016, ID-controls were implemented as a next step in decreasing the amount of immigrants to Sweden (Regeringskansliet, 2016a). As of June, 2016, the border controls have been prolonged eight times with a current end date set to November 11, 2016 (Regeringskansliet, 2016a).

1.2 Purpose and Research Questions

Due to the increased (negative) attention Sweden has received in relation to migration, the purpose of the study is to explore how the migration crisis has impacted on the work with promoting the image and interests of Sweden abroad. The first research question explores how the work is institutionally and communicatively organised and perceived by the actors involved, also exploring how the actors define the Image of Sweden:

- *How do UD-KOM², UD-FH³ and the Swedish Institute work with promoting the image and interests of Sweden abroad through public diplomacy and/or nation branding activities and strategies?*

² The Department for Communication ('Enheten för kommunikation')

³ The Department for Promotion and Sustainable Business Enterprise ('Enheten för främjande och hållbart företagande')

The migration crisis is used as a case in point, with the purpose of finding out how the promotional work has been challenged as a result of the crisis:

- *How has the migration crisis impacted on UD-KOM, UD-FH and the Swedish Institute's work with promoting the image and interests of Sweden abroad through public diplomacy and/or nation branding activities and strategies?*

A third research question aims at connecting the results with public relations (PR) theory:

- *What challenges are involved in promoting or managing the contemporary image and interests of Sweden abroad?*

1.3 Focus and Delimitations

The study focuses on the image and interests of Sweden abroad, using a public diplomacy and nation branding framework. It includes an exploration of whether Swedish public diplomacy is seen to adhere to the current 'zeitgeist', and whether Sweden, apart from ID-controls to keep the number of asylum seekers down, is also engaging in 'negative branding' as a way to make the country less attractive for certain groups. This occurred in the Netherlands in 2004, when the Ministry of Justice communicated that 26 000 illegal asylum seekers residing in the country would be deported. The message spread quickly online and led to a decreased flow of refugees (Melissen, 2005).

The study has been delimited to only include the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) units UD-KOM and UD-FH and the Swedish Institute (SI), as these are perceived to work within the framework of public diplomacy. Other

actors promoting Sweden abroad, such as Business Sweden and Visit Sweden, have been excluded due to their narrower (branding) foci.

1.4 Previous Research and Contribution of the Study

Few practice-oriented studies have been done on public diplomacy and nation branding in relation to ‘crises’: Merckelsen & Rasmussen (2014) researched how the Danish cartoon crisis, i.e. the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten*’s published depictions of the prophet Muhammad, was managed through nation branding strategies. Avraham (2013) used a crisis communication and image restoration approach when analysing what strategies were employed by marketers in the Middle East when attempting to restore a positive image of places suffering from long-term image crises. Studies that focus specifically on the Image of Sweden, Swedish public diplomacy and nation branding are scarce, and have usually taken a general focus. For instance, Pamment (2011a) researched the new public diplomacy and used Sweden as one of three cases. Pelling (2016) focussed his research on Swedish digital diplomacy and recent initiatives for ideas and collaboration. Other studies (e.g. Christensen, 2013; Hoffman, 2013) tend to focus on cultural relations and the work of the Swedish Institute and/or specific initiatives, such as the official Sweden Twitter account *Curators of Sweden*, run by ‘regular’ Swedes. Thus, few studies to date have taken an integrative approach to the work with promoting the image of Sweden abroad by researching both the MFA and SI, while also comparing how the work has been, or has not been, affected by an event such as the migration crisis.

The current study contributes to advancing theoretical and practical knowledge within public relations theory through its focus on image management. It raises the issue of how external circumstances can challenge not just the work on promoting the image and interests of Sweden abroad, but also the legitimacy of an 'open' nation brand due to contradicting messages and the co-existence of a less open Sweden.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The following literature review aims at providing an overall account of how image promotion can be used by nations to advance their image and interests. It is complemented with a chapter on Swedish public diplomacy and nation branding that provides the reader with an understanding of the study's specific context.

2.1 Promoting the Image and Interests of a Nation Abroad

Nation-states have long used persuasion strategies as means to attain an attractive image abroad and advance their “political, economic, and cultural agendas” (Kaneva, 2011, p. 117; Melissen, 2005; Dinnie, 2016). Promoting an image (and interests) abroad is closely related to the fields of public diplomacy (PD) and nation branding (NB), whose definitions and interrelationship are continuously debated. The fields have been viewed as the same concept, as two separate concepts, or as something in between (e.g. Szondi, 2008); or as complements to each other (e.g. Melissen, 2005). Generally, nation branding is viewed as one-way promotion providing a simplified image of a country in order to sell it, while at the same time silencing controversies. Public diplomacy is seen to consist of two-way, symmetric communication that aims to explain and resolve issues (Ociepka, 2013).

Nation branding, originating from the marketing and branding paradigms, can be seen as a means to compete for economic gains (tourists, trade, and talent), while public diplomacy, originating from the field of

international relations, is an activity aimed at influencing in policy related areas (Melissen, 2013). However, both fields have an interest in promoting a certain image internationally, and through that image contribute to reaching economic, cultural, and policy related objectives. Thus, nation branding and public diplomacy are in this study viewed as overall image management tools (Kaneva, 2011). Before exploring the relationship between the concepts further, a historic overview is presented, followed by explanations of the concepts of image, identity and nation brand.

2.2 A History of Image Promotion

After the Second World War, nations became encouraged to replace the concept of ‘battlefield’ with ‘marketplace’ as the new way of attaining power and prestige, in a world where physical boundaries and borders were becoming less relevant (Aronczyk, 2013; Jansen, 2008). State leaders began viewing the nation as “a valuable resource in the growing competition for global investment, trade, and tourism” (Aronczyk, 2013, p. 4). These thoughts portray the emergence of what in the 1990’s became known as *nation branding*. Michael Porter, who applied the concept of ‘competitive advantage’ to the nation, is a key figure in the discussion, which also included individuals such as Mark Leonard, Wally Olins and Simon Anholt, the latter credited for establishing nation branding as a discourse and field of practice and research (Pamment, 2015; Aronczyk, 2008; Jansen, 2008).

Professional political image cultivation, which emerged around the same time, can be seen in the increased focus on ‘soft power’, i.e. the use of culture, ideology, and institutions as power resources, as alternatives to ‘hard’

military and economic power (Nye, 2004). Thus, the use of softer values became the postmodern version of ‘power over opinion’, where countries that “frame issues, whose culture and ideas are closer to prevailing international norms, and whose credibility abroad is reinforced by their values and policies” are likely to be seen as more attractive (Melissen, 2005, p. 4). Through its focus on values, culture and ideology, *public diplomacy* can be viewed as a key instrument or tool of soft power (Melissen, 2005; Cross, 2013).

The retired American Foreign Service officer Edmund Guillon has been credited for using the term ‘public diplomacy’ in its modern sense in 1965, with the purpose of creating a less pejorative alternative to the term ‘propaganda’. The birth of the public diplomacy-term did not mean that the components of public diplomacy were novel, however – they have been used by states for centuries (Cull, 2009; 2013). Public diplomacy is defined as “the communication of a nation’s foreign policies to citizens in sovereign states other than one’s own” (Pamment, 2012, p. 313). Thus, as opposed to traditional diplomacy, which targets governments, public diplomacy is directed at non-governmental actors, such as the general public, civil society representatives or journalists and media institutions, with the implicit aim of influencing relations to and positions of foreign governments through citizens of that country (Pamment, 2012). Traditional diplomacy is characterised by one-way communication, risk aversion and protection of information, and letting go of that mind set is difficult for governments. As Murray (2016) argues, however, public and digital diplomacy makes it possible to move from

slow and ‘fossilized’ diplomacy into one that is innovative, proactive, dynamic, and not the least – public.

Public diplomacy work is seen to “feed off the general image of the country and reflect back on it - in both positive and negative directions” (Leonard, Stead & Smewing, 2002, p. 9). Thus, what image a nation has can impact on whether a nation is able to influence issues of importance. In the case of Sweden, contemporary soft power attempts can be seen in the current government’s attempt to attract other nations to its feminist foreign policy (Regeringskansliet, n.d.). However, it usually takes time before soft power results are seen (Aronczyk, 2013; Nye & Welch, 2011). Access to e.g. several communication channels be used as a tactic to influence how issues are framed by global news media (Snow, 2009).

For a long time, public diplomacy was strongly connected to U.S experience (Cull, 2013). The 9/11 attacks are seen to have “triggered a global debate on public diplomacy” (Melissen, 2005, p. 8), however, when governments began realising the importance of following and responding to increasingly negative foreign perceptions of a nation: a poor image abroad could severely affect the nation at home (Zaharna, 2015). Focus on building relationships increased among national governments, and as a result of this ‘turn’, research differentiates between traditional, one-way public diplomacy and the new public diplomacy more focussed on engagement with foreign audiences.

2.3 Image and Identity

*Image*⁴ is defined as how something is perceived from the outside (Dinnie, 2016), and as the “generally unplanned impressions created in the minds of insiders and outsiders” (Browning, 2015, p. 201). These impressions are the results of different factors, e.g. direct experience and emotional perceptions of a nation (White & Kolesnicov, 2015), specific associations to and knowledge of a country and personal values (Browning, 2015); people’s associations, memories, expectations and other feelings around the nation (Anholt, 2007); and media coverage and stereotypes (Fan, 2010). According to Anholt (2007), a national image is the result of six aspects: *tourism promotion; export brands; governmental policy decisions; business aspects* (investment, talent recruitment and other companies’ expansion into the nation); *cultural exchange, activities, and exports*; and a nation’s *people*. An image is something a nation has irrespective of whether it engages in activities aiming at influencing it (Anholt, 2007). Also, nations are likely to have several, competing images that are continuously (re)shaped by world events and nations’ reactions to these events (Manor & Segev, 2015). Thus, different parts of the image are in focus at different times, making it complex and fluid. As a result, the image clarity as projected in e.g. the nation brand can never be reached in reality (Fan, 2010). Furthermore, the image of a nation can affect how citizens see themselves and how they want to be seen by others (Cross, 2013).

⁴ *Image* and *reputation* are interrelated concepts. While some authors differentiate between them (e.g. Fan, 2010; Manor & Segev, 2015), others do not make any further distinction between the two (e.g. Anholt, 2007, 2010; White & Kolesnicov, 2015). In this study, the concepts are viewed as similar, and *image* is the term used when referring to either of the two.

A nation's *identity* is its true essence (Dinnie, 2016); its self-perception (White & Kolesnicov, 2015), i.e. the “essentially irrational psychological bond that binds fellow nationals together” (Fan, 2010, p. 100). According to Cross (2013), the existence of constant identity-image feedback requires public diplomacy actors to reflect upon “the identity of the people it represents” (p. 6). The identity of a nation and image perceptions are unlikely to correspond fully. Instead, image perceptions are oftentimes made up of stereotypes, clichés and racist caricatures. One means to decrease the gap and promote the ‘real’ national identity, is to strategically manage it through nation branding (Dinnie, 2016).

2.4 Nation Brand(ing)

Fan (2010) equates *nation brand* with *nation image*: the brand is the outcome of the perceptions held by international stakeholders. This implies that the brand is the result of external perceptions rather than the choice to focus on unique identity qualities as is done in a nation branding process. Anholt (2007) instead declares *national identity* and *nation brand* “virtually the same”, nation brand being the identity made “tangible, robust, communicable, and above all useful” (p. 75), i.e. representing a nation’s ‘competitive identity’. This view is also visible in the definition of the *nation brand* as “the unique, multi-dimensional blend of elements that provide the nation with culturally grounded differentiation and relevance for all of its target audiences” (Dinnie, 2016, p. 5). This study thus defines the nation brand as the parts of the identity that help define what makes the nation unique. That ‘something unique’ has been chosen (by an elite) in a nation branding process as being representative of the nation, or in other words, as “simplified

representations” of the national identity (Browning, 2015, p. 201). However, getting those not involved in the process (e.g. regular citizens) to agree with and act according to the brand values and chosen strengths is a potentially substantial challenge (Fan, 2010; Dinnie, 2016). A solution is to focus on the true essence of the nation, as Olins & Hildreth (2011) argue to be the best approach: “In the more successful instances of nation branding, the focus seems to be more internal than external – that is, more attention is directed to how the nation perceives itself than to how the nation is perceived by outsiders” (p. 56). Still, the problem remains of finding values that can represent a nation in all its complexity and diversity, which has been pointed out by e.g. Aronczyk (2013).

2.5 Reconceptualising Nation Branding

When nation branding first emerged as a field, it was ridiculed and met with scepticism by many scholars. Neither was it seen as a serious phenomenon, nor as something worth researching: the thought of branding a nation was simply unconceivable (Aronczyk, 2013). According to Olins (2002), nation branding is misinterpreted by the critics and thus does not deserve the ‘mongering’ it has been subjected to. The problem critics seem to have with nation branding is not related to the practice itself, but rather to the use of the word ‘brand’ or the process of ‘branding’ when put into the context of a nation (Olins, 2002; Anholt, 2010). Also supporters of nation branding have questioned the appropriateness of the word ‘branding’ in this context, since it fails to acknowledge that nation branding is a highly politicized activity, including e.g. activating diaspora networks, coordinating governmental agencies, and the debate around national identity (Dinnie, 2016). Suggested

replacement terms for *nation branding* are *nation image management* (Fan, 2010); and *reputation management* (Dinnie, 2016).

Simon Anholt, the founder of nation branding, also seems to have altered his interpretation of the field. From having referred to the concept as *nation branding*, Anholt (2007) renamed it *competitive identity* (CI); a concept that includes public diplomacy, trade, investment, tourism and export promotion (Anholt, 2007, 2011; Jansen, 2008; Kaneva, 2011). Anholt views CI as the modern version of ‘soft power’, as it concerns “making people want to pay attention to a country’s achievements, and believe in its qualities” (Anholt, 2007, p. 127; 2008). Thus, nation branding “has more to do with national identity and the politics and economics of competitiveness than with branding as it is usually understood in the commercial sector” (Anholt, 2008, p. 22). Anholt (2013) furthermore stresses the importance of cultural relations and how cultural exchange between nations and their citizens (through e.g. cultural centres) is the “only demonstrably effective form of nation branding” (Anholt, 2013, p. 11).

Thus, due to its connection to the sphere of e.g. politics, nation branding as a term and concept is not sufficient when put into the context of cultivating a certain image abroad. Together with public diplomacy, however, an integrative perspective can be found.

2.6 Nation Branding and the Public Diplomacy Framework

Aronczyk (2013) defines nation branding as consisting of three dimensions. The first dimension views nation branding as the *commercial and public sector interests* in communicating “national priorities among domestic and

international populations for a variety of interrelated purposes” such as competing for international capital within tourism, foreign direct investment (FDI), import-export trade, higher education, and skilled labour (p. 16). Secondly, Aronczyk includes a *diplomacy dimension*, with focus on conveying an image of legitimacy and authority in diplomatic arenas. In this dimension, nation branding can be used to manage impressions, repair a damaged reputation, or to evade negative attention due to unpopular domestic decisions or unexpected or uncontrollable events. In the third dimension, nation branding is a means to gain consensus and positive emotions of pride among citizens at home as a result of positive public opinions abroad. This view has also been argued by van Ham (2001), who views nation branding as non-antagonistic campaign replacing nationalism.

A recent attempt to define public diplomacy and its relation to nation branding is seen in *the integrated public diplomacy model* (Golan & Yang, 2015), which divides public diplomacy into three dimensions: *the mediated public diplomacy dimension*, *the national branding and country reputation dimension*, and *the relational dimension*. The short-term, mediated public diplomacy dimension, which concerns pursuing to cultivate a favourable image in foreign media e.g. in times of crisis, has the aim of controlling how policy issues are framed. The national branding and country reputation dimension takes into consideration the impact of the nation ‘brand’ on the national image, and is viewed as a medium to long-term approach. The long-term, relational dimension is based on Nye’s ‘soft power’ concept of using culture, political values and foreign policies as resources to attract other nations and make them “want what you want” (Golan, 2015, p. 422). This

level includes the use of communication technologies and activities such as cultural exchange as means to build relationships with publics. The three dimensions are seen as contingent upon each other: favourable media coverage is necessary before success in other public diplomacy efforts can be reached. Nations with good credibility, a good image, can therefore focus their efforts on the nation branding and relational PD levels directly (Golan, 2015).

Golan & Yang's model has clear connections to Nye's and Leonard, Stead & Smewing's three dimensions of public diplomacy, respectively. Nye (2004) names the dimensions *daily communications*, e.g. explaining policy; *strategic communication*, e.g. developing themes; and *cultivating relationships*, e.g. through exchanges, seminars, and access to media channels. Leonard, Stead & Smewing (2002) refer to the dimensions mainly in terms of timeframe: *reactive*, i.e. hours and days, *proactive*, i.e. weeks and months, and *relationship building*, i.e. years. Furthermore, public diplomacy takes place in three different spheres - political/military, economic, and societal/cultural - which all impact on creating an attractive image of a country and can help obtain the outcomes desired.

According to Kelley (2015), public diplomacy is furthermore dependent on situational factors, which makes the communication either propagandistic or transparent (communication style), short-term or long-term (timeframe), and proactive or reactive (posture orientation). The latter can be used as 'damage-control' in times of (reputational) crisis.

In this study, public diplomacy is defined according to Golan & Yang's model; divided into timeframes and including nation branding as one

dimension. Furthermore, PD is viewed as context-dependent, as argued by Kelley (2015).

2.6.1 COMPONENTS OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Apart from consisting of dimensions, public diplomacy can be broken down into components. Cull (2011; 2013) defines five elements involved in public diplomacy: *listening*; *advocacy*, i.e. engaging a public through explaining foreign policy; *cultural diplomacy*, i.e. engaging a public by export of artistic, linguistic or other cultural forms; *exchange*, i.e. a two-way exchange of persons (e.g. student exchange); and finally, *international broadcasting*, i.e. state sponsorship of news. Public diplomacy begins with listening to the public that you are trying to connect with, however (Cull, 2011; Seib, 2012).

Traditional public diplomacy to a great extent used one-way communication mass media channels such as TV, radio and print media to reach their publics, mainly with the purpose of generating support for foreign policies abroad (yet combined with two-way communication in the form of cultural and educational exchanges) (Zaharna & Uysal, 2015). The new public diplomacy still uses these channels but is also characterised by a relational approach and a demand for governments to engage more in dialogue with different actors, an approach influenced by the field of public relations research (Golan & Yang, 2015).

Scholars tend to agree that information (management and distribution), influence (long-term persuasion) and engagement (building relationships) make up core public diplomacy categories of activity (Kelley, 2015). Who the actors of public diplomacy are and whether public diplomacy occurs in a domestic or foreign sphere has no consensus, however. Scholars debate

whether public diplomacy is the task of state-level actors (government-to-people diplomacy), or if the initiator or the activities can also be private individuals or groups (people-to-people diplomacy), or a combination of the two (Kelley, 2015; Cross, 2013; Snow, 2009). If citizens are viewed as public diplomats, their actions can be seen to impact on foreigners' "respect and affection" for the nation (Mueller, 2009, p. 106; Cross, 2013). Thus, citizens can be seen as nation brand ambassadors (Anholt, 2007; Dinnie, 2016). The relevance of this debate has grown along with e.g. globalization and the digital revolution, which today provides more democratic access to information for non-state actors, a monopoly that previously belonged to the nation state. Social media and user-generated sites are enabling individuals, who were previously observers, to be networked participants in international politics on a global scale (Melissen, 2005; Snow & Taylor, 2009; Cull, 2011).

The digital revolution is furthermore seen to have impacted on the boundaries between the domestic and foreign spheres, blurring the lines between them (Kelley, 2015; Headley, 2011). To get an integrative view, Huijgh (2013) proposes to view domestic public affairs and international public diplomacy as complementary concepts on a "continuum of stepping stones" (p. 60), while Melissen (in Kelley, 2015) argues for a distinction between the two.

2.6.2 COORDINATING PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

How public diplomacy is organised differs, but a nation commonly has several institutions from the areas of tourism, business, culture, and the government managing the work on promoting a nation's competitive identity abroad (Anholt, 2007). To implement a public diplomacy strategy efficiently,

it is important for the actors involved to be coordinated: poor coordination can have negative impact on both the work and results (Leonard, Stead & Smewing, 2002). Thus, collaborative public diplomacy is necessary in order to shape shared perceptions of the issues at hand (Pamment, 2013). Actors should be telling the same “story of the country” (Anholt, 2007, p. 87) and make sure that a majority of the stakeholders and the general population understand (and agree with) the strategy and its content. The policy timeframe is usually short-term focussed, however, as opposed to the more long-term nature of culture and cultural institutes (Anholt, 2007; Pamment, 2013). As a result, different timeframe-perspectives could prove a challenge in coordination among promotional actors.

3. IN-DEPTH BACKGROUND: SWEDISH PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND NATION BRANDING

Swedish public diplomacy and nation branding, or promotional work, is divided between the *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*, MFA and the *Swedish Institute*, SI, a public agency under the MFA.

3.1 Organisation

3.1.1 THE MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Created in 1809, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) is responsible for Swedish foreign policy (Pamment, 2011a). As the largest of ten departments, the MFA consists of ca 100 Foreign Missions⁵ that together with the MFA make up the Foreign Service. The Foreign Service employs around 2600 staff: ca 750 are stationed in Stockholm, ca 500 at the missions, and ca 1300 are locally employed (Regeringskansliet, 2016d). In relation to work on public diplomacy and promoting the Image of Sweden abroad, two functional units are of most relevance: *the Department for Communication*, UD-KOM⁶ and *the Department for Promotion and Sustainable Business Enterprise*, UD-FH⁷. The units were initially merged, but a rationalisation process in 2007 led to UD-FH becoming a separate unit with main promotional responsibility, with the exception of culture. Culture promotion lay with UD-KOM until around five years ago, when a rationalisation process led to this task being given to UD-FH, along with the supervision of SI (Pamment, 2011a).

⁵ Embassies, representations, delegations, and consulates.

⁶ UD-PIK, short for *Press, Information och Kommunikation* changed into UD-KOM, short for *kommunikation* in 2014 (Ekberg, 2016, personal correspondence).

⁷ On April 11th, 2016 UD-FIM changed into UD-FH, *Enheten för främjande och hållbart företagande*. The changes have not impacted on the work of Hjort and his team (Hjort, 2016), and thus has no impact on the results of this study.

3.1.2 THE SWEDISH INSTITUTE

The *Swedish Institute for Cultural Exchange*⁸ was established in 1945 to create goodwill for and trust in Sweden, at a time when Sweden's wartime policy of neutrality had negatively impacted on the country reputation. SI was initially a joint venture between state and business but struggled with balancing the competing interests. As a result, it was restructured into a government-funded foundation in 1970, and in 1998 into its current form as a public agency under the MFA (Brandin & Jahn, 2015; Kommunikationsenheten, 2014b; Svenska Institutet, n.d.d.). The organisation employs ca 140 staff divided between offices in Stockholm, Visby and Paris (Svenska Institutet, n.d.d.).

3.2 History

3.2.1 PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

From 1978 until the early 2000's, Swedish public diplomacy was mainly guided by recommendations made in the SOU report *Culture & Information over Borders* ('Kultur och information över gränserna'). In 2003, the SOU report *Committee of Inquiry on International Cultural Activities* ['Internationella kulturutredningen'] came with new recommendations (Pamment, 2011a). The report perceives public diplomacy as a short-term focused activity that needs to be complemented with cultural diplomacy; a long-term, relational approach (Kulturdepartementet, 2003).

⁸ In 1970, the name changed into the *Swedish Institute*, SI, which is what it will be referred to from here on.

In 2011, the investigation *A World Class Foreign Service* [‘Utrikesförvaltning i världsklass’] was published. For the Foreign Service to become ‘world class’, i.e. efficient and flexible, it has to adapt to a world where international relations merge with national politics, and where non-state actors are creators and influencers of international developments. Thus, public diplomacy efforts were recommended to be integrated into all policy areas and used as a strategic complement to traditional state-to-state diplomacy. As a result, “the image of Sweden and the Swedish message” (Utrikesdepartementet, 2011, p. 54, 99) would reach a wider international audience, and Swedish political, economic and societal interests gain increased impact (UD-KOM, 2013c). As a result of the recommendations, and along with the requirement that no changes in organisation could be made, the *Coordinating Group for Public Diplomacy* (consisting of UD-KOM and UD-FH) was established. Tasked with providing advice and support in public diplomacy related matters, the group presented the *Guidelines for Public Diplomacy* in 2012 (UD-KOM & UD-FIM, 2014). The work with public diplomacy has continued and focus on digital diplomacy increased. Following the aim to be in the forefront of digital diplomacy, all Foreign Missions had a presence on social media (Facebook and Twitter) by 2013⁹, and by 2014, public and digital diplomacy were to be integrated in operational plans and promotional planning (Pelling, 2015; UD-KOM, 2013b; 2014b; 2015a).

⁹ The MFA itself has had online presence through the MFA blog, Facebook and Twitter accounts since 2010.

In 2013, a pilot study on public diplomacy was conducted in foreign missions in 13 countries (including e.g. the UK, Russia, and the U.S). Through e.g. thematic weeks and campaigns, the aim was to attract attention to current issues and in that way influence opinion and decision-making. The study concluded that a strategic approach to PD is important, social media are effective tools, and that the target group should be in focus. Furthermore, local language and cultural competence is crucial, while political context and resources are not essential. Also, PD work is seen to provide a platform for synergy between politics, promotion, and communication (UD-KOM, 2014b).

3.2.2 CREATING 'BRAND SWEDEN'

In 2004, the *Study of Sweden's Images Abroad* was conducted, analysing how the image of Sweden had changed over time¹⁰ (Lundberg, 2005). The study found the image to be generally positive, but blurry and based on old images and clichés. Therefore, a recommendation was for the image to be narrowed down by exiting from already strong areas, such as welfare, culture, clichés (!), and nature. The following year, the process of creating a nation brand for Sweden began, by the help 'nation brand gurus' Simon Anholt and Mark Leonard (Pamment, 2016). The work was a consensus-based joint effort by 500-600 persons involved in promoting Sweden abroad, including the Swedish Institute and the other members of the NSU¹¹, *the Council for the Promotion of Sweden Abroad*. The work continued until 2007 and resulted in

¹⁰ Commissioned by the NSU, this study was the first analysing the Image of Sweden during a longer time-interval, and was seen as a necessary complement to the monthly and yearly reports on *the Image of Sweden in foreign press and media* produced since 1968 by the MFA's communication unit (Pamment, 2011a; Lundberg, 2005).

¹¹ NSU ('Nämnden för Sverigefrämjande i utlandet') consists of representatives from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs; the Ministry for Enterprise, Energy and Communications; the Ministry for Culture; Visit Sweden; Business Sweden; and the Swedish Institute.

a platform with a distinctive international profile for Sweden, including a common language and identity portraying Swedish values and activities, all focusing on the core principle of *the Image of Sweden* [‘Sverigebildnen’] (Svenska Institutet, 2014b; Pamment, 2011a; Svenska Institutet, 2008; Swedish Institute, n.d.a.).

In 2013, the *Strategy for the Promotion of Sweden Abroad* was presented. The vision statement conveys the role Sweden seeks: “In a world with big challenges, Sweden’s free and open society can boost innovation and co-creation” (Swedish Institute, n.d., p. 2). The statement encapsulates Sweden’s strong tradition and long history of being an open and tolerant society, mixed with the strengths within innovation and co-creation (Svenska Institutet, n.d.c.). The image focusses on what is unique for Sweden, or perhaps more importantly, areas where Sweden is internationally known to be in the forefront. The profile areas *society, innovation, sustainability, and creativity* are the foci for *what* to communicate about, while the core values *open, authentic, caring and innovative* declare *how* to communicate within the four areas. The strategy is seen to contribute to a strong, broad, and updated image of Sweden, giving Sweden a competitive advantage when striving for attaining political objectives; promoting trade; attracting investment, tourists and talent; and encouraging cultural and scientific exchange. The strategy declares *connectors*¹² the most important target group (NSU, 2014; Svenska Institutet, 2014b; Swedish Institute, n.d.).

¹² Connector = person with a large network acting as a mediator communicating to a broader end group, i.e. in a two-step flow manner.

In 2014, the strategy was complemented with a visual brand identity tool developed together with design and brand agency *Söderhavet*. The identity includes the Swedish flag as a common symbol, along with other unifying visual components¹³. By using the identity tool, actors promoting Sweden can indicate where the communication originates, leading to a win-win situation for the actor, who can utilize Brand Sweden, and for Brand Sweden, which favours from having successful ‘promoters’ under its umbrella (Svenska Institutet, 2014b; Söderhavet, 2014)

3.3 Concluding Remarks and Direction of the Research

The literature review and in-depth background have covered topics of relevance for the following case study on the migration crisis and Swedish public diplomacy. Thus, the thesis now turns to presenting how the research was conducted, what results were found, and finally, the implications of those results for PR theory and practice.

¹³ See <http://sweden.identitytool.com/>.

4. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Theoretical Framework and Contribution

The study is placed within the management paradigm of PR, with a focus on image management. Image and reputation are core concepts within (corporate) public relations (e.g. Gray & Balmer, 2001), which have also been applied to nations (e.g. Anholt, 2007). The study explores the promotion of the image and interests of Sweden abroad, using a public diplomacy and nation branding theoretical framework. The choice to focus on these fields is due to their close connection to the work and actors engaged in promoting the image of Sweden abroad, i.e. the MFA and SI. Through a functionalist approach, the aim is to find out how normative ideas in place branding and public diplomacy literature are reflected in practice.

Due to the topicality of the subject, little (if any) academic research has been conducted in relation to the migration crisis and its impact on the work on promoting the image and interests of Sweden abroad. Thus, the study aims to provide an overall account of how Swedish public diplomacy is conducted on a regular basis, so as to understand how the work has been affected by (primarily) the migration crisis.

4.2. Research Questions

The research aims to find answers to three questions:

- *How do UD-KOM, UD-FH and the Swedish Institute work with promoting the image and interests of Sweden abroad through public diplomacy and/or nation branding activities and strategies?*

- *How has the migration crisis impacted on UD-KOM, UD-FH and the Swedish Institute's work with promoting the image and interests of Sweden abroad through public diplomacy and/or nation branding activities and strategies?*
- *What challenges are involved in promoting or managing the contemporary image and interests of Sweden abroad?*

4.3 Research Strategy

4.3.1 WORLDVIEW AND RESEARCH APPROACH

Creswell (2009) defines philosophical worldview (epistemology and ontology) as the researcher's general philosophical orientation about the world and the nature of research. In this study, I have applied a social constructivist worldview, where meaning is seen as socially constructed. Thus, meaning and knowledge about the world is subjective, varied and multiple, and the task of the researcher is to understand this complexity of views (Creswell, 2009). Constructivist studies commonly take a qualitative research approach, as this enables a context-specific interpretation by the researcher, who acts as an observer in the natural setting of the study objects. The aim is to make sense of the understanding people have of a phenomenon (Creswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2011). A qualitative approach is also appropriate when little research has been done on the topic. Thus, the research is explorative and mainly inductive, and aims at developing patterns, theories and generalizations that are compared with previous research and literature on the topic so as to give a holistic account of events (Creswell, 2009). In this study, I have extracted meaning from the

data that resulted from practitioner interviews in ‘the field’ and policy and strategy documents.

4.3.2 CASE STUDY

Case study research takes place in a real-life context and in the ‘natural’ setting of the participants. Focussing on a single case enables the researcher to explore a phenomenon in-depth (Yin, 2009; Flyvberg, 2011). As I wanted to gain a holistic understanding of contemporary Swedish public diplomacy and nation branding, especially in relation to the migration crisis, a case study was deemed the best approach. As a result of its context-specific focus, however, the case study has been criticised for not providing generalizable results. Even though results cannot be generalizable to e.g. populations, they can be generalized to theoretical propositions (Yin, 2009). Thus, scientific value can still be reached.

Case study research offers the possibility to use multiple sources of evidence to triangulate the data (Yin, 2009). Comparing and contrasting different sources can make the study more credible, especially if the information from the different sources converges (Bowen, 2009). In this study, policy documents and interviews make up the methods for data collection. They have been used as a means of triangulation and have provided the basis for the subsequent document analysis.

Documents related to public and digital diplomacy and the *Strategy for the Image of Sweden* make up the secondary data. Policy analysis was partly done prior to conducting the interviews, so as to get an understanding of how the organisations work with promoting the image and interests of Sweden. To get an overview of Swedish public diplomacy, a wide array of documents

were collected¹⁴. I analysed documents from the MFA, SI and the NSU, and I also compared different versions to see what changes have occurred. When analysing documents, it is important to acknowledge that they are social artefacts that have been created by individuals or organizations for other purposes than this research (Daymon & Holloway, 2011; Saldaña, 2016). Thus, it is important to be aware of the bias and the sender's potential "impression management" and apply a critical stance. Triangulation of sources has enabled me to spot both discrepancies and concurrences between policy and reality.

Interviews make up the primary sources of the data collection, as it is through interviews otherwise inaccessible information can be attained (Peräkylä & Ruusuvoori, 2011). Thus, by speaking to MFA and SI staff, I have developed an understanding of the impact of the migration crisis on the promotional work. The interview sampling was initially purposive, as I began with identifying potential interviewees through scanning through the Governmental intranet¹⁵. After initial contact, snowball sampling became the most applicable approach, as the interviewees provided names of relevant employees. The interviews were conducted April 28-29, 2016 at the natural work setting of the respondents, i.e. the MFA and SI in Stockholm. In total, five semi-structured interviews were conducted¹⁶ (the one at UD-KOM conducted with two employees) (see table 1). This was the result as one interviewee declined participation, since she would not be likely to provide

¹⁴ See appendix for a list of documents analysed.

¹⁵ I interned at the Embassy of Sweden in Helsinki in early 2016 and thus had access to e.g. staff contact information. My position is not seen as biasing the researcher-research relationship, as none of the study participants had any previous relation to me, however.

¹⁶ See appendix for the interview guide.

any additional information. Another interview was ruled out as the employee did not respond to my interview time suggestions. Lastly, a third interview was cancelled as the interviewee did not feel qualified to answer questions regarding the topic at hand. The number of interviews is still deemed sufficient for the study, however, as I have combined interviews with policy analysis, and each department is represented by at least one participant with extensive experience from public diplomacy work. Thus, the research performed does provide an overall, holistic picture of Swedish public diplomacy.

Table 1. Interviews

Department	Name	Role
UD-KOM	Sara Modin	Head of the unit <i>UD KOM Strategic communication</i>
UD-KOM	Anna Ekberg	Press communicator and member of a work group on migration
UD-FH	Håkan Hjort	Head of <i>Cultural Promotion and Sweden Information</i> and head of the NSU
SI	Henrik Selin	Director at the Department of Intercultural Dialogue
SI	Agnes Lidbeck	Chief of the Director-General's Office, responsible for management-, internal-, and external communication and work on tracking and analysing the Image of Sweden
SI	Helen Nilsson	Administrator working on the migration mandate

Due to the participants' high positions, they can be considered elite (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Thus, there was a risk of the interviewees safeguarding sensitive information or answering in 'prepared' ways. However, I was well informed and knowledgeable within in the topic, and was able to build a foundation of trust. As a result, the informants seem to have answered genuinely and honestly, sharing (in most cases) both positive and negative aspects of their work.

Two of three informants from SI asked to receive the interview guide beforehand to better prepare for the interview. An informed consent form¹⁷ was presented to and signed by the interviewee(s) at the start of the session. After asking permission, I recorded the interviews the iPhone SE voice recorder. The recordings were transferred to my computer and the transcription done with the *Express Scribe* software. Pauses and utterances of reflection (e.g. “eeh”) were initially included in the transcriptions, but were eliminated when transferred to the analysis, so as to get a coherent and easy-to-follow excerpt. The transcribed interviews became documents in themselves that were then also subjected to document analysis.

4.4 Analytical Strategy and Approach

When analysing, I used theoretical propositions, i.e. the research questions and previous literature, to help guide me in the analysis. As a result, attention was pointed at certain data, while other data could be ignored (Yin, 2009). The interpretative process began as I collected the data, and I engaged in analytic memo writing (Saldaña, 2016) throughout the analysis process to remember ideas of interest later on, and to better understand the meaning of the data at hand by reflecting over potential themes and tentative answers to the research questions.

I used thematic analysis as the analytical approach. After initially skimming through the interviews for an overview, I did closer readings for words and topics that reappeared. With the research questions in mind, certain topics were expected to be found, while others emerged. The topics were

¹⁷ See appendix.

clustered and renamed into codes, and excerpts containing the same codes grouped together in piles, e.g. “cooperation”¹⁸. Then, broader themes were located in the material, providing the basis for an analysis. The analytical process was iterative, jumping back and forth between codes, categories and themes until the analysis was finalised.

4.5 Ethical Considerations

Conducting qualitative research entails certain ethical considerations. As the policy documents were collected from public authorities comprised by the principle of public access to official records, no ethical considerations were deemed necessary. Research with human subjects, e.g. conducting interviews, requires certain measures to be taken, however. The interviewees were handed a written consent form¹⁹ prior to the interviews, where they were informed about the purpose of the study and that the data collected would only be used for research purposes. The participants were also informed that their partaking was voluntary, could be finalized at any time, and that participation would not impact negatively on their work (Christians, 2011; Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). By signing, the respondents agreed to participate with their real identities and to potentially be quoted in the study. As a result, all participants wanted to read their quotes prior to my submitting the thesis, and some interviewees declared not wanting to be quoted in relation to specific issues that came up during the interviews.

¹⁸ See appendix for the codebook.

¹⁹ See appendix.

4.6 Claims of Validity, Reliability, Objectivity and Generalizability

Due to the constructivist research approach, the concepts of validity, reliability, objectivity and generalizability cannot be applied to this study in the same manner as in e.g. positivistic research (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). In this research, validity, assuring that the study investigates what it is supposed to (Creswell, 2009), has permeated the research process from beginning to end, through e.g. triangulating data; member checking, e.g. through follow-up questions to UD-KOM; and through providing citations to the interviewees before publishing the study. Reliability is assured by me having documented the procedures of the case study (some of which are appended) and by keeping all records stored.

In qualitative research, I as a researcher am seen to bring values and experiences to the research. To increase objectivity, it is important to be aware of how previous experiences shape the interpretation and the relationship between researcher and research (Creswell, 2009). I have increased objectivity by constantly reflecting upon the interpretation made, and through assuring that findings are reflected in the data collected by e.g. checking quotes and translations of these several times. Finally, this study exchanges generalizability (to populations) for particularity and deeper understanding of a phenomenon: one of the strengths of qualitative research (Creswell, 2009).

5. ANALYSIS

Part I of the analysis presents how Swedish public diplomacy actors perceive and work with promoting the image and interests of Sweden abroad, followed by an analysis of the concept of the Image of Sweden. Part two focuses on the impact of the migration crisis on the Image of Sweden and promotional work, concluding with current challenges and changes.

5.1 Part I: Promoting the Image and Interests of Sweden Abroad

5.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Swedish public diplomacy is referred to as an “integrated promotion of Sweden”, and has the purpose of “safeguarding and promoting Sweden’s political, economic and commercial interests abroad” (UD-KOM, 2016). The *Strategy for the Promotion of Sweden* is incorporated into the public diplomacy work of both SI and the MFA, even though UD-KOM also has the ministers’ policy priorities as their communication foci (Modin, 2016). Thus, in the case of Swedish public diplomacy and nation branding, it is relevant to speak of promoting both *the image* and *the interests* of Sweden abroad.

Public diplomacy and the strategy for the Image of Sweden are seen as two sides of the same coin:

It [public diplomacy] goes together with the Image of Sweden as well, because within sustainability, innovation, creativity and society, trade policy relates to both innovation and creativity, aid relates to sustainability...but if you think about society, what is subsumed under that area are Swedish values, and that is what all policy is built upon, both development policy, UN-policy, the feminist foreign policy... It is reinforced by those values we pursue regarding respect for human rights, international law, the UN as a central actor, EU cooperation - that we are strong together. (Modin, 2016)

The MFA's and SI's perceptions of public diplomacy share many similarities. Both actors define public diplomacy as consisting of listening, engaging in dialogue and reciprocity, building relationships, having a strategic mode of operation, and influencing (UD-KOM, 2013a; Svenska Institutet, n.d.b.). There are several instruments in use to do this, such as seminars; cultural events; presentations; visits; meetings with key representatives of organisations; interviews, engaging in debates; digital diplomacy²⁰; student exchanges; Swedish teaching abroad and educational efforts via aid (Utrikesdepartementet, 2011; UD-KOM, 2013b, 2015). While the MFA overall works more with influencing in policy-related matters, SI has a general focus, and work done today is unlikely to impact on the Image of Sweden within the next five years. What can be done by SI within a shorter horizon is influence "images of Sweden in chosen issues" (Selin, 2016), and thus hope to influence knowledge, interest and engagement around issues of interest, so that the target group begins perceiving Sweden in a new way.

In practice, the connection between image and interest can be seen in the thematic calendar²¹, a tool introduced by the Coordinating Group for Public Diplomacy in 2014. Divided into *Public Diplomacy* and *Promotion of Sweden*, each month has a specific theme depending on what focus is chosen. In 2016, public diplomacy revolves around an active UN-policy; the feminist foreign policy; EU as a global actor; the new export policy; the sustainable development policy; and human rights. Promotion of Sweden focuses on the implementation of the government's export strategy, and on the strategy for

²⁰ As opposed to public diplomacy, digital diplomacy can be directed at both civil society and official representatives and decision-makers (UD-KOM & UD-FIM, n.d.).

²¹ Contact the author for access to the thematic calendar for 2016.

the Promotion of the Image of Sweden Abroad. The calendar acts as communication support for the missions and the central MFA alike (Modin, 2016; UD-KOM & UD-FIM, n.d.; UD-KOM, 2014b).

5.1.2 ORGANISATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The MFA units UD-KOM, the Unit for Communication, and UD-FH, the Unit for Promotion and Sustainable Enterprise, are responsible for strategy, content and application of public diplomacy, while the Swedish Institute has more of an operative role (Kommunikationsenheten, 2014b).

UD-KOM²² is organisationally placed under the Minister for EU Affairs and Trade but also works for the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister for International Development Cooperation (Ekberg, 2016c; Modin, 2016). UD-KOM has several tasks subsumed under an overall assignment of having *strategic responsibility of the Foreign Service's internal and external communication*. The tasks include responsibility for public and digital diplomacy; the blog platform Swedish Foreign Policy News²³, the official digital channels on Facebook and Twitter²⁴; and Sweden Abroad, the platform for the Foreign Missions' websites²⁵. UD-KOM also develops guidelines and provides education and support in communication; provides digital and printed content; gives service to media and other stakeholders; observes media, and assists with translations and text services (Utrikesdepartementet, 2011; UD-KOM, 2015a; Regeringskansliet, 2016b; Modin, 2016).

²² For an overview of UD-KOM's organisation, see appendix.

²³ www.swemfa.se

²⁴ @SweMFA (English) and @Utrikesdep (Swedish)

²⁵ <http://www.swedenabroad.com/>

UD-KOM's primary PD focus is to communicate foreign policy, with the aim of contributing to influencing in areas relating to its operational targets. The unit is involved in projects initiated by the MFA, currently on e.g. *Agenda 2030*, the UN's new agenda for global sustainability (Modin, 2016). KOM also does broader promotion of Sweden in relation to current topics, however, such as promoting the King's birthday. In any case, the target groups do not differ between communication about general Sweden and policy-Sweden: to them, everything is *Sweden* (Ekberg, 2016a).

UD-KOM works both short-term and strategically. Short-term communication concerns posting current information on the (foreign) communication channels, and assisting foreign missions by providing suggestions for up-to-date content. A long-term perspective is seen in the thematic calendar, in the work with the Sweden Abroad platform, and in educating staff in social media (Modin, 2016). The short-term focus can sometime become very evident: "If there is a fire, someone has to extinguish it, and that responsibility lies with UD-KOM and the local embassy" (Hjort, 2016). What is important then is to analyse the situation, and "based on that you can inform, act, and communicate around the issues of interest" (Hjort, 2016).

UD-FH²⁶ serves under the Minister for EU Affairs and Trade (Ekberg, 2016c). The unit has a strategic focus as the one responsible for *promotion of Swedish export and foreign investment in Sweden* as well as for *coordinating the promotion of culture and the Image of Sweden*. The strategy for Promoting

²⁶ For an overview of UD-FH's organisation, see appendix.

the Image of Sweden is used as a basis for the work, and is also incorporated into the thematic calendar (Hjort, 2016; Utrikesdepartementet, 2011).

The foreign missions are closely linked to FH, who each year allocates their budgets and sets the promotional priorities. UD-FH gives guidance and support to the missions, and tries to get them to help each other (Hjort, 2016). UD-FH is responsible for the NSU, *the Council for the Promotion of Sweden Abroad*, which was established in 1995 as a forum for information exchange, coordination and integrated promotion of Sweden. UD-FH also oversees the Swedish Institute (Hjort, 2016; Utrikesdepartementet, 2011; Regeringskansliet, 2016b, 2016c).

The Swedish Institute (SI) acts as the performing organisation, operating according to an instruction²⁷ and a yearly letter of regulation from the Government Offices (Hjort, 2016; Svenska Institutet, n.d.a). SI perceives itself as a “central node in the overall promotion of Sweden” (Selin, 2016), communicating from a wide perspective in order to convey the whole narrative of Sweden (Svenska Institutet, 2016a). The work exits from the Image of Sweden-strategy, and has the purpose of creating trust in Sweden, making Sweden visible, and contributing to reaching Swedish international aims.

According to SI, “a country’s ability to attain its policy goals, to attract trade, investments and visitors, and to be involved in exchanges of talent and creativity is largely dependent on how that country is perceived” (Swedish Institute, n.d.b.). As the *expert organisation* on following, analysing,

²⁷ The 2016 letter of regulation is based on instructions from 2007 and 2009, although a slightly adapted instruction was presented in 2015 (<http://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/forordning-2015152-med-instruktion-for-svenska-sfs-2015-152>).

evaluating and promoting the Image of Sweden abroad, this statement can be seen as SI's way of legitimising its work within public diplomacy. SI also engages in 'Sweden information' through arranging events and exhibitions; supporting education in Swedish; managing exchange programs and scholarships; arranging journalist visits, and managing strategic work directed at international media (Svenska Institutet, 2016a).

Although SI is organisationally placed under the MFA, Selin (2016) still seems eager to stress the difference between the two:

There is a difference between state, the sitting government, which has a diplomatic agenda, and land, represented by civil society, often in the type of institution that we are. Even if we are an authority under the government, there is a difference between us. It is not as if there is Berlin wall between us, but as an authority we are all the time working to make sure that there is no ambiguity... If we were to be seen as the exact same as the government, then our credibility decreases, and our target groups would most likely not find it as interesting, because they know they can turn to the government in certain policy related questions. Of course, in the wide stratum of people, nobody knows the difference between Sweden.se and the MFA [...] but for us working it is still important to have a balance [...] I would not say that there is any problem surface, it is just important to [...] keep a balance.

Despite a yearly instruction, SI is rather independent in deciding how to communicate around the mandates. Since part of SI's work revolves around helping embassies communicate and do activities about Swedish issues, it is still important to keep a dialogue with the MFA and foreign missions. Even though "Sweden has chosen this solution" (Selin, 2016), a more independent SI could have provided an advantage:

We [SI] could have had our own Foreign Mission present, and more of our own way of working, which could be good for our credibility. Still, I think Sweden has been lucky in that it is not viewed as a major issue. (Selin, 2016)

The Swedish Institute defines itself as “a coherent representative of Sweden and of Swedish skills, values and experience in the world”, and SI’s role within public diplomacy as “understanding, informing, influencing and developing relations with people in other countries” (Swedish Institute, n.d.b.). In this case, ‘people’ refers to the public and civic life in general, media, academia, culture, and business sectors within the areas of culture, education and research and democracy (Swedish Institute, n.d.b.). SI communicates directly with target groups through the official channels of Sweden on Twitter²⁸, Facebook²⁹ and the *Sweden.com*-website, and through the SI-filial in Paris.

SI views listening and dialogue as means to learn more about what the target group is interested in. However, these issues should relate to Swedish strengths and core values in order to be of interest, so that a favourable connection to Sweden can be made. Furthermore, what interests the target group should preferably be seen by Sweden as a common challenge, to show that Sweden is not a nation to “shy away from talking about things that are difficult” (Selin, 2016). Acting in this manner is seen to have “the long-term effect of creating trust for Sweden, knowledge about Sweden, and it is good for our country to be someone you can cooperate with” (Selin, 2016). It clearly shows the high ambition seen in the vision of the Image of Sweden-strategy; a wish to act as an arena for co-creation to solve the world’s problems.

In 2016, SI has received mandates relating to the e.g. new export strategy, implementing the feminist foreign policy, the policy for global

²⁸ <https://twitter.com/swedense>

²⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/swedense/>

development (including Agenda 2030), and migration (presented more thoroughly in part II).

5.1.3 COOPERATION AND COORDINATION

Different roles within the promotion of Sweden require the actors to work together. For a small nation like Sweden, cooperation and coordination is seen as a way to create synergy (Hjort, 2016). However, at least in relation to the Coordinating Group for Public Diplomacy, current cooperative efforts do not seem to suffice. UD-FH and UD-KOM do keep contact, but “forms of cooperation need to exist on several levels”, and cooperation with e.g. SI also needs to be improved, as “the coordinating group cannot manage everything” (Modin, 2016). Thus, the coordinating group is currently considering adding more constant members to the group. As it is now, it seems that the coordinating group was created partly for the sake of having someone responsible for public diplomacy, which there had not been before (Hjort, 2016). Anyone seems to be able to take the first step in improving cooperation around promotional work. As is usually the case, however, it is a question of resources (Hjort, 2016). Although Hjort (2016) does see room for improvement in relation to the coordinating group, UD-FH seems to be the actor most content with cooperation overall, also in relation to the other members of the NSU. The organisations keep regular contact and meet several times a year to discuss how the Image of Sweden is doing. Furthermore, other nations are eager to learn more about how Sweden manages to cooperate in such a friendly manner (Hjort, 2016).

5.1.4 THE IMAGE OF SWEDEN

The Image of Sweden is defined as how people abroad perceive, comprehend and understand Sweden. The image differs from person to person, and thus, “there is no such thing as *one* image of Sweden. People put different things into the concept depending on cultural context, for instance, but what can be seen is that overall, many have a positive perception of Sweden” (Lidbeck, 2016). Thus, it is more relevant to speak of several images of Sweden, which are all constructions characterized by and reflecting what is happening in Sweden and the world, as well as reflecting the Swedish self-image; how Swedes perceive themselves (Svenska Institutet, 2014a). SI does regular analyses on perceptions of Sweden abroad through following international indexes (e.g. the *Nation Brands Index* and *Good Country Index*); through quantitative and qualitative studies; and through media analyses (Svenska Institutet, n.d.b, n.d.c.; Lidbeck, 2016).

Several reports on the Image of Sweden have been published since 2007 (Pamment, 2011). Studies tend to conclude that Sweden has a mainly positive image abroad. However, knowledge about Sweden decreases with the younger generation, especially in distant and developing countries (Svenska Institutet, 2012). Generally, Sweden is viewed as a leading country within areas such as equality, responsibility, tolerance, openness, and progression (Svenska Institutet, 2012), which is also represented in the interviewees’ descriptions of Sweden and its image. The actors stress how Sweden has claimed the leader position in many issues, such as the LGBTQ-issue (Hjort, 2016). This leads to Sweden being used as an example for other nations, the result of Sweden’s effort indicating whether or not others ought to follow

(Nilsson, 2016). The positive image provides a strong basis for work on promoting the country abroad: “Sweden has an incredibly strong position for being such a small country. There is built-up sensitivity, a positive feeling all over the world” (Selin, 2016). Hjort (2016) shows a similar viewpoint: “People trust Sweden and believe we stand for good things. We are good world citizens. That is positive, because it provides a good seedbed to build upon (Hjort, 2016). While the general impression of Sweden is positive, sometimes, ”the image is so idealistic that it becomes irrelevant” (Selin, 2016). Sweden is seen as “that country far away where everything is perfect, with perfect Swedes – we do not want anything to do with them!” (Selin, 2016). To balance this image it is important to tell the story about the journey Sweden has taken to get to this place: a journey built upon change and political choices. Thus, it is important to include both positive aspects, and challenges faced (Selin, 2016). Even though Selin perceives Sweden as a nation open for discussion, a nation that does not have cemented opinions on how things should be, Sweden seems very content with being able to tell the story about a small nation worthy of being followed by others. Thus, the outcome is still the story of Sweden as the ‘perfect’ world citizen.

An image tends to change very slowly. However, social media and the increased speed of (dis)information might lead to the image changing faster. Social media are also channels where youth tend to find the “truth” (Hjort, 2016). On the other hand, the amount of information has also increased, making it more difficult to reach out with your communication (Lidbeck, 2016). So far, the image of Sweden has proven resilient: “It can change momentarily in the eyes of many, but our image is made up of so many things

and has been built up for such a long time that it tends to bounce back and stay the same” (Selin, 2016). However, contemporary events in Sweden have shown signs of affecting this image: two ministers have been murdered in modern times; Swedish Noir-literature shows a violent- and criminal side to a ‘perfect society’; and riots in the Stockholm suburb Husby show issues with integration. Events like these seem to have created an image of Sweden as an ideal society with a dark (and mysterious) side to it. Thus, instead of negatively affecting the image, it has rather made Sweden seem more ‘attractive’ and perhaps more ‘human’: bad things can happen here as well (Hjort, 2016; Selin, 2016). This darker image of Sweden seems a good thing, as it helps create a more balanced image – as long as it does not change from connotations of mystery and attraction into becoming something negative. Considering that these events consist of murders and issues with integration, it can seem strange that it has not.

When limited events like the ones mentioned are exchanged for prolonged ones, however, this might no longer be the case. Indicators of a potentially altered image can be seen in SI’s study on the Image of Sweden in relation to the 2014 elections, when the far-right nationalist party the Sweden Democrats (SD) received nearly 13% of the votes, becoming the 3rd largest party (with twice as many votes compared to the 2010 elections) (Svenska Institutet, 2014a; Valmyndigheten, 2014). Based on media reports in different countries, the study concluded that the narrative around the new political landscape in Sweden might not change in the short term, but could potentially impact negatively on the image in the future (Svenska Institutet, 2014a).

Since entering parliament in 2010, SD has acted as a ‘balance of power’ between the Government, consisting of the Social Democratic Party (S) and the Green Party (MP), and the opposition, consisting of the Moderate Party (M), the Centre Party (C), the Christian Democrats (KD), and the Liberals (L) (the Left Party (V) stands outside the Government). Thus, SD can potentially settle issues where other parties disagree. The remaining parties have been reluctant towards cooperating with SD, e.g. due to the party’s anti-immigration stance. With the large number of people immigrating to Sweden during 2015, however, migration has become an issue for all parties to adhere to, and the change towards a more closed migration policy can be seen as an approximation to SD’s core values. The migration crisis provides an example of an ongoing event that could impact on the Image of Sweden, and this is what the analysis turns to next.

5.2 Part II: Promoting the Image and Interests of Sweden Abroad: the Image(s) of Sweden and the Migration Crisis

5.2.1 SI AND THE MIGRATION MANDATE

Migration was added to the mandates of SI in 2016, as SI along with the MFA felt its growing importance. Thus, “as experts on the image of Sweden, [SI] should be able to answer to questions relating to migration as well” (Nilsson, 2016). The migration mandate can be seen in the migration toolkit (published in June, 2016), which provides a structure on how to discuss migration and integration in a more proactive way. SI has also produced a timeline in six parts, telling the narrative of Sweden and migration over the centuries and

how migration has helped the nation. The last part treats the refugee challenge³⁰ (Nilsson, 2016).

SI is also developing its own organisation in relation to migration, in order to find out what value the authority can provide within the area. For instance, an internship programme for immigrants in cooperation with the Employment Services and the Migration Agency has been introduced, with SI accepting its first intern in April 2016 (Nilsson, 2016). Together with e.g. the Migration Agency, SI is also involved in *MigTalks*, a structure for how to talk about migration, and supports initiatives aiming at bringing together established and newly arrived Swedes³¹. In March 2016, SI began cooperating with the Local, a service for immigrants in English, which provides news and information about the Swedish society (Lidbeck, 2016).

5.2.2 THE IMAGE(S) OF SWEDEN: OPEN, RUINED, AND CLOSED

As the migration crisis is both recent and ongoing, studies on how the crisis has potentially impacted on the Image of Sweden have not yet been made³². Thus, it is not possible to know if and to what extent the Image of Sweden abroad has changed:

Usually, a single news event has very small impact on the image of a country, but if it is the case that we have a long period of a certain type of articles about Sweden ahead of us, then it could have an impact on the image [...] Sometimes, what you think will be perceived positively is perceived negatively and vice versa, so you cannot univocally say that the migration crisis would have a negative impact on the Image of Sweden. You cannot start from that assumption. (Lidbeck, 2016)

³⁰ See <https://sweden.se/migration/>

³¹ See <http://www.oppnadorren.se/>

³² Currently, SI is carrying out a study on how European countries have reported around Sweden and migration, the results of which are expected in late 2016 (Lidbeck, 2016).

Furthermore, it is important to “separate what the debate sounds like from whether that impacts on the Image of Sweden: those are two different things” (Selin, 2016). Nevertheless, what can be seen in relation to the migration crisis is the circulation of different, at times contrarious images, of Sweden.

Sweden is known abroad for its welfare model, and it is thus no wonder that Sweden (along with the other Nordics) is an attractive end destination for many immigrants. Generally speaking, it is favourable for Sweden to be perceived as a good place to live. However, when an image becomes too idealised, it gets problematic. UD-KOM has noticed how distorted images of Sweden circulate among certain groups of people in some parts of the world. These images, e.g. made up of beliefs that migrants will be given both housing and jobs automatically upon their arrival in Sweden, are misleading, and KOM works actively to counter them (Ekberg, 2016a). The images are not only built on the circulating welfare model-cliché, however; the source of the information has sometimes been a Swedish Foreign Mission in a transit country of country of origin. Even though information relating to e.g. Swedish social policy portrays Sweden in a positive way, publishing this type of information gives certain groups the wrong signals, and in turn, contributes to creating a false image of Sweden. As a way to assure information quality, the platform for Sweden Abroad is now in the remaking, and information will become more centralised, thus more steered by UD-KOM (Ekberg, 2016a; Modin, 2016).

In autumn 2015, the image of Sweden as open and big-hearted was joined by another narrative in (Western) international media, with portrayals of a Swedish society in ruins; a result of having a too tolerant migration policy

(Modin, 2016). As responsible for the foreign services' communication, UD-KOM quickly became involved, even though migration policy itself lies under the Ministry for Justice and thus is a domestic matter. Several pieces on the 'escalated situation' were published in newspapers such as the *Daily Mail* and the *Telegraph*:

While monitoring international media we noticed that much was written and said around the world about Swedish refugee- and migration policy in a different way than before [...] In no other issue has Sweden been depicted to such a great extent before. Some lifted Sweden as a country taking responsibility [...] as the nation with the big heart within the EU, but it was mainly negative [...] Other nations were subjected to it as well. Sweden became an example nation of how bad the results of an open policy can be... Portraying a Sweden on the verge of dissolution. (Modin, 2016)

Embassies contacted KOM to ask for guidance on how to counter 'angled stories' and disinformation about Sweden in relation to migration. While simultaneously communicating around its 'ordinary' tasks, e.g. aid and the UN, KOM tried to support the Foreign Missions but struggled with a lack of coordination and the non-existence of a common communication policy: "To be honest, we fumbled for quite some time... We provided general advice that we had from before, but when those inquiries increased we started feeling that we needed to think more strategically around it all" (Modin, 2016). It was difficult for UD-KOM to have a strategic mind set, however, as policy decisions were made "all the time", and no one knew how many refugees would come:

We can put together a calendar and priorities, but then things happen that impact on the work. In February, for example, the theme was migration but so much happened within that area that it was difficult to compile a package [...] and if you are to communicate something, you need to know what to communicate, to whom, and why. (Ekberg, 2016a)

Disinformation spreads through different channels, and with social media it has only increased. UD-KOM and SI work to counter disinformation about Sweden being e.g. a “rape nation and an Islamised nation” (Selin, 2016). Even though this type of stories can often be tracked back to ‘unserious’ sources, countering them is not easy (Ekberg, 2016a). Disinformation occurs “on the highest level, with top politicians in other countries speaking about Sweden in these terms” (Selin, 2016). Cooperation with other countries is one tactic used to counter the stories, and when they do circulate, it is important to provide facts and information, and in different languages, at least when it concerns ‘serious media’ (Ekberg, 2016a, Selin, 2016). In June, 2016, KOM published guidelines around managing disinformation as a reaction to the recent increase in disinformation (Modin, 2016).

Compared to other Nordic countries, Sweden was slower in reaching a common policy on migration. In November, 2016, internal border controls were implemented, a decision that had to be worked out (Ekberg, 2016a). As the amount of immigrants began decreasing, UD-KOM was able to take a step back and reflect upon recent events (Ekberg, 2016a). Concurrently, another image began spreading – one about Sweden closing its borders: “It did happen gradually, but it was perceived abroad as if Sweden made a very swift turn” (Ekberg, 2016). The fact that Sweden is *perceived from the outside as having changed its behaviour* is what is of interest, rather than the fact that something happens in Sweden (Selin, 2016). Thus,

Sweden no longer is what the nation perceives itself as, i.e. open, tolerant, with strong focus on the asylum right. Instead, we are perceived as closing our borders. I believe this is one of the first things that could impact on the Image of Sweden on a shorter term. During the

autumn when refugees started coming, it was easy for us to say that nothing really has changed [...] but with the border controls it became something else and more complicated to talk about, even though the reasons behind it are completely understandable. (Selin, 2016)

Thus, the introduction of ID-controls has made it more difficult for Sweden to tell the story about its journey to become the good world citizen it is. Despite the valid argument that “our image of what we have done is built upon what the EU has not done” (Selin, 2016), it is still the case that Sweden, an open and big-hearted nation in Europe, no longer can claim to fully represent that role. Stressing that ID-controls are a temporary solution³³ and the result of what others have not done seems to be important and acts as an ‘excuse’ for Sweden’s behaviour.

As a result of (primarily) the migration crisis, Swedish public diplomacy is with several challenges and changes, and these are presented next.

5.2.3. BALANCING THE IMAGES

The solution to the ‘image problem’, where actions such as the ID-controls speak against the official communication of being an open country, comes down to communicating why these decisions have been made (Hjort, 2016). Thus, it is important to communicate a balanced image of Sweden, one that includes facts and nuance; the black and the white (Modin, 2016; Selin, 2016).

Apart from communicating facts and the actual state of legislation, UD-KOM has sought support from the Government Offices in lifting the narrative of ‘Open Sweden’ as a way to balance the ID-controls and a ‘Closed Sweden’:

³³ The current border control end date is set to 11 November, 2016.

We have a long history of being an open country, we have a long history of being an international aid donor, we have a long history of solidarity [...] and we have wanted to communicate that image to balance what has been written. Naturally, in the situation that emerged, also our Government had to take certain decisions to control the situation, but that does not mean that our core values are not still there. There are other ways in which we are open [...] such as free trade, but in relation to asylum we no longer have that same openness. (Modin, 2016)

Ekberg (2016a) fills in: “Sweden works in favour for increasing bilateral relations, having good coordination and cooperation in several issues, we want to increase export... At the same time, Sweden has a policy that can be interpreted as less open”. The current state of events has thus led to a communicative challenge and a situation with conflicting goals that “does not fit in with the Image of Sweden we want to have”, and “we have to be honest about that, while at the same time indicating that it is a temporary solution” (Ekberg, 2016a). Due to the apparent contradiction to the current policy, the Government Offices have not supported KOM in their attempt to save ‘an injured Image of Sweden’ through communicating Open Sweden.

Selin (2016) also stresses the many nuances submerged under *openness*, which incorporates:

Tolerance towards different sexual identities; gender equality; respect for religion and people from other countries; powerful international engagement, and being a very export dependent country. At the same time, it is important to remember that Sweden still is the country in Europe to accept the largest amount of refugees.

On May 20th 2016, the work on communicating a balanced, realistic and up-to-date image of Sweden moved forward, as a formal decision to establish a task force on coordination of migration was taken, communication being one

of the focus areas³⁴. The purpose is to communicate objective, factual information concerning what applies as a result of recent legislation³⁵ and what possibilities there are to come to Sweden (Ekberg, 2016a); thus, “both the hard messages and the softer ones” (Ekberg, 2016b). Starting in June, 2016, targeted messages are communicated on the MFA’s central websites and social media channels and by the help of embassies in primarily countries of origin and transit countries. The primary target groups are persons “already on the way to Sweden and those planning to go, so that they know what to expect” (Ekberg, 2016a). The task force also includes the Migration Agency, which, as an implementing agency informs through their channels already through web content and information sheets that are distributed to refugees in Swedish reception centres. Much of the information done by the Migration Agency is reused via e.g. links (Ekberg, 2016b). SI was not invited to the task force on migration until the group had found “the right person for it“ (Ekberg, 2016b). The purpose of SI’s participation is to help spread the messages, but also has the long-term purpose of improving coordination and cooperation.

5.2.4. BALANCING (SELF-)IMAGE AND IDENTITY

In a competitive world, “it is important to stay relevant, and I think what is important is staying true to who you are” (Hjort, 2016). In the case of Sweden, however, it has not only been about being true to who you are: how others perceive the nation seems to have a large impact on how Swedes view

³⁴ Informal meetings and cooperation around communication between KOM, the Ministry for Justice and the Government Offices began already during autumn 2015 (Ekberg, 2016a).

³⁵ 1) Changes in regulation around ID-controls implemented in November, 2015, 2) Changes to the law regarding asylum seekers’ rights to accommodation and daily allowance that was implemented on June 1st, 2016, and 3) The proposal regarding temporary residence permits for asylum seekers that was implemented July 20th, 2016 and is to run for three years.

themselves. This has been noticed in previous research (e.g. Pamment, 2011a), and several examples of this outside-in perspective can be found in both policy documents and in the interviews conducted for this research. The interviewees speak of how Sweden is *perceived as* doing something or being something. Usually, Sweden has been known for mainly positive aspects. However, in relation to the migration crisis, the perceived altered behaviour with regards to the core value *openness* has received attention, usually not in a positive light. The question is, then, how the Swedish self-image will be affected if the surrounding world begins describing the nation in wording that speaks against the openness declared in the Image of Sweden-strategy.

Both UD-FH and SI are reluctant towards referring to their work as nation branding, even though the *Strategy for the Image of Sweden* explicitly refers to ‘the nation brand Sweden’ (Svenska Institutet, 2014b, p.5). According to Hjort (2016), “It is always challenging to treat a nation as a brand, and we do not try to do that, either”. Instead, “Sweden is what it is, which depends on political decisions taken for a long time” (Hjort, 2016). Selin (2016) refers to Simon Anholt and his argument that you cannot manage your brand, but only find out what that brand is, and from that insight build relationships and engage in dialogue with target groups. This view thus partly denies the argument that Swedish public diplomacy is closely linked to nation branding, even though actors are in fact *promoting* an image, a term connected to branding (see Pamment, 2011a). In this light, nation branding can be perceived by the actors as a less serious activity in comparison to public diplomacy, and thus shows a wish rather to be referred to as working with PD.

Even if nation branding cannot ‘force’ a specific image to be the ruling one, the process of nation branding can still choose to focus on certain aspects of that image. Currently, the image of Sweden as presented in the strategy excludes the identity of Sweden that can be seen among part of the Swedish citizens and political parties (e.g. the Sweden Democrats). Thus, the discrepancy between the image and values that ‘official Sweden’ projects in terms of being open and caring, and the contrarious ‘identity’ among regular Swedish citizens, who view migration as something that only causes problems, creates a complicated situation. From that perspective, the Strategy for the Promotion of Sweden cannot be seen to represent Sweden univocally. Hjort (2016) counters this by bringing up the project Curators of Sweden as a means for Sweden to let all of its citizens speak their voices. As studies have shown, however, the process of being chosen as a representative of Sweden is not as democratic as it is claimed (see Christensen, 2013).

5.2.5 BALANCING SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM

The need for coordinated communication has increased overall in 2016, as SI has received mandates on more policy related issues, and “when an issue such as migration becomes more intense, all of a sudden we need to speak quite a lot with each other; who says what and how do we distribute our favours...” (Selin, 2016). Thus, the role of SI is currently changing, and the way the actors work together should be changing as well. However, this is not always the case. In relation to the new task force on migration, KOM has had difficulties finding “the right person for the job” (Ekberg, 2016b), despite the apprehension that there is a need to “work closer between policy and the

Image of Sweden, the long-term work” (Modin, 2016). This shows issues with managing the different timeframes of public diplomacy.

A reason for improving coordination is to assure not to communicate ‘mixed messages’. As SI is more flexible in their communication, the authority can decide to e.g. more actively integrate other nuances of openness in their communication. However, it should to be done with a short-term focus in mind, where you consider and adapt to current policy. In January 2016, SI published *This is Sweden*, a film showing different images of Sweden, including a generous parental leave and same-sex marriage. The aim of the movie is to convey an authentic and open image of Sweden and what Sweden represents (Svenska Institutet, 2016b). Although a good tactic to promote Sweden abroad, the timing of it was not ideal and the lack of day-to-day focus resulted in contradicting messages in relation to policy, as “it was released the same week as the Minister for Home Affairs said Sweden was going to send home 80 000 [asylum seekers]. We could synchronize these things better to get maximal impact” (Ekberg, 2016a). Since the target groups are unlikely to make a difference between policy-Sweden and broader Sweden, coordination of different campaigns becomes even more important.

UD-FH also seems to have a lack of understanding for the short-term impact of events on the Image of Sweden. As the strategic actor, UD-FH did not immediately get involved when the migration crisis ‘hit’. Instead, UD-KOM, together with the embassies became the fire-fighter. Not having to deal with the crisis immediately probably makes it easier to view the crisis as a ‘bump in the road’.

Triggered by recent events, UD-KOM sees difficulties in working with the Strategy for the Image of Sweden: “Having an image that Sweden is trying to project when the world says something completely different makes it difficult [...] We also have to adapt to reality. That is the challenge. (Modin, 2016). KOM sees a possibility in following Germany’s example in working dynamically with the image, having no core values or strategy, but instead focussing on current strengths and weaknesses of the image and adapting the work accordingly. The way public diplomacy is organised now, however, KOM does not have much of a say in this matter, as UD-FH is the one who “controls SI” (Modin, 2016). A recommendation is for SI to be organisationally placed under both UD-FH and UD-KOM, alternatively under the Coordinating Group for Public Diplomacy. This way, there would be more of a balance between long-term and short-term.

While SI and UD-FH would profit from integrating a short-term perspective as well, the MFA, as ‘short-term diplomats’, in general needs to develop more of a long-term, relational perspective in order to increase its possibility to influence. Even though some embassies are engaging in two-way communication and dialogue, most diplomats are “stuck in the one-way thinking” of traditional state-to-state diplomacy: “You could step up both capacity building and the understanding that [...] there are different ways to influence: it is our duty to influence in formal gatherings, but we can also use public and digital diplomacy to perform our mission” (Modin, 2016). Furthermore, diplomats need to understand that what they do on a day-to-day-basis helps build the Image of Sweden (Ekberg, 2016a). Changing that mind set takes time, however.

5.2.6 BALANCING INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC

UD-KOM got involved in the crisis even though it was a domestic matter. Thus, the line between what are international and domestic issues is blurred, reflecting the views of Huijgh (2013). The Government Offices did not seem to fully understand that this shift is taking place also from a communicative point-of-view. This can explain why they, according to UD-KOM, did not begin grasping the impact of international media reporting until *Swedish* media were reporting on what international media were saying about the nation, leading to “everyone” seeing it (Ekberg, 2016a). Instead, the Government offices were focussed on managing the situation nationally and policy-wise. Thus, the change in perception of the need to focus also on foreign target groups, and take an “outside-in perspective”, did not begin changing until April 2016, when Sweden had reached a complete migration policy. The change in perception is yet to “trickle down” fully, however (Modin, 2016).

For SI, the blurring of international-domestic (e.g. Headley, 2011) has begun evolving in the opposite direction. With the mandate on migration, SI now also has domestic target groups (e.g. migrant interns) and has increased their cooperation with domestic actors, e.g. the Migration Agency. However, this change is not just a result of the migration crisis but seen as a natural part of a globalised world. Thus, it is important to create an image of Sweden that includes migration in a balanced way (Nilsson, 2016). The mandate on migration gives SI the possibility to complete its mandates within the framework of public diplomacy with a domestic mission of also promoting Sweden ‘at home’.

6. DISCUSSION

The discussion summarizes current challenges and changes involved in promoting the image and interests of Sweden abroad, particularly in relation to the migration crisis. The overall aim is to extract the implications of the research. As it is a case study on Swedish public diplomacy and nation branding, the results are context-based and one must be cautious when attempting to generalise to other cases.

6.1 Lack of Leadership and Short-term Focus

Work on promoting the image and interests of Sweden abroad seems to be in a state of lacking leadership. UD-KOM acknowledges their need to work more with SI, the long-term actor. SI is also not late to point this out, while dismissing the MFA as short-term diplomats. Even though anyone seems to be able to take the lead in improving cooperation, no one has done so. As the strategic actor and thus also with a long-term focus, UD-FH is the one responsible for SI. They share similar timeframes, which has proven challenging in relation to the migration crisis, especially in terms of coordination of communication. It is not possible to remain strategic when something ‘unexpected’ and short-term impacts on the plans. Thus, having only UD-FH as responsible, who is furthermore serving the Minister for Trade, might not be apt when policy connected events that require short-term action take place: coordination must be improved and a fuller perspective integrated. It is important for the Coordinating Group for Public Diplomacy to take in more permanent members, out of which SI should definitely be one, also due to SI’s increase in policy related issues. This way, coordination between UD-KOM and SI would become easier.

6.2 The Migration Crisis and the Image of Sweden

How the migration crisis is perceived in relation to the impact on the Image of Sweden seems to impact on how work is affected. Thus, it is easier for UD-FH and SI to argue that there is no way of telling if the image has changed yet, as this takes time. However, for UD-KOM, who has been dealing with the crisis on a daily basis, it has been viewed as more acute.

UD-KOM was not supported in its attempt to communicate the narrative of Open Sweden. However, this is an appropriate decision, as it could risk resulting in the same type of double messaging that occurred when SI released *This is Sweden*. A comparison can be made to the Danish cartoon crisis, and how the decision to manage national reputation through nation branding was deemed inappropriate and insufficient when managing a complex crisis (see Merckelsen & Rasmussen, 2014). However, the passive role that KOM initially has taken might not represent the best solution either, and shows how a struggle in reaching a common migration policy left UD-KOM fumbling in darkness for a long time. Thus, there has also been a lack of understanding of the Image of Sweden from the Government Offices point-of-view, even though the decision above is deemed suitable.

The image of Sweden as a good world citizen has been challenged by closed borders – perhaps Sweden’s self-righteousness in relation to this plays its part in why international media depicted Sweden in such negative terms. With the world perceiving Sweden as less open, it is interesting to see to what extent Swedes’ self-image is affected, as it has been argued that it is largely dependent on others’ perceptions (Pamment, 2011a).

6.3 Public Diplomacy or (Negative) Nation Branding?

Since autumn 2015, UD-KOM has been communicating reactively in relation to migration, for example through short-term actions such as tweets as means to counter disinformation (Ekberg, 2016a). Only recently has KOM begun proactive communication with the long-term purpose of decreasing the influx of people to Sweden. However, current public diplomacy work from UD-KOM's perspective revolves to a great extent about targeted communication, what can also be perceived as negative branding (Melissen, 2005), with the purpose of preventing certain groups from coming. Although communicating current legislation, one purpose is also to balance out an idealistic image of Sweden in certain places. Thus, apart from engaging in some of Cull's components of PD, e.g. listening, nation branding through pure informational campaigns has been of great importance for the MFA, even though the MFA would be unlikely to refer to it in these terms. The relational aspects of PD have instead been primarily used by SI and are starting to be used by the foreign missions as a toolkit on migration has now been produced. As argued by Kelley (2015), situational factors affect PD, and in the case of Swedish public diplomacy and the migration crisis, a reactive posture by the Government in creating a common migration policy has impacted on this delay.

Lastly, in their strategies and documents, the MFA are keen on presenting all its public and digital diplomacy efforts that have been conducted since the 2011 SOU report. However, in reality, UD-KOM acknowledge that many diplomats are still stuck in one-way thinking, and are

yet to walk the talk of being forerunners in public and digital diplomacy, which has also been pointed out by Pamment (2011a), according to whom Swedish PD is yet to become genuine and effective.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The following section concludes the study by answering the research questions and referring to the most important findings. Lastly, suggestions for further research are presented.

7.1. Research Questions Revisited

7.1.1 SWEDISH PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Swedish public diplomacy, or promotional work, is divided between the MFA units UD-KOM and UD-FH, and the Swedish Institute. Despite slightly different foci, there is a close connection between the actors. Even though UD-KOM mainly has a policy focus, the unit also works with the Strategy for the Image of Sweden, which through its core areas and values show *what* and *how* to communicate Sweden to target groups. As the strategic actor, UD-FH is in charge of work on promoting the Image of Sweden, and work exits from the Image of Sweden-strategy. The Swedish Institute takes a long-term perspective and communicates Sweden from a broad perspective. While overseen by UD-FH and steered by a yearly letter of regulation, SI can rather independently make decisions about its communication. Even though it is an authority under the MFA, SI stresses its difference from the “short-term diplomats” at the MFA.

Promoting the image and interests of Sweden requires coordination and cooperation among actors. In practice, this does not seem sufficient, however. Improving coordination seems a slow process, even though e.g. the Coordinating Group for Public Diplomacy would benefit from having SI as a permanent member, partly due to SI’s increase in policy related mandates.

7.1.2 SWEDISH PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND THE MIGRATION CRISIS

The breadth of the migration crisis was unexpected, which is reflected in how the situation of e.g. negative reporting of Sweden in international media was managed. The lack of a common policy, also with regards to communication, led to UD-KOM struggling with how to communicate and support foreign missions in need of guidance. Not until April 2016 did Sweden reach a complete migration policy and the Government Offices begin understanding the potential impact international reporting about Sweden could have on the Image of Sweden. Furthermore, the implementation of internal border controls has led to communicative difficulties concerning how to communicate the strategy core value of openness when actions speak differently.

UD-FH was initially not affected by the migration crisis, and as the strategic actor remains the least troubled by it overall. The current organisation, with UD-FH as the main responsible for SI, has proven insufficient. PD work has suffered from poor coordination, an example being when SI released a promotional film about e.g. Swedish openness and equality in connection to the Government communicating that 80 000 refugees would be sent home.

In June, 2016 UD-KOM and others began a targeted communication effort in transit countries and countries of origin, the purpose being to communicate current migration legislation. Thus, Sweden has begun combining the hard power of border controls with softer communication around what to expect when attempting to migrate to Sweden. These countries

tend to have an idealised image of Sweden, and balancing communication can make the picture more realistic.

Migration has also led to a mandate on the issue for SI, which can be seen in the organisational development, e.g. partaking in an internship programme for newly arrived. As a result, SI also has a domestic target group. SI has also received other policy-related mandates, and its role within PD thus seems to grow.

7.1.3 CONTEMPORARY SWEDISH PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND IMAGE MANAGEMENT

Due to an overall positive image, promoting the image and interests of Sweden abroad is viewed as grateful work. When circumstances change, however, and events like the migration crisis occur, the perceived discrepancy between Swedish identity and the projected image of openness might contest this image. Adapting to the current 'zeitgeist' is complicated in practice. The Swedish case shows that UD-KOM has acknowledged the difficulties with promoting a certain image of openness when not only the world, but also current Swedish migration policy and part of the Swedish citizenry can be perceived as telling and showing a different story.

The view of an image as one that changes slowly could be replaced by a faster pace – and even though no proof of a changed Image of Sweden exists yet, it is better to be able to act according to a shorter horizon irrespective of time frame. Thus, a strategic mind set requires flexibility and reflection – and most of all, good coordination among promotional actors.

An overly positive image of Sweden seems to have led to the actors taking it for granted. Thus, the results show an unpreparedness to manage

what could be a potential ‘image crisis’. It might be relevant to start rethinking Brand Sweden and what values Sweden should promote in order for Swedish public diplomacy to become effective and authentic. Stressing the temporary solution of border controls still does not erase the fact that openness no longer can be communicated to everyone.

7.2 Suggestions for Further Research

For a fuller picture of Swedish public diplomacy, researching how diplomatic missions have acted in relation to the migration crisis would be fruitful, especially since the MFA struggled with how to tackle the issue. This could include an exploration of how diaspora networks have been engaged in promotional work. Furthermore, if the image does change as a result of the migration crisis, it would be interesting to follow-up by exploring how this knowledge impacts on the work with promoting the image and interests of Sweden abroad.

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9. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Organisational Structure

UD-KOM:

KOM Ledning (management)
KOM Press
KOM IPC (the international press centre)
KOM Strat kom (strategic communication)
KOM Språk (language services)

UD-FH:

FH Ledning (management)
FH EI (export and investment promotion)
FH KULT (promotion of culture and the Image of Sweden)
FH PIH (project export, international procurement and sustainable business enterprise)

The Swedish Institute:

Director General
The Department for Intercultural Dialogue
The Department for International Relations
The Department for Professional Support

Appendix B: Informed Consent Form

Information om deltagande i forskningsprojekt kring Sverigebilden

Du tillfrågas härmed om ditt godkännande att delta i denna studie kring migrationskrisen och Sverigebilden. Syftet med intervjun är samla källmaterial till uppsatsen som är del av masterprogrammet i Strategic Public Relations vid Lunds Universitet Campus Helsingborg.

Du är en av sex personer som har blivit tillfrågad att delta, då du i din arbetsroll besitter en stor expertis och kunskap om arbetet med strategin för Sverigebilden och främjandet av Sverigebilden i utlandet.

Intervjun beräknas ta ca 30 minuter, och citat av dig kan komma att användas i uppsatsen. Hör gärna av dig om du vill se hur du kommer att citeras och/eller om du vill få tillgång till uppsatsen när den är klar (inlämning i augusti 2016). Dina svar och dina resultat kommer att behandlas så att inga obehöriga kan ta del av dem. Projektet kommer inte att påverka dig som medverkande eller din arbetsplats på något negativt sätt.

Med ditt tillstånd (se nedan) kommer ditt riktiga namn att användas i uppsatsen. Om du vill vara anonym kommer du istället refereras som t.ex. "UD-KOM intervju 1".

För vidare information eller frågor kring studien, kontakta:
Alexandra Olofsson: tel. 0725-644422 alt. olofssonalexandra@outlook.com

Informerat samtycke:

- Jag bekräftar att jag fått denna skriftliga samt annan muntlig information om forskningsstudien.
- Jag ger mitt samtycke till att delta i studien och vet att mitt deltagande är helt frivilligt.
- Jag är medveten om att jag när som helst och utan förklaring kan avsluta mitt deltagande.
- Jag tillåter att mina svar och uppgifter registreras enligt den information jag tagit del av och att insamlad data om mig förvaras och hanteras elektroniskt av studieansvarig så att ingen obehörig kan ta del av den.
- Jag tillåter att mitt riktiga namn används i uppsatsen

Informanten

Ort & datum:

Signatur:

Förtydligande:

Intervjuaren

Ort & datum:

Signatur:

Förtydligande:

Appendix C: Interview Guide

1. THE SWEDISH INSTITUTE

Intervjun behandlar teman relaterade till Strategin för Sverige bilden i utlandet, alltså främjandet av Sverige inom ramen för offentlig diplomati och nation branding, både generellt och i relation till migrationskrisen. Syftet med intervjun är att du ska svara på frågorna utefter din yrkesroll och dina arbetsuppgifter, men du får givetvis vara personlig om du vill.

Warm-up:

- Berätta om din roll på Svenska Institutet
 - Vilket ansvarsområde har du?
 - Hur länge har du jobbat här?
 - Hur länge har du haft de arbetsuppgifter du har nu?
 - Hur ser en vanlig dag ut för dig i din arbetsroll?
 - Hur skulle du beskriva bilden av Sverige?

Arbetet med Sverige bilden:

- Berätta om Svenska Institutets arbete med Främjandet av Sverige bilden
 - På ett organisatoriskt plan, hur arbetar SI med Sverige bilden på ett operativt plan (på daglig basis)
 - På ett strategiskt plan (långsiktigt)
 - strategi för Sverige bilden
 - relationsbyggande
 - Mätning av Sverige bilden:
 - När började ni mäta Sverige bilden?
 - Hur ofta?
 - Var mäter ni? Länder/områden av mer relevans
 - Vad letar ni efter?
 - Vem är involverad i processen?
 - Strategier för att mäta
 - Egna analyser
 - Brand Indexes: vilka? Hur ofta? Anpassat efter särskilda händelser eller på regelbunden nivå?
 - Några förändringar från år till år?
 - Hur följer ni upp resultatet av mätningarna, om det kommer fram att bilden av Sverige förändrats
 - till det sämre?
 - till det bättre?
 - beror på land/område?
 - Senaste året, i samband med flyktingkrisen?

- Bilden av Sverige i utlandet just nu

Om man tänker på de senaste utvecklingarna, ex. migrationskrisen och det stora antalet nya människor i Sverige, så har Sverige fått utstå en del kritik gentemot sin öppna utrikespolitik, och i vissa, exempelvis brittiska medier, har bilden av Sverige fått sig en törn, då "vårt öppna samhälle har lett till vårt förfall". Detta står även på Sis hemsida, och ett toolkit om detta väntas i juni 2016.

- Hur har en potentiellt förändrad Sverigebild påverkat Sis arbete? Hur har ni reagerat (ex. toolkit om migration)?
- Var det några särskilda ögonblick som fick er att se det som ett problem för er del? (Alan på stranden, ID-kontrollerna etc.)
- Hur ser ni på Bilden av Sverige efter flyktingkrisen?
- Vilken bild är det som är viktig att få ut? Hur?

Den svåra situationen för Sverige i samband med krisen ledde sedan till att utrikespolitiken gick från öppen till stängd (om än tillfälligt).

- Hur påverkade detta ert arbete?
- Diskrepans mellan identitet och image eller varumärke; alltså hur Sverige utger sig för att vara: Måste man tänka om kring varumärket Sverige med sina värdeord såsom öppenhet, och omtänksamhet för att följa med utvecklingen? Att promota öppenhet när Sverige just nu för vissa grupper är ett stängt land kan ses som problematiskt: hur hanterar ni detta?
- Vems ansvar är det i så fall? Var börjar processen?
- Något som kommer att jämna ut sig, bara ett gupp i vägen?
- Har Sverige upplevt något liknande tidigare i historien?

- Samarbete kring arbetet med Sverige bilden

- Hur ser ert samarbete med andra ut på ett generellt plan?
 - UD KOM och UD FH
 - ambassader och diplomatiska beskickningar?
 - andra organisationer i NSU?
 - andra aktörer, ex. civila samhället, företag etc., SIDA
- Hur har samarbetet med dessa påverkats av migrationskrisen?
 - Migrationsverket, nu i samband med migrationskrisen?
 - SIDA – (avdelningen för partnerskap och innovation, avdelningschef Lena Ingelstam) – PD (kallas ej för det), ser till att företag följer svenska värderingar
- Vilken roll spelar Svenska Institutet när det gäller Sverige bilden, jämfört med andra NSU-organisationer?
 - Vilken makt har SI att påverka hur arbetet med främjandet ska förändras?

- Utmaningar
 - Vad ser ni för utmaningar i arbetet med Sverige bilden idag?
 - Digitala kanaler
 - kontroll av kommunikationen, alltså risk att bilder som inte stämmer överens med den utvalda Sverige bilden sprids genom svenska eller utländska medborgare/intressenter.
 - Hur tänker ni kring detta?
- Möjligheter för arbetet med Sverige bilden
 - Vad ser ni för möjligheter i arbetet med Sverige bilden idag?
 - samskapande som verktyg: påvisa brand-ambassadors, gör att det blir mer autentiskt, som ju faktiskt är ett av brand values som Sverige valt att fokusera på. Hur tänker ni kring detta?
 - innovation som verktyg

De-briefing:

- Det här var de teman och frågor jag ville prata om idag. Har du något du vill tillägga?

TACK för din medverkan! Återkom gärna om du har undringar eller vill komplettera något svar.

2. THE MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Intervjun behandlar teman relaterade till Strategin för Sverige bilden i utlandet, alltså främjandet av Sverige inom ramen för offentlig och digital diplomati och nation branding, både generellt och i relation till migrationskrisen. Syftet med intervjun är att du ska svara på frågorna utefter din yrkesroll och dina arbetsuppgifter, men du får givetvis vara personlig om du vill.

Warm-up:

- Berätta om din roll på UD
 - Vilket ansvarsområde har du?
 - Hur länge har du jobbat här?
 - Hur länge har du haft de arbetsuppgifter du har nu?
 - Hur ser en vanlig dag ut för dig i din arbetsroll?
 - Hur skulle du beskriva bilden av Sverige?

Arbetet med Sverige bilden:

- Berätta om arbetet med att främja Sverige bilden och svenska intressen utomlands
 - Vilken är UD:s (FH/KOM) roll när det gäller främjandet av Sverige bilden och svenska intressen utomlands?
 - Hur arbetar ni med Sverige bilden på ett operativt plan (på daglig basis)
 - På ett strategiskt plan (långsiktigt)

- relationsbyggande
 - Samarbete inom samverkansgruppen för offentlig diplomati (UD KOM och UD FH)
 - hur ser samarbetet ut? På vilket sätt arbetar ni med offentlig diplomati tillsammans?
 - Pilotsatsningarna 2013 – hur gick det sen? Vad hände med PIK?
 - Förändringar i organisationen: UD FIM → UD FH (hållbart företagande) – hur påverkar det arbetet med främjandet av Sverige-bilden?
- Bilden av Sverige i utlandet

Om man tänker på de senaste utvecklingarna, ex. migrationskrisen och det stora antalet nya människor i Sverige, så har Sverige fått utstå en del kritik gentemot sin utrikespolitik, och i vissa, exempelvis brittiska medier, har bilden av Sverige fått sig en törn, då ”vårt öppna samhälle har lett till vårt förfall”.

- Hur har detta påverkat ert arbete inom offentlig och digital diplomati?
- Var det några särskilda ögonblick som fick er att se det som ett problem för er del? (Alan på stranden, ID-kontrollerna etc.)
- Hur har migrationskrisen påverkat Bilden av Sverige i samband med flyktingkrisen?
- Vilken bild är det som är viktig att få ut? Hur?

Den svåra situationen för Sverige i samband med krisen ledde sedan till att utrikespolitiken gick från öppen till stängd (om än tillfälligt).

- Hur påverkade detta ert arbete inom kommunikation? (ex. få andra länder att ta mer ansvar)
- Länder såsom Norge har valt att försöka minska på trycket genom riktad kommunikation i sociala medier och annonser i ex. Afghanistan, där Norges migrationsverk ville avskräcka asylsökande från att komma. Hur reagerade Sverige på detta? <http://www.svd.se/norge-vill-avskracka-asylsokande/om/sverige>
- Hur har Sverige tänkt kring detta? Vilka diskussioner har förts kring att rikta viss kommunikation mot särskilda grupper?
 - Har Sverige gjort riktade kommunikationsinsatser i vissa delar av världen på liknande sätt, genom att i vissa länder eller gentemot vissa grupper aktivt göra Sverige mindre attraktivt?
- Det syns en viss diskrepans mellan identitet och image eller varumärke; alltså hur Sverige utger sig för att vara: Måste man tänka om kring varumärket Sverige med sina värdeord såsom öppenhet, och omtänksamhet för att följa med utvecklingen? Att promota öppenhet när Sverige just nu för vissa grupper är ett stängt land kan ses som problematiskt.
- Vems ansvar är det i så fall? Var börjar processen?
- Något som kommer att jämna ut sig, bara ett gupp i vägen?
- Har Sverige upplevt något liknande tidigare i historien?

- Samarbete kring arbetet med Sverige bilden
 - Hur ser ert samarbete med andra ut på ett generellt plan?
 - SI
 - ambassader och diplomatiska beskickningar?
 - andra organisationer i NSU?
 - andra aktörer i civilsamhället, företag etc., SIDA?
 - Hur har samarbetet med dessa påverkats i samband med migrationskrisen?
 - Migrationsverket
 - SIDA – (avdelningen för partnerskap och innovation, avdelningschef Lena Ingelstam) – PD (kallas ej för det), ser till att företag följer svenska värderingar
 - Vilken roll har UD KOM/FIM när det gäller Sverige bilden, jämfört med andra NSU-organisationer?
 - Vilken makt har UD att påverka hur arbetet med Sverige bilden ska förändras?

- Utmaningar
 - Vad ser ni för utmaningar i arbetet med Sverige bilden idag?
 - Digitala kanaler
 - Kommunikation är mer svårkontrollerat än någonsin, och i Sverige märks vissa ”mer stängda” åsikter tydligt, åsikter som kan påverka hur medborgare i andra länder ser på Sverige. Det finns en risk att bilder som inte stämmer överens med den utvalda Sverige bilden sprids och får förankring i omvärlden genom svenska eller utländska medborgares åsikter i sociala medier och forum på nätet.
 - Hur tänker ni kring detta?

- Möjligheter för arbetet med Sverige bilden
 - Vad ser ni för möjligheter i arbetet med Sverige bilden idag?
 - samskapande som verktyg: påvisa brand-ambassadors, gör att det blir mer autentiskt, som ju faktiskt är ett av brand values som Sverige valt att fokusera på. Hur tänker ni kring detta?
 - innovation som verktyg

De-briefing:

- Det här var de teman och frågor jag ville prata om idag. Har du något du vill tillägga?

TACK för din medverkan! Återkom gärna om du har undringar eller vill komplettera något svar.

Appendix D: Documents Analysed and Codebook

Table 2. Documents and codes

Source	Document	Date/year of Publication	Code
The Ministry for Foreign Affairs/The Government	Vägledning för offentlig diplomati	2014-08-19	V.O.D
	Checklista för offentlig diplomati	2013-11-21	C.O.D
	Vägledning för digital diplomati	2014-08-19	V.D.D
	Vägledning för sociala medier	2014-08-19	V.S.M
	Riktlinjer för kommunikation i utrikesförvaltningen	2014-06-26	R.K.U
	Utrikesförvaltning i världsklass	2011	SOU11
	10 x Prezi presentations on public and digital diplomacy	2013-2016	PREZI 1-10
	Interview with Sara Modin/Anna Ekberg	2016-04-28	I.KOM
	Interview with Håkan Hjort	2016-04-28	I.FH
The Swedish Institute	Sverigebilden utomlands	N/A	SI_Svebild_ut
	Strategi och prioriteringar	N/A	SI_strat
	Kulturpolicy	N/A	SI_pol_kult
	Årsredovisning 2015	2016	SI_år2015
	Årsredovisning 2014	2015	SI_år2014
	Uppdrag och finansiering	N/A	SI_uppfin
	Budskapsplattform samhälle	N/A	SI_sh
	Instruktion 2015:152	2015	SI_instr2015
	Regleringsbrev 2016	2016	SI_regl16
	Regleringsbrev 2015	2015	SI_regl15
	Instruktion 2007:1224	2007	SI_instr2007
	Bilder av Sverige i utlandet	2014	B.A.S14
	Interview Henrik Selin	2016-04-29	I.SI.HS
	Interview Agnes Lidbeck	2016-04-29	I.SI.AL
	Interview Helen Nilsson	2016-04-29	I.SI.HN
Brand Sweden / NSU	Strategi för Sverigebilden i utlandet (powerpoint)	N/A	SveBild_pp
	Strategi för Sverigebilden	2014	SveBild
	Strategi för arbetet med Sverigebilden i utlandet (sv + eng)	N/A	SveBild_arb
	Sverigebilden 2.0	2008	SveBild2.0

Table 3. Codebook

RESP	Responsibilities, roles, tasks
COMM	Specific communication/PD activities
CHA	Challenges/opportunities
COOP	Cooperation, coordination
SE	Views on Brand Sweden, Swedish PD, Sweden's image
MIG in front of code	Specific migration effects in relation to code