

# **A para(t)oxic relationship between conservatives and climate**

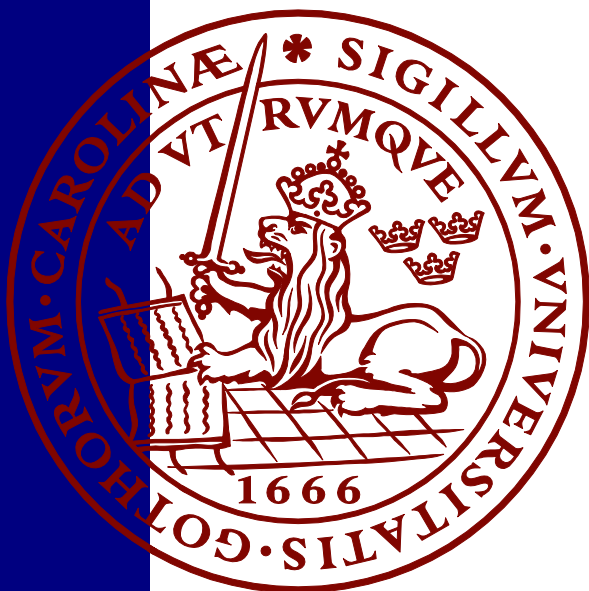
Analyzing climate denial in the frames of the Estonian Conservative People's Party EKRE and their embeddedness in toxic masculinity

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## **Abstract**

The nexus between the far-right ideologies, toxic masculinity, and climate denial urgently calls for more research. Drawing on intersectional feminist theory and framing theory, a qualitative frame analysis based on the Estonian Far-Right Populist Party's (EKRE) conservative news platform was conducted to scrutinize the role of toxic masculinity in legitimizing climate denial. As research reveals, EKRE's climate denialist attitudes are strongly embedded in toxic masculinity: EKRE's authoritarian, anti-globalist, and anti-immigrant stance, merged with the glorification of rationality manifests in the portrayal of climate mitigation as an 'economic suicide' imposed by 'green totalitarians' with a threat to national security. EKRE's 'hysterical' climate frame signals that climate action is anti-masculine. By emphasizing nature protection over climate action and depoliticizing the climate conversation, the business-as-usual is justified while the urgent need for a political change remains unaddressed. To overcome climate denial in the far-right, challenging toxic masculinity should be the first crucial step.

**Keywords:** toxic masculinity, climate denial, intersectionality, far-right, framing, feminism

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Despite having promised not to end on an overly dramatic note, I am too tempted to conclude with a verse that carried me through my humble teenage years and will continue to do so as I will leave our tiny LUMES bubble and try to find meaning in the world that is for some odd reason still running on fossil fuels.

*“In these bodies we will live / in these bodies we will die /  
where you invest your love / you invest your life.”*

Mumford and Sons

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*“The further society drifts from the truth the more it will hate people who speak it.”*

George Orwell

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1. Prologue: How did we get to climate denial?**

Despite the scientific consensus on anthropogenic climate change (Cook et al., 2013, 2016; Hoegh-Guldberg et.al. 2018; Powell, 2017), climate denialist<sup>1</sup> positions proliferate in present-day Western societies (Feinberg & Willer, 2011; Fischer, 2019), often associated with conservative worldviews and the political right-wing (Conversi, 2020; Forchtner & Kølvråa, 2015; Forchtner, et.al., 2018; Hultman et.al., 2020; Lockwood, 2018). While climate emergency urgently calls for transnational political action and the acceptance of the political responsibility of the Global North to drastically reduce its emissions (Hickel, 2021), the current state of denial by some rejects the need for immediate climate action, thereby obscuring the possibility to envision alternative social futures (Petersen et. al., 2019; Sharry, 2019). Acknowledging that scientific facts are no longer enough to convince someone on climate change because climate denial is strongly bound to ideologies and identities (Daggett, 2018; Hoffman, 2011; Malloy, 2009), the thesis departs from the presumption that the social inequalities in human wealth, privilege and power need to be critically addressed when scrutinizing the underlying reasons of climate denial.

As a vast body of literature suggests, the main drivers behind climate change, biodiversity loss, and the destruction of the ecosystems, as well as the oppression of women, BIPOC<sup>2</sup>, non-binary/genderqueer, poor and marginalized people can be pinpointed to capitalism, colonialism, patriarchy, and white supremacy (Connell, 2017; Hickel, 2021; Hultman & Pulé, 2018; Pease, 2019; Wiedmann et. al., 2020; Wright, 2017). Since a sufficient response to climate change calls for restructuring the capitalist system that favors unlimited growth (Hickel, 2019; Kallis, 2011; Van Den Bergh & Kallis, 2012), climate denial has been characterized as an antidote of those whose vested interests and privilege are tied to capital accumulation at the cost of the environment, the atmosphere, and other living beings (Daggett, 2018; Hultman and Pulé, 2018; McGlade & Ekins, 2015). Economic growth and industrialization, inherently tied to carbon pollution, biodiversity loss, and the acceleration of climate change (Hickel, 2019; Van Den Bergh & Kallis, 2012; Wright, 2017), has resulted in disproportionate wealth accumulation in the hands of a few

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<sup>1</sup> “Climate denial” is used instead of “climate skepticism”, indicating to the denial of the scientific facts instead of remaining skeptical while being inclined to engage in critical scientific debates.

<sup>2</sup> The acronym stands for Black, Indigenous, and People Of Color (Garcia, 2020).

(Anshelm & Hultman, 2014; Banerjee & Bell, 2007; McCright & Dunlap, 2011). To put the wealth of the world's wealthiest in perspective: the world's top wealthiest 1% – predominantly male, middle-aged, and white (Hultman & Pulé, 2018) – own twice as much wealth as the bottom 6.9 billion people (Oxfam, 2020).

It is important to note here, however, that this thesis does not accuse the individual white men as the root of all evil, nor does it concur with gendered essentialism that problematically characterizes women as 'closer to nature' (Twine, 2001), thereby perceiving men as less capable of ecological care. As Hultman and Pulé (2018, p. 31) emphasize, "all masculinities have infinite capacities to care" but masculine care is shaped by the gender norms, social expectations, and capitalist definitions of success.

In a similar vein, Connell (2017) aptly highlights:

The top managers of the corporations pouring out greenhouse gases and poisoning river systems are not necessarily doing so from inner evil. Perhaps these men love babies and puppies and would sing in a church choir if only they could find the time. But they are working in an insane elite world that institutionalizes competition, power-oriented masculinity, and they are doing whatever it takes. (Connell, 2017, p. 6)

Building on the latter quote, a critical focus of this thesis lies on the systemic pressure put on men to achieve success in highly competitive, elite-driven modern Western societies. The pressure to be the providers and always win paves the road to toxic masculinity – a focus in this thesis. Toxic masculinity refers to a set of socially constructed, stereotypical norms of 'manhood' that are centered around dominance, toughness, hyper-competitiveness, and low empathy (Daddow & Hertner, 2019; Flood, 2018; Kupers, 2005; Pearson, 2019; Pizarro-Sirera, 2020; Sculos, 2017b). Toxic masculinity is particularly fitting to neoliberal capitalism (Sculos, 2017b), favoring growth, competition, and dominance. Since climate action requires "an element of altruism" (Farstad, 2018, p. 699) and willingness to leave "trillions of dollars of profit in the ground" (Daggett, 2018, p. 26), the traits of toxic masculinity conflict with the need for ecological care and transnational cooperation that is required to sufficiently respond a changing climate (Farstad, 2018; Pease, 2016).

## **1.2. Thesis aim and research questions**

Departing from the premise that the political right is shaped by masculinist domination (Agius et. al., 2020), the thesis assumes that the far-right's climate denialist positions – already legitimized through their anti-universalist stance, glorification of strong male leaders, and determination to control national resources (Agius, Rosamond, & Kinnvall, 2020; Cole, 2005; Conversi, 2020; Kandiyoti, 1991; Rensmann, 2017) – can be further rooted in toxic masculinity (Pearson, 2019; Sculos, 2017b). Intending to overcome climate denial in the far-right by targeting toxic masculinity, this thesis seeks to address a research gap on the

synergies between far-right ideologies, toxic masculinity, and climate denial. To simultaneously address the literature gap on the far-right parties of Eastern Europe (Kasekamp, Madisson, & Wierenga, 2019), as well as to contribute to a lack of analytical tools for measuring the toxic masculine culture in politics (Daddow & Hertner, 2019), the Estonian Conservative People's Party (*Eesti Konservatiivne Rahvaerakond*, EKRE) has been chosen as a case study.

To scrutinize the presence of toxic masculinity in the far-right and its role in legitimizing climate denial, the research is driven by the following research question and sub-questions:

**RQ:** How is toxic masculinity nourishing far-right ideologies through the legitimization of climate denial?

**RQ1:** What are EKRE's main frames and how do they uphold toxic masculinity?

**RQ2:** How does toxic masculinity in EKRE's frames justify climate denial?

### **1.3. Contribution to sustainability science**

Climate change is a wicked problem that urgently requires contributions from both social and natural science perspectives (Jerneck et al., 2011). However, as Löwbrand et.al. (2015) have emphasized, the global change research community is mostly focused on the need for environmental change, whereas the need for social change remains largely unaddressed. Similarly, Connell (2017, p. 5) calls for more social science perspectives for understanding how to respond to environmental changes, stressing that "we do not live in an Anthropocene so much as a Sociocene". Alternatively, Hultman & Pulé (2018) have suggested that we live in an era of (m)Anthropocene – where the (m) prefix refers to the men's dominant impact on the environmental harm and acceleration of climate change. Moreover, the term Capitalocene has been proposed (Malm, 2018; Malm & Hornborg, 2014) to emphasize the role of the market interests and capital accumulation in accelerating climate emergency.

Building on the perspectives introduced above, this thesis recognizes the role of the social conditions behind climate change (MacGregor, 2009; Rosa & Dietz, 1988) and the role of social interests behind climate denial. By utilizing an intersectional feminist lens (elaborated further in Section 3), the thesis aims to explore the role of unjust power structures that have maintained the capitalist status quo, guided by market interests that drive life on Earth beyond safe planetary boundaries (Clark & York, 2005; Hickel, 2021; Van Den Bergh & Kallis, 2012). A framing theory lens (Section 3) serves as a guide in this thesis to understand the power of communication in shaping people's attitudes on climate change. By bridging different research disciplines, this thesis aspires to contribute to the field of sustainability science by

advancing a holistic understanding of the underlying roots of climate denial – and open a conversation on how to overcome it.

#### **1.4. Thesis outline**

The thesis proceeds with some essential background knowledge of the interconnections between toxic masculinity and climate denial (Section 2.1.), far-right ideologies and climate denial (2.2.), and the proliferation of the far-right parties in Estonia in the new millennium (2.3.). What follows are the theoretical entry points for research (Section 3). Section 4 introduces the methodological approach, followed by outlining the results (Section 5). The analysis in Section 6 aims to answer the research questions and open a further conversation for overcoming climate denial in the far-right. Section 7 summarizes the main takeaways from the thesis and proposes a direction for future research and action.

## **2. Background**

The first two Background sections in this chapter guide the reader through the interlinkages between toxic masculinity, the far-right, and climate denial, while also providing definitions of the concepts. The last section (2.3.) concludes with an overview of the current state of far-right nationalism in Estonia that also aims to introduce the case study of the thesis.

### **2.1. Toxic masculinity and climate denial**

The behaviors associated with toxic masculinity have been characterized as harmful to all of society and the environment, but the traits of toxic masculinity are not necessarily characteristic to men only (Sculos, 2017b). Toxic masculinity is an exaggerated form of hegemonic masculinity that legitimizes men's supremacy over women (Daddow & Hertner, 2019; Kupers, 2005). Toxic masculinity adds an additional layer of domination: both over femininity and over other types of masculinities (Daddow & Hertner, 2019; Kupers, 2005). Toxic masculinity – or “straight man cancer” in Mandarin (Kesvani, 2018) – has been defined as “the constellation of socially regressive male traits that serve to foster domination, the devaluation of women, homophobia, and wanton violence” (Kupers, 2005, p. 714). Despite the need for critically engaging with toxic masculinity in academia, there is a lack of tools developed for measuring toxic masculinity (Parent, Gobble, & Rochlen, 2019). A non-exhaustive list of toxic masculinity characteristics has been proposed by numerous authors: hyper-competitiveness, individualistic self-sufficiency, dread of dependency, (glorification of) violence, heteronormativity, rigid concepts of sexual identities and gender roles, sexism, misogyny, chauvinism, lack of affection/ low empathy, the right to women's sexual attention, islamophobia and a refusal to cooperate with authorities (Daddow & Hertner,

2019; Kupers, 2005; Parent et al., 2019; Parent & Moradi, 2011; Pearson, 2019; Pizarro-Sirera, 2020; Sculos, 2017b).

To understand the connection between toxic masculinity and climate denial, it is worth highlighting that neoliberal capitalism is a perfect soil for toxic masculinity (Sculos, 2017a). Since effective climate action requires a complete restructuring of the present-day economic system (Farstad, 2018), by urgently calling for “more radical questionings of growth, extractivism, and even modernity” (Escobar, 2015, p. 461), the changing climate puts the modern-day capitalism along with the masculinist primacy at risk (Malm & The Zetkin Collective, 2021). This results in what Pulé & Hultman (2018, p. 92) characterize as a wide “disconnection between modern Western malestreams and Earthcare”, based on a wide gap between the ecological care and what is considered as a ‘masculine’ identity (Anshelm & Hultman, 2014; Pease, 2019). As a result, climate denialist positions proliferate to “cast climate science as oppositional to the implemented securities and assumed entitlements of masculine primacy” (Anshelm & Hultman, 2014; Pulé & Hultman, 2018, p. 92). Vast resources have been invested in manipulating climate data “to maintain an illusion of controversy” and convey a message that climate concerns are “nothing more than hysteria” (Farrell, 2016; Pulé & Hultman, 2018, p. 92).

To identify toxic masculinity in EKRE’s frames, this thesis draws on Daddow & Hertner’s (2019) framework for measuring toxic masculinity in political parties. According to the authors, a party can be characterized as one with a highly toxic masculine culture if it displays five to six indicators of the following list: (1) heterosexism, (2) sexism, (3) verbally and physically aggressive behavior towards women and other men, (4) rejection of positive gender discrimination, (5) hyper-competitiveness between ingroup and outgroups, (6) glorification of strong male leadership. This thesis will turn to the framework in the Analysis part and will propose a synthesis of the toxic masculinity traits identified in the case of EKRE and the toxic masculinity traits suggested by Daddow and Hertner (2019).

All in all, having explained how toxic masculinity is at odds with climate action and keeping in mind the research aim to explore the role of toxic masculinity in legitimizing the far-right’s climate denial, this thesis now turns to explain the wide umbrella of the ‘political right’.

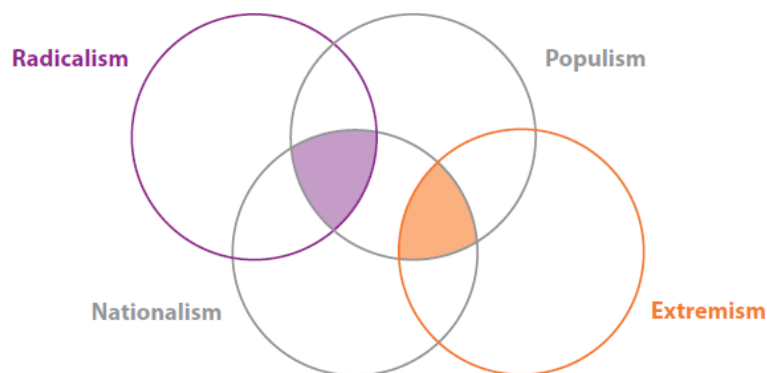
## **2.2. Far-right ideologies and climate denial**

As previous research has revealed, climate change salience is constrained by the left-right ideology division more than by any other party characteristic (Farstad, 2018). Climate denialist attitudes, associated with the right-wing (Agius, Rosamond, & Kinnvall, 2020; Anshelm & Hultman, 2014; Jacques, Dunlap, &

Freeman, 2008; Lockwood, 2018; Wolsko, Ariceaga, & Seiden, 2016) have been characterized as a part of a bigger counter-movement against transnational climate action (Hultman, Björk, & Viinikka, 2020). Climate denial in the far-right can also be understood as a matter of safeguarding one's national resources within a sovereign territory (Conversi, 2020).

Defining the characteristics of the far-right is, however, anything but an easy task (Golder, 2016). In general, the term 'right' is often used to characterize a stance against the liberal, egalitarian and socialist/Marxist values of the "left" (Cole, 2005). A non-exhaustive list of the characteristics often associated with the far-right includes an ethnonationalist belief of a nation's mythical past; appreciation of traditional family values; an anti-immigration stance; authoritarianism; as well as anti-universalist, anti-pluralist, and anti-globalist attitudes (Agius et al., 2020; Rydgren, 2018). Rensmann (2017, p. 124) identifies the present-day populism as a "cultural counter-revolution" against "liberal-cosmopolitan socio-cultural transformations and culturally inclusive identities in globalized immigration societies – and against immigrants and "the elite" identified with those changes". A strong distinction is drawn between the corrupt elite, the bottom class (immigrants and asylum seekers), and one's nation, portrayed as 'pure people' (Agius et al., 2020; Steele & Homolar, 2019).

It is important to note here, however, that there exists simply no one 'right' and one 'left' – instead, there are several 'rights' and 'lefts' (Cole, 2005). As **Figure 1** illustrates, the term 'far-right' is a wide umbrella, consisting of different characteristics that are not shared by all the members of the far-right family (Golder, 2016).



**Figure 1.** Different dimensions of the far-right. Source: Golder, 2016.

Over the past 30 years, a new 'master frame' has developed – a combination of nationalism, populism, and radicalism, illustrated by the purple shading in **Figure 1** (Golder, 2016; Rydgren, 2005, 2018). The

orange shading combines traits of nationalism, populism, and extremism altogether labeled as ‘fascism’ (Golder, 2016). The ‘master frame’ will be used throughout the thesis when referring to the term ‘far-right’.

### **2.3. The rise of the far-right in the EU and Estonia**

Having identified the synergies between climate denial and the far-right, this section aims to provide some context on the recent increase of the far-right parties in recent years. Populist, nativist, and xenophobic parties have proliferated across the globe since the beginning of the new millennium (Agius et al., 2020). Their appearance has been explained through a “loss of faith in mainstream parties” as well as through the nations’ aspiration for strong male leaders with conservative worldviews in times of insecurity, anxiety, and loss of control (Agius et al., 2020).

The year 2014 marks a turning point in the politics of the European Union: a rise of far-right populism in the EU member countries began challenging mainstream European political forces (Lazaridis, Campani, & Benveniste, 2016). Estonia has been no exception: the Estonian Conservative People’s Party EKRE was founded in 2012 and it has gained strong support since (ERR, 2018). As a result of the 2019 parliament elections, EKRE became the third most popular party and entered the minority coalition (Valimised, 2019). In January 2021, the Estonian government collapsed – the party was sent to the opposition but its support has increased to its highest level in EKRE’s history (23% as in April 2021) (ERR, 2021; Kook, 2021).

Previous literature on EKRE’s discourses reveals that EKRE advocates four core positions: (1) an anti-Russian stance, (2) Euroscepticism, (3) promotion of traditional family values, and (4) an anti-refugee discourse (Kasekamp et al., 2019). EKRE’s campaigns build on Estonians’ pre-existing frames of decolonization (Petsinis, 2019), thereby evoking fear which is turned into hostility towards foreigners (Feministarium, 2015). Some of the party members have been associated with neo-Nazism (Braghiroli, 2019) and crypto-fascism (Rohtmets, 2019). Additionally, EKRE is verbally abusive towards the LGBTQ+ community (Koppel, 2020) and has hampered gender equality, despite claiming the opposite (Viik, 2019). All in all, EKRE has widened polarization in society and threatened democratic institutions (Raik, 2021).

EKRE’s environmental attitudes have not been systematically studied but the party has been recognized as the only party in Estonia that denies anthropogenic climate change (Väinsalu, 2019). Building on the research aim to scrutinize EKRE’s climate denial through toxic masculinity, intersectional feminist theory, and framing theory will be utilized in the following theory section, followed by qualitative frame analysis on EKRE’s conservative news platform *Uued Uudised* (ENG: New News).

### **3. Theoretical entry points**

Driven by the ambition to scrutinize the social conditions that legitimize climate denial while exploring the power of climate communication, perspectives from intersectional feminist theory (Section 3.2.) and framing theory (Section 3.3.) are used as guiding lenses for the research. Before explaining the theories, however, the ontological and epistemological positionality of the author is clarified.

#### **3.1. Research philosophy: A realist social constructivism**

Building on Elder-Vass (2012, p. 3) who advocates for mediation between critical realism and social constructivism, arguing that “social scientists should be *both* realists *and* social constructivists”, this thesis adopts a realist social constructivist ontological stance. As it has been proposed by various scholars, the battle between realism and social constructivism has “often obscured the possibility that a more moderate social constructionism might be entirely compatible with a realist understanding of the social world” (Elder-Vass, 2012, p. 6).

A combination of the two – not necessarily mutually exclusive – ontological stances is particularly appropriate when studying climate denial. A realist social constructivist lens does not reject a critical realist position that climate change exists independently from the researchers’ knowledge of it (Fleetwood & Ackroyd, 2004) but simultaneously acknowledges the significance of the *social conditions* and *social actors* behind climate crisis that unequally affect people across the globe (MacGregor, 2009; Rosa & Dietz, 1988). Therefore, a realist social constructivist perspective allows a critical discussion of the social and political factors that shape our dominant understandings of climate change (MacGregor, 2009) but also influence the socially constructed understanding of masculinities and femininities (Connell, 2017; Pease, 2019).

#### **3.2. An intersectional feminist contribution**

As it has been revealed by now, both environmental and social crises stem from gendered identities and a relationship between patriarchal privilege and fossil fuel extraction (Buckingham, 2015; Daggett, 2018; Hultman & Pulé, 2018). Therefore, this thesis agrees that a gender analysis is necessary for defining “a more accurate diagnosis of the problem and thus a more promising ‘cure’ (if there is one) than is possible with a gender neutral approach” (MacGregor, 2009, p. 124). Going one step further, however, this thesis adopts an intersectional feminist lens that looks beyond the inequalities caused by gender by also acknowledging the inequalities caused by the intersection of different overlapping identity categories.



Intersectional feminism was first coined by Crenshaw in 1989 to explain how different systems of oppression overlap and thereby create unique experiences of oppression for people with multiple identity categories (Davis, 2008). It broadens the scope of earlier feminist theorizations by “focus[ing] attention on the vexed dynamic of difference and the solidarities of sameness in the context of antidiscrimination and social movement politics” (Cho, Crenshaw, & Mccall, 2013, p. 787). Furthermore, by broadening the scope from gender to other identity categories, an intersectional feminist lens allows one to investigate the power asymmetries between hegemonic masculinity and other types of masculinities, recognizing that not all men are equal, as outlined by Hultman and Pulé (2018, p. 1): “disparities between the rich and poor within nations run parallel to different socially sanctioned rankings among men based on race, age, sexual orientation, identity”.

In the context of climate change, an intersectional feminist lens not only illustrates how societal power structures play a role in how different social groups contribute to climate change but also how they are differently affected by it (Kajiser & Kronsell, 2014). It also helps explain climate denial – as Pulé and Hultman (2018) highlight, climate denial is a rather obvious response by those whose primacy, largely tied to rapid industrialization and growth, is threatened by climate mitigation. Climate denial has been thus characterized as a “breach in the patriarchal dam” (Daggett, 2018, p. 44), as “a reflex of prioritising people before planet” (Pulé & Hultman, 2018, p. 93); or as the “psychology of capitalist climate governance” (Malm & The Zetkin Collective, 2021, p. 484), aspiring to defend those who benefit from the fossil capital the most (Pulé & Hultman, 2018).

In the face of a widening polarization between the climate deniers and ‘climate accepters’ that may result in questioning whether progressive climate policies have become impossible to reach because the facts no longer seem to convince people whose identities support a different belief (Hoffman, 2011), it is crucial to develop effective communication on the climate emergency. Building on Hoffman’s (2011) statement that the debate on climate change is as much of a cultural debate as it is scientific, framing theory is utilized to pave a road towards overcoming a barrier between climate deniers and ‘climate accepters’.

### **3.3. A framing theory contribution**

Cognitive brain science research has concluded that humans think in frames (Lakoff, 2010). A frame can be understood as an “unconscious structure” (Lakoff, 2010, p. 71) or “a specific organizing principle that give[s] structures and meaning to the world outside” (Shehata & Hopmann, 2012, p. 178). Framing involves carefully choosing some aspects from the perceived reality that are fostered through increasing

their salience in communication, thereby shaping people's attitudes, moral judgments, and potential actions (Entman, 1993).

It has been argued that the Western masculine focus on climate framing has been "based on an ideology of the domination and control of nature", focusing on technocratic responses and thereby leaving less space for ethical and political considerations (Pease, 2019, p. 115). Among the political right, climate change has not reached sufficient salience, despite the increasingly popular framing of climate change as the greatest threat humanity has ever faced that has led media to report climate change as a political issue (Shehata & Hopmann, 2012). It has been proposed that whereas the far-right populist parties tend to emphasize environmental protection motivated by strong national pride (Forchtner, 2020), climate change does often not receive salience (Forchtner & Kølvråa, 2015). As the scholars have explained, the aesthetics of the national landscape and homeland can be used symbolically and materially to support the idea of an ethnically unified nation (Forchtner & Kølvråa, 2015). In the Estonian context, the pre-independence nationalist movement escalated with the creation of the first national park – Lahemaa – in the USSR in 1971 (Conversi, 2020), providing evidence for theories suggesting that the national environment plays a significant role in a nation's self-identification process (Malloy, 2009).

Climate, on the other hand, "fits poorly into a nationalist imaginary of nature" as nationalists fail to frame climate as something to be enjoyed or directly experienced (Forchtner & Kølvråa, 2015, p. 212). Moreover, the reluctance of the political right to engage in climate debates has been explained through the fact that accepting the climate emergency also requires the acceptance of transnational responsibility (Forchtner & Kølvråa, 2015). While earlier environmental risks (e.g. pollution, destruction of the landscapes) could be governed within a national frame, "a much broader, totalizing, 360-degree threat like climate change" (Conversi, 2020, p. 632) requires obeying transnational authorities and committing to internationally organized effort to reduce the emissions (Forchtner & Kølvråa, 2015). Therefore, reducing the emissions to meet the climate targets can be interpreted as betraying one's ingroup – a nation-state (Forchtner & Kølvråa, 2015; Wolsko et al., 2016).

In the climate debates, the climate deniers and 'climate accepters' engage in fundamentally different discussions – while 'climate accepters' communicate in prognostic frames, thereby admitting the problem cause and looking for solutions, climate deniers use diagnostic frames, thereby doubting and rejecting climate science (Hoffmann, 2011). To mislead the public and contradict the "massive scientific evidence" of anthropogenic climate change, a counter-movement has emerged to legitimate climate denial, involving "conservative think tanks, advocacy groups, trade associations, and conservative foundations,

with strong links to sympathetic media outlets and conservative politicians” (Brulle, 2014, p. 692). Climate deniers frame climate change as a hoax invented by the liberal elite for earning money (Forchtner, Kroneder, & Wetzel, 2018; Hultman et al., 2020). The climate change counter-movement aims at maintaining the business-as-usual “by attempting to delegitimize the science that supports the necessity of mandatory limits on carbon emissions” (Brulle, 2014, p. 692).

Having introduced both intersectional feminist and framing perspectives for understanding climate denial, this thesis now turns to the methodological approach that was used for scrutinizing climate denial in the far-right in Estonia.

## **4. Methodology**

With an aspiration to investigate how is toxic masculinity nourishing far-right ideologies through the legitimization of climate denial – the main research question –, a case study approach was adopted. The motivation for selecting a case study stemmed from the aim of the researcher to observe the data in a specific context (Zainal, 2007). Case studies are particularly useful when one aspires to investigate and explain a real-life phenomenon in more detail (Zainal, 2007). As already mentioned, the Estonian Conservative People’s Party was selected as a case for this thesis. The research method, design, data collection, and data analysis will be further elaborated in the following sub-sections.

### **4.1. Research method: qualitative frame analysis**

To scrutinize EKRE’s climate denial through toxic masculinity, a qualitative frame analysis was adopted as a research method. As a form of qualitative content analysis, qualitative frame analysis serves as an analytical research tool that “involves repeated and extensive engagement with a text and looks holistically at the material to identify frames” (Connolly-Ahern & Broadway, 2008, p. 369; Linström & Marais, 2012). A qualitative frame analysis operates on three levels: it (1) inspects the keywords, metaphors, narratives, etc. in the text; (2) identifies what is included in the frame and what is left out; (3) recognizes that the words with the highest appearance frequency are not necessarily the most important (Connolly-Ahern & Broadway, 2008). Qualitative frame analysis can be used to describe the media content; compare the media content with ‘the real world’; and establish a starting point for media analysis studies (Linström & Marais, 2012).

When it comes to identifying the frames, a distinction is drawn between *issue-specific* and *generic* frames – whereas the former is “pertinent only to specific topics or events”, the latter “transcend thematic limitations and can be identified in relation to different topics, some even over time and in different

cultural contexts” (de Vreese, 2005, p. 54). For EKRE’s case study, issue-specific frames were identified, motivated by the ambition of the researcher to investigate EKRE’s political communication without a pre-determined set of frames in mind.

#### **4.2. Research design and data collection**

Based on Linström and Marais’ (2012) guide to qualitative news frame analysis, the research was designed and implemented in the following steps that will be explained and elaborated below:

- 1) a medium selection,
- 2) a time frame selection,
- 3) a sample collection,
- 4) identification of a unit of analysis,
- 5) frame typology selection,
- 6) operational definitions.

First, EKRE’s conservative news platform *Uued Uudised* (ENG: New News) was chosen as a data source. The platform is created by EKRE as an alternative media outlet as opposed to the mainstream media. The platform is open to all, which made the data easily accessible.

The data was collected in two phases. First, to identify EKRE’s main frames and compare the proportion of climate frames compared to other frames, a one-month time frame was set as a sample. All the articles labeled as ‘opinion’ that were published on the platform in January 2021 (in total: 195 articles) were collected. The motivation for analyzing the ‘opinion’ label stems from the intention to analyze the most value-driven articles that presumably contain emotional language and strong positions of the individual party members. To further investigate EKRE’s climate frames, a longer time frame was set. By explicitly seeking articles that contained the keyword ‘*kliima*’ (ENG: ‘climate’), 134 articles from 2018 until March 2021 were collected.

The unit of analysis was driven by the sentences’ thematic boundaries, not length. For example, if several adjacent sentences fitted under a certain label (e. g. ‘climate hysteria’), they were merged into one code. If, however, a sentence, a picture, or a phrase stood out from the surrounding context, it was coded accordingly.

The frame typology was a mix of inductive and deductive methods. While inductively searching the issue-specific frames from the text, the pre-existing knowledge of toxic masculinity traits (e. g. “low empathy”; “glorification of violence”) intuitively guided the process in frame creation.

Lastly, the operational criteria were taken into count when identifying the frames. These followed the suggestions by various scholars who have stressed that a frame must be (1) conceptually and linguistically clearly identified; (2) clearly distinguished from other frames; and (3) recognized by others (de Vreese, 2005; Linström & Marais, 2012). As the Results section will reveal, EKRE's main frames were synthesized with the already existing frames proposed by Kasekamp et.al. (2019) to advance the empirical knowledge of EKRE's political communication and thus contribute to a more holistic understanding of EKRE's main frames (**Figure 3**). Additionally, the toxic masculinity traits identified by the author were complemented with Daddow & Hertner's (2019) framework for assessing toxic masculinity culture in political parties to highlight the synergies between the frames and suggest the emerging alternatives for advancing the existing tools for measuring toxic masculinity (**Figure 5** and **Figure 6** in the Discussion section).

### **4.3. Data analysis**

Since the data was collected in two phases, the data analysis also followed in two phases. First, the sample set (195 articles published in January 2021) was analyzed to identify the main frames and compare the frequency of climate frames in relation to EKRE's general frames. The same process was repeated with the articles that contained the word 'climate' to recognize the main climate frames.

The data was analyzed in the NVivo program – a tool for qualitative data analysis. To spot the emerging frame patterns while inductively creating the issue-specific frames, all the articles were read twice. The frames were characterized as 'nodes' in the NVivo program. If a sentence, an image, or a text section covered several topics simultaneously, it was coded under different nodes. After having coded all the articles, similar nodes were merged into broader, more general nodes. Several nodes contained sub-nodes (**Figure 2**).

Nodes			
Name	Files	Refer	
Economic suicide   response skepticism	1	204	
Climate change denial	1	193	
Human impact denial	1	51	
Evidence denial	1	49	
Scientific method skepticism	1	17	
CC neutral   positive consequences	1	15	
Climate hysteria	1	169	
Green totalitarianism	1	147	
Apolitical climate framing   individual blaming	1	29	
Nature over climate	1	16	
Energy security threat	1	10	

**Figure 2.** A visual representation of EKRE’s main climate frames (identified as nodes in the NVivo program), based on 134 articles containing the word ‘klima’ (ENG: ‘climate’) from 2018 until March 2021. In order of appearance frequency. Source: screenshot taken by the author on April 10, 2021.

The identification of EKRE’s frames serves as a first necessary step to enable the potential of reframing that can contribute to conflict solving (Gray, 1996) – in this research context, ‘the conflict’ is understood as climate denial.

#### 4.4. Limitations of the study

Despite aspiring for scientific objectivity, some potential biases must be highlighted. First and foremost, I do acknowledge that I am a sustainability science student who identifies as a feminist. Climate denial and toxic masculinity are not concepts that leave me impartial on a personal level. To minimize the influence of my positionality on my results, I received critical feedback from my peers and my supervisor. Additionally, I used deep reflexivity while coding, identifying results, and drawing conclusions. Nevertheless, I kindly ask the reader to be conscious of my positionality as a researcher.

Another limitation stems from generating qualitative frames – as Linström & Marais (2012) have stressed, the qualitative frame identification can be shaped the researcher’s subjectivity. Moreover, as De Vreese (2015) has highlighted, preferring issue-specific frames instead of generic frames complicates the process of drawing comparisons with other researchers’ work, escalating with hardships in constructing a sufficient theory. As mentioned in Section 4.2., however, I drew parallels with the frames proposed by other scholars for minimizing the risk of alienation.

I also acknowledge that my results are affected by the time frame chosen. January 2021 marks a turning point in the Estonian government – as a result of the new government formation, EKRE was sent to the opposition. Therefore, climate coverage in this period may have been further obscured due to a large political power change in Estonia.

## **5. Results: framing climate change**

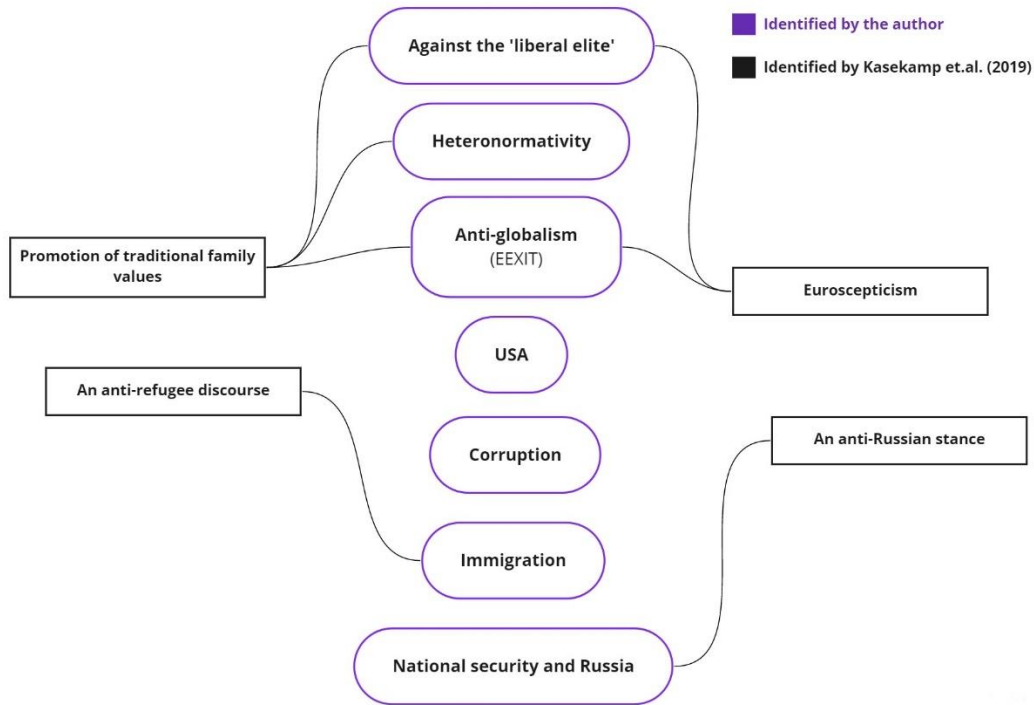
Having introduced the methodological approach, this thesis now turns to introduce EKRE's frames identified in the coding process. The results are meant to provide an understanding of the priorities of EKRE's political agenda (Section 5.1.) and the frames through which climate denial is legitimized (Section 5.2.). Since the goal of the Results section is to shed light on EKRE's tone and attitudes, empirical examples from EKRE's conservative news platform will be used. The original quotes – translated by the author – are found in Appendix A. The results are followed by a deeper analysis that further engages with toxic masculinity in EKRE's frames, guided by an intersectional feminist theory lens.

### **5.1. EKRE's general frames: climate change absence in the political agenda**

As the frame analysis of the sample set (195 articles published in January 2021) revealed, climate change and the environment receive very little attention in EKRE's agenda. Climate and environment topics are dominated by the following themes, in order of appearance frequency:

- 1) a negative stance against 'liberal totalitarianism',
- 2) heteronormativity,
- 3) anti-globalism,
- 4) USA,
- 5) corruption in other parties,
- 6) immigrants,
- 7) relationship with Russia and national security.

The results support previous research introduced in Section 2.3. that identified EKRE's four core positions: (1) an anti-Russian stance, (2) Euroscepticism, (3) promotion of traditional family values, and (4) an anti-refugee discourse (Kasekamp et al., 2019). A synthesis of the frames identified in the coding process and the ones proposed Kasekamp et.al. (2019) is illustrated in **Figure 3**.



**Figure 3.** A synthesis of EKRE's main frames. The frames identified by the author in the coding process are represented in purple ovals, the frames proposed by Kasekamp et.al. (2019) in gray rectangles. Source: own creation with Miro platform on April 15, 2021.

Out of 1288 references coded in total, only 15 addressed the environment and/or climate (1.2%). Climate absence in the agenda signals the topic's unimportance to EKRE; the general tone in EKRE's communication portrays the need for 'real solutions' to 'more tangible issues'. Whereas the dominating focus is on the fight against 'liberal totalitarianism' and 'cultural Marxism' that threaten national sovereignty; defense of the traditional family and heteronormativity; as well as immigration issues, climate emergency remains unaddressed.

## 5.2. EKRE's climate frames

As **Figure 2** in Section 4.3. illustrated, seven dominating frames emerged from coding the articles that contained the word "climate". In order of appearance frequency, which does not necessarily correspond with importance (Section 4.1.), EKRE's most frequently used climate frames are the following:

- 1) 'economic suicide',
- 2) climate denial (subdivided into evidence denial, human impact denial, scientific method skepticism, and positive/neutral consequences of climate change),
- 3) 'climate hysteria',



- 4) 'green totalitarianism'.
- 5) apolitical climate framing/individual blaming,
- 6) nature protection over climate action,
- 7) national energy security threat.

EKRE's climate denialist positions – conveyed through the climate frames identified above – are illustrated in Table 1 with examples from EKRE's conservative news platform.

**Table 1.** EKRE's main climate frames with examples from EKRE's conservative news platform Uued Uudised. Translated by the author. Source: own creation on April 10, 2021.

<b>Climate frame</b>	<b>Example</b>
Economic suicide	<i>The demand for climate neutrality has essentially destroyed our [own] oil shale-based electricity, raised the price to high levels, and made us dependent on other energy producers, including Russia that avoids climate panic and sells "dirty" electricity.</i>
Climate denial	<i>Polar snow melts stormily? No, it doesn't. The amount of snow varies from year to year, but 2012-2013 marks the snow record in the last half-century and [the snow cover] is even now higher than the average of the last half hundred years. The Arctic ice is melting in some areas, but it is not the greenhouse gases that are causing it, but the currents that have begun to bring more warm water under the ice sheet.</i>
Climate hysteria	<i>If the whole [climate] campaign had been launched with sanity, there might also be national conservatives in the ranks of climate fighters. However, [the conservatives] are now trying to make sense of what is going on, keep their heads clear, and not rush with the climate hysterics.</i>
Green totalitarianism	<i>It turns out that the alleged crisis facing our mother Earth is pure totalitarianism. [...] It is a rather obvious conspiracy.</i>
Apolitical climate framing	<i>He considers it wise to live a normal life – do not litter, eat your plate empty and consume moderately, and do not panic about things that a person cannot really influence.</i>
Nature protection > climate action	<i>EKRE politician Martin Helme once said that environmental protection has been completely forgotten in climate hysteria. This means that the Estonian greens are no longer seriously involved in dealing with the 'plastic flood', they are not interested in how badly the Rail Baltic or Tallinn-Helsinki tunnel can affect the local and global environment, nor are they concerned about other issues that affect us here directly.</i>
National security, Russia	<i>Hence the question - how will climate neutrality affect the technology of NATO allies and thereby the Estonian defense forces, as well as the defense capability and security situation? Because one can be absolutely sure that the generals of Russia (North Korea, China, Iran, etc.) will not damage the engines of their war machines with environmentally friendly solid fuel.</i>

What follows is a closer investigation of EKRE's climate frames – exemplified through EKRE's quotes from the news articles analyzed –, followed by a further analysis of the role of toxic masculinity in fostering climate denial and justifying climate inaction.

### **5.2.1. 'Economic suicide'**

The 'economic suicide' frame consists of two broad themes: (1) unemployment and social problems that allegedly arise from meeting the ambitious climate mitigation targets – this theme also includes resentment of EU climate policies based on climate change response skepticism; and (2) justifying business-as-usual by blaming the marginal emitters who are not 'sacrificing their economies to climate hysteria'.

First, as mentioned, the 'economic suicide' frame strongly emphasizes the social and economic difficulties that emerge from implementing climate mitigation policies. The frame overlaps with EKRE's antipathy towards the 'liberal elite' that will be elaborated under the 'green totalitarianism' climate frame – EKRE sides with the 'fair hard workers', victims of the EU climate mitigation efforts. The 'economic suicide' frame is additionally fused with the 'national energy security' and 'climate hysteria' frames, evident in EKRE's argument that 'stifling the economy with climate hysteria' means "kill[ing] domestic electricity production" and making the Estonians dependent on "suspicious foreign energy" (Appendix A). Built on the latter, renewable energy alternatives are criticized for being "expensive, unproductive and undeveloped" (Appendix A) and still 'in their infancy'. Climate mitigation scenarios are framed as a rush to solutions that are not fully developed yet, evident in the following quote: "Are we ready for that? Are we rich enough to aggressively turn our entire way of living upside down?" (Appendix A). The Estonian economy is portrayed as a victim of the 'green idiotism of the EU', resulting in a severe economic recession.

The 'economic suicide' frame also entails blaming the marginal emitters: in EKRE's words, "it is absolutely absurd that a supranational climate fight is being fought on one continent only, which actually pollutes relatively little - if Russia, China, India, and the entire Third World continue to pollute and fight [climate change] only in their words, Europe will destroy itself for others to survive." (Appendix A). The internationally binding climate mitigation policies are framed to be 'thickly filled with absurdity', stressing that while the European Union is forcing its nation-states to limit their economies, China and India will become dominant forces in the global economy. A critical focus on the marginal emitters legitimizes EKRE's opposition to climate mitigation policies, justified on grounds that 'if they are not doing anything about it, why should we?'.

### **5.2.2. Climate denial**

To disregard the scientific consensus on climate change and portray the climate emergency as a fraud, fake news based on other conservative media resources are created. Climate denial strongly overlaps with the ‘green totalitarianism’ frame, evident in EKRE’s claims that climate is not reported objectively in the mainstream media. EKRE relies on the research of various well-known climate skeptics to uphold their denialist stance – in EKRE’s words “scientists and experts who are not funded by governments that support the [climate] alarmists’ narrative” (Appendix A).

As mentioned above, EKRE’s climate denial frame combines four themes: (1) evidence denial; (2) human impact denial; (3) scientific method skepticism; (4) neutral and/or positive consequences of climate change. Whereas “evidence denial” disregards the scientific evidence on climate change (e. g. “the probability of high temperatures has decreased in recent years, new record low temperatures have been measured among other things”) (Appendix A) and portrays climate change as a ‘popular current trend’, the human impact is mainly denied through the argument that climate has always changed. In this scenario, a changing climate is not denied, but the human impact is portrayed as a fraud that “only exists in dubious computer simulations and delusions of a frightened 16-year-old girl” [Greta Thunberg] (Appendix A). In addition to denying the role of human-caused emissions on climate, business-as-usual has been justified and even encouraged, motivated by the argument that the plants need more CO<sub>2</sub> to grow – at current CO<sub>2</sub> levels, the plants are said to be on a “strict diet” (Appendix A).

Scientific method skepticism focuses on questioning the methods of collecting climate data, claiming that the raw data and scientific models are tuned until they give the expected politically correct result. Climate scientists are portrayed as ‘a bunch of fraudsters’ who “are motivated grants and dubious activism instead of selfless interest in science” (Appendix A).

Finally, the neutral and positive consequences of climate change have also been highlighted: “in almost every field, climate change only has a small, often beneficial, effect” (Appendix A). The statements stressing the potentially positive consequences of climate change directly conflict with the rest of EKRE’s climate denial frame, thereby revealing acute inconsistencies in EKRE’s climate denialist attitudes.

### **5.2.3. ‘Climate hysteria’**

The ‘climate hysteria’ frame – synonymously used with ‘climate circus’, ‘climate cult’, ‘eco-madness’, ‘climate messianism’, and ‘climate panic’ is used to shed a negative light on climate activists. EKRE’s climate inaction is justified through an attempt to keep a sane mind among the ‘alarmists’ whose ‘hysteric

reactions' drive humans to hunger and recession, thereby rather exacerbating the problem than reducing it. The responses aimed at mitigating climate change are also criticized and rejected through the 'hysteria' frame, merged with the 'liberal totalitarianism' frame here: "biofuels forced upon us in the name of environmental protection is a monstrous result of a panic fight against climate change" (Appendix A).

The 'normal life' is framed as being threatened by the 'climate hysterics':

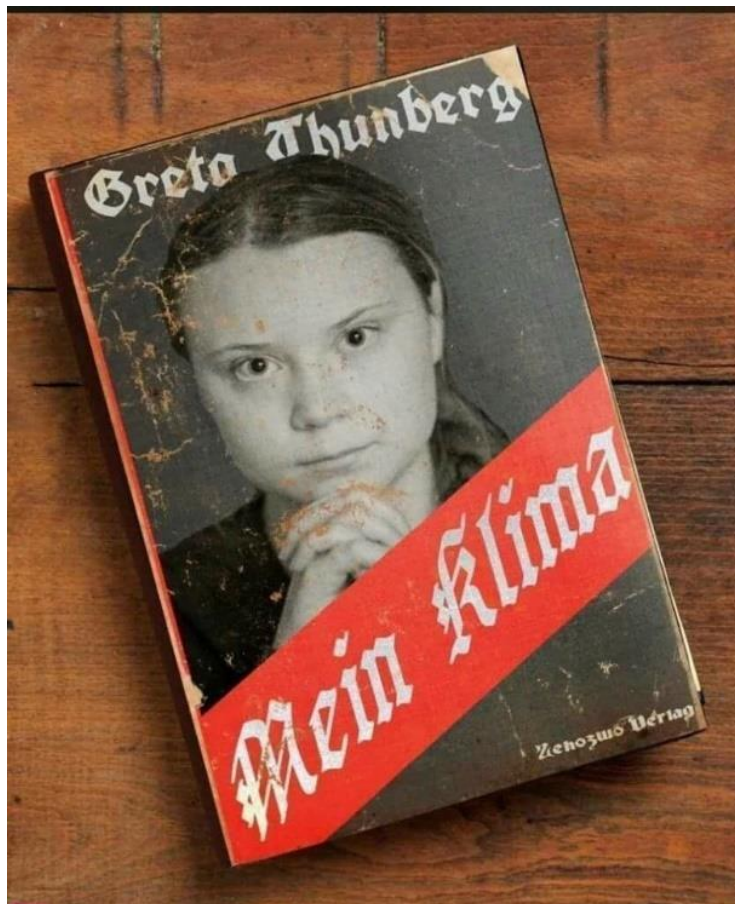
One might ask, then, what is so reprehensible about this climate circus? Let the freaks wave their posters, why does it matter? In fact, it does. By bringing their protest into public space they destabilize ordinary life, create a nervous and distressing atmosphere, and challenge the old way of living. Why does a handful of climate protestors think they have a special right to teach the whole world how to live? (Appendix A)

By normalizing – and victimizing – business-as-usual, EKRE sends a clear signal that climate action is a radical disruption of the 'norm' that should be avoided at any cost since it results in 'green totalitarianism'.

#### **5.2.4. 'Green totalitarianism'**

The 'green totalitarianism' frame represents climate change as a hoax by the liberal elite to earn money by selling renewable energy. Renewable energy is portrayed as a scam to concentrate money in the hands of the "left-liberal oligarchy" while Estonians are doomed to "face a free fall in living standards" (Appendix A). EKRE warns that resulting from 'green totalitarianism', Estonian domestic energy prices will skyrocket, the sovereign freedom will be restricted, and Estonian nature "will be lost as a result of bird-killing eco-crucifixes [wind turbines]" (Appendix A). The 'green totalitarianism' frame justifies climate denial on the grounds that 'there is no science' in climate change debates, only "big money, dirty politics, and group thinking by insane masses" (Appendix A).

The term 'green Gulag' is used to emphasize the totalitarian nature of progressive climate policies – as EKRE claims, one is not allowed to doubt climate science, "or the police will come and take you away" (Appendix A). A strong emphasis is placed on the portrayal of climate activists as radicals. Greta is described as a dangerous extremist advocating for a perilous radical ideology, her statements are said to be 'completely fueled by evil'. As EKRE further elaborates, Greta is "the mainstream of this radical ideology [...] She's dangerous. The ideology she advocates is dangerous" (Appendix A). **Figure 4** represents a visual portrayal of Greta as a perilous climate radical, published on EKRE's conservative news platform on December 14, 2019.



**Figure 4.** A visual representation of the 'green totalitarianism' frame. Source: Uued Uudised, 2019.

### **5.2.5. Apolitical climate frame**

EKRE's apolitical climate frame has depoliticized the climate conversation, advocating that "To seriously start protecting the Earth, there is no need to make children protest for hours so that some political force can benefit from it" (Appendix A). Building on the attitude expressed by one party member – "I don't trust any eco-communist who drives a car, lives in a centrally heated apartment and uses electricity" (Appendix A) – a critical focus is shifted towards the individual contribution of the climate activists. EKRE encourages "all anti-fascists, climate activists, feminists, socialists, vegans and other warriors of goodness" to give up all 'white man technologies', including electricity, plastics, antibiotics, asphalt, distilled alcohol, aluminum, and abortion, characterized as 'one of the most hostile inventions of a white middle-aged man of all' (Appendix A). Young climate strikers are advised to save the climate by not using their smartphones, moving to the countryside, and skipping a shower if it is powered by oil shale. Unless the climate activists can show the lead in living sustainably, they are advised against attending climate demonstrations. The apolitical frame functions to pressure activists from demanding system change and 'live a normal life' instead while not panicking about things and "that a person cannot really influence" (Appendix A). EKRE's

apolitical climate frame functions to stop people from challenging the status quo, pressuring them to change their lifestyles in an unsustainable system instead.

### **5.2.6. Nature protection over climate action**

The 'nature protection over climate action' frame victimizes Estonian nature that has been – in EKRE's words – "completely forgotten in climate hysteria" (Appendix A). The victimization of Estonian nature through this frame is executed through criticizing the Green party who is "no longer seriously involved in dealing with the 'plastic flood'", "not interested in how badly the Rail Baltic or Tallinn-Helsinki tunnel can affect the local and global environment", nor concerned about the other issues that "affect [Estonians] here directly" (Appendix A). Additionally, climate activists are verbally attacked for not fighting enough for Estonian forests nor protesting the Rail Baltic "which divides their homeland and wastes resources" (Appendix A). While stressing that environmentally friendly behavior should not be equated with 'climate messianism', EKRE finds that it is more convenient for climate activists to protest in front of the parliament on Fridays because fighting abstract CO<sub>2</sub> is more convenient than protecting Estonia's nature.

### **5.2.7. National security threat**

The 'national security threat' frame stresses the need for maintaining and strengthening Estonian national defense capability, stemming from a premise that energy security is one of the most important components of all security. Since Russia is perceived as the biggest security threat to Estonia, EKRE turns people's pre-existing fear into climate response irony, mockingly asking "will we demand Russian generals to use biofuel in tanks as well?" or "force the military to recharge electric batteries in tanks from time to time?" (Appendix A). By conveying a clear message that Estonia's potential enemies will not damage their war machine engines with environmentally friendly solid fuel, EKRE legitimizes the delay in taking climate action, grounded in the argument that Estonia must not weaken its defense capacity unless the climate fighters have a plan to end the wars by climate mitigation deadlines.

## **6. Analysis**

Having identified EKRE's 7 main frames and 7 main climate frames, the thesis will continue with a closer analysis of toxic masculinity characteristics identified in the coding process, guided by the intersectional feminist theory lens. By drawing contributions from the existing literature and bringing empirical examples from EKRE's conservative news platform, the goal of the analysis is to answer the research questions, followed by outlining some broader key prospects in Section 7 for overcoming climate denial.

Before diving into the analysis, the research questions that guide the following sections are reminded again:

**RQ:** How is toxic masculinity nourishing the far-right ideologies through the legitimization of climate denial?

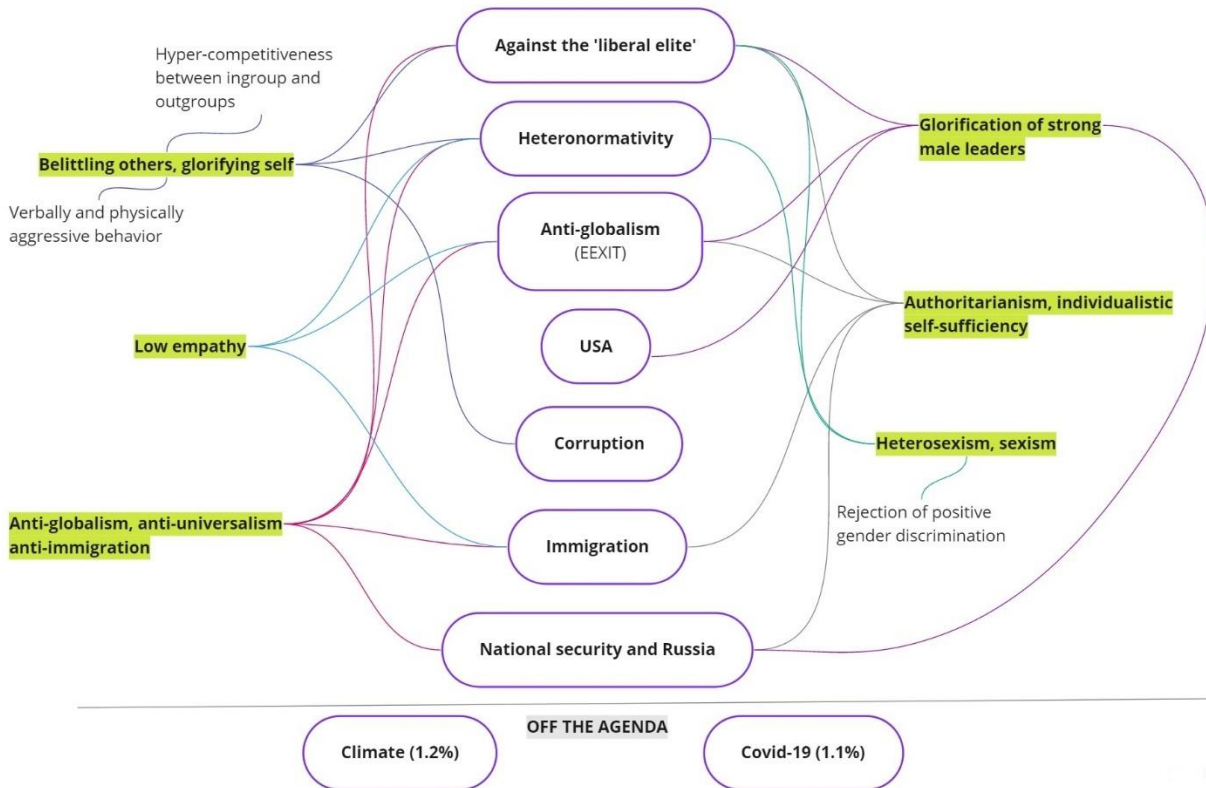
**RQ1:** What are EKRE's main frames and how do they uphold toxic masculinity?

**RQ2:** How does toxic masculinity in EKRE's frames justify climate denial?

### **6.1. Toxic masculinity in EKRE's frames**

By utilizing an intersectional feminist lens in the analysis of EKRE's main frames (Section 5.1.) and main climate frames (Section 5.2.), it becomes evident that EKRE's frames are strongly embedded in maintaining the 'masculine logic' – understood as a hegemonic manner of interpreting the world, based on the masculine universalization while subjugating alternative ways of being (Agius et al., 2020, p. 439). The masculine logic is evident in all EKRE's frames, fused with toxic masculinity indicators that were recognized in the coding process, in parallel to identifying EKRE's frames. The following toxic masculinity characteristics (highlighted in green in **Figure 5**) not only prevail in EKRE's main frames but also help explain the absence of climate salience in EKRE's agenda: (1) belittling others and glorifying self; (2) low empathy; (3) anti-globalism, anti-universalism and anti-immigration; (4) glorification of strong male leaders; (5) authoritarianism and individualistic self-sufficiency; (6) heterosexism and sexism. Whereas EKRE's authoritarian, anti-globalist, and anti-immigrant attitudes motivate a strong opposition against the 'liberal elite' and the foreigners; low empathy and heterosexism promote heteronormativity, and a glorification of strong male leaders justify the frequent appearance of the USA and national security frames in EKRE's political communication, climate change remains marginally addressed.

To answer the first research question, **Figure 5** illustrates the interconnections between EKRE's 7 main frames (represented by purple ovals) and the most recurrent toxic masculinity characteristics that steer EKRE's political communication.



**Figure 5.** EKRE’s main frames (represented in purple ovals) and their embeddedness toxic masculinity. The toxic masculinity indicators identified by the author are highlighted in green, merged with contributions from Daddow & Hertner’s (2019) framework. Source: own creation with Miro platform on April 23, 2021.

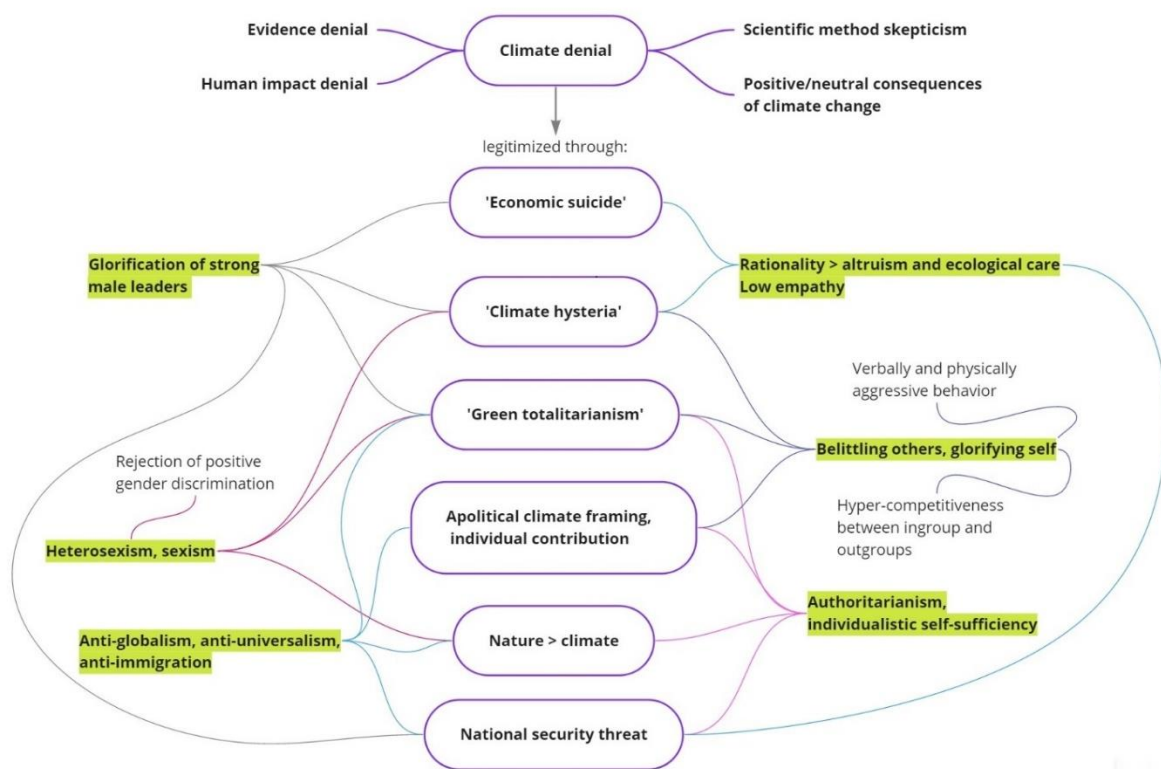
**Figure 5** builds on Daddow & Hertner’s (2019) framework for measuring toxic masculinity in political parties, introduced in Section 2.1. As mentioned earlier, the authors’ framework characterizes a party as one with a highly toxic masculine culture if it displays five to six indicators of the following list: (1) heterosexism, (2) sexism, (3) verbally and physically aggressive behavior towards women and other men, (4) rejection of positive gender discrimination, (5) hyper-competitiveness between ingroup and outgroups, (6) glorification of strong male leadership. While some indicators identified in EKRE’s case already overlapped with Daddow and Hertner’s (2019) framework, the remaining characteristics proposed by the authors were used to complement and create synergies with EKRE’s toxic masculinity characteristics. As seen in **Figure 5**, ‘high competitiveness between ingroup and outgroups’ and ‘verbally and physically aggressive behavior’ proposed by Daddow & Hertner (2019) were merged with ‘belittling others and glorification of self’ whereas ‘rejection of positive gender discrimination’ was merged with ‘heterosexism and sexism’. Three additional toxic masculinity characteristics identified in EKRE’s case but not recognized by Daddow & Hertner (2019) could further advance the framework: (1) anti-globalism, anti-universalism, and anti-immigration; (2) low empathy; (3) authoritarianism and individualistic self-sufficiency.



All in all, building on Daddow & Hertner’s (2019) toxic masculinity characteristics – all present in EKRE’s case, as **Figure 5** reveals – and considering the additional notable toxic masculinity indicators identified, EKRE can be characterized as a party with a highly toxic masculine culture.

## 6.2. The role of toxic masculinity in legitimizing climate denial

To answer the second research question, **Figure 6** provides a visual representation of EKRE’s main climate frames (represented in purple ovals, identified in Section 5.2.) and their embeddedness in toxic masculinity. Again, Daddow & Hertner’s (2019) framework was utilized to further advance the set of toxic masculinity indicators in EKRE’s climate frames identified by the author in the coding process.



**Figure 6.** EKRE’s main climate frames (represented in purple ovals) and their embeddedness toxic masculinity. The toxic masculinity indicators identified by the author are highlighted in green, merged with contributions from Daddow & Hertner’s (2019) framework. Source: own creation with Miro platform on April 23, 2021.

As **Figure 6** shows, the toxic masculinity characteristics in EKRE’s climate frames are largely overlapping with the toxic masculinity characteristics in EKRE’s main frames, introduced in the previous section. An additional outstanding indicator ‘rationality > altruism and ecological care’ was identified in EKRE’s climate frames, bound to “low empathy” that was already introduced in the previous section.

In the following subsections, the toxic masculinity characteristics in EKRE's climate frames will be further analyzed to investigate their role in legitimizing EKRE's climate denial and justifying a delay in climate action.

### **6.2.1. Belittling others**

A toxic masculinity characteristic outstandingly present in EKRE's frames is the glorification of self through belittling others. As one EKRE member put it: "I have always been astonished by the stupidity of people. And how blind and short-sighted they can be" (Appendix A). In the context of climate change, this is particularly evident in belittling the climate activists and the 'snowflake generation'— a term mockingly used to characterize generation Z as incompetent, narcissistic, and fragile. On one hand, climate activists are portrayed as narcissists with a wish to stand out; on the other hand, they are depicted as innocent children who "do not think for themselves" but – in line with the 'green totalitarianism' frame – are used and subordinated to one's will in the hands of the "climate Bolsheviks" (Appendix A). Similarly, Greta Thunberg is characterized as a victim of the political and ideological games of adults, forcefully taken from one climate event to another "instead of letting her develop at school" (Appendix A). Belittling also occurs through the apolitical climate frame, urging the climate activists to refrain from showering and stop using the 'white man's inventions'. Excluding political action from the climate debate allows EKRE to justify its political omission on climate change, shifting the focus to individual blame instead.

Belittling others is not limited to targeting the climate activists only; climate mitigation policies and pathways demanding renewable energy transitions, a reduction in meat production, and setting birth limits are criticized through the 'climate hysteria' frame, claiming that "serious people come up with idiotic ideas" (Appendix A). By portraying climate responses as idiotic, EKRE has adopted a strong defensive position for the 'white-man-made world', justifying industrialization and technological innovations while portraying the opponents as weak and dysfunctional. Through the glorification of the white-man-made world, the business-as-usual extractivism is justified while the alternative futures that could emerge from a more egalitarian societal debate are deposed.

### **6.2.2. Authoritarianism, anti-globalism, anti-immigration**

First and foremost, authoritarianism and individualistic self-sufficiency manifest in EKRE's stance against the 'liberal elite', or in their words, 'the Rich and the Beautiful' who are portrayed to be behind 'green totalitarianism'. A clear distinction is drawn between the EU and Estonians who are forcefully told to "embrace "values" such as openness and tolerance" (Appendix A). The climate mitigation policies by the EU, also characterized as 'Mordor', where nations and nation-states have no place, are perceived as the

violators of national autonomy and ultimately, democracy. Soviet Union reminders are used to shed a negative light on climate mitigation policies, portrayed as the violators of Estonian national security. An example of how a parallel is drawn between 'Green Revolution' and the Communist revolution is evident in the following quote: "when reading another news of the Green Revolution, the Soviet Union and its campaigns come to mind, including Gorbachev's fight against alcoholism" (Appendix A). By reminding Estonians about its Soviet past that still prevails in the nation's collective memory, the country's victimhood and innocence – similarly observed in other far-right parties in Europe – (Malm & The Zetkin collective, 2021) is glorified and turned into a negative stance against progressive climate politics that are coupled in parallel with communism. A mix of the 'green totalitarianism' and 'national security threat' frames, distinctly grounded in EKRE's authoritarian and anti-globalist stance, draw the negative connotations of communism to mind when one hears or reads about climate mitigation in the media.

Authoritarianism and anti-universalism are also conveyed in EKRE's 'climate hysteria', "nature over climate" and apolitical climate frames, justifying political inertia while claiming control over one's national sovereign territory. This can be seen in EKRE's reminders not to 'panic' about climate change but protect Estonian forests, protest the Rail Baltic construction and fight against pollution instead. EKRE's motivation for nature protection – as suggested by Forchtner & Kølvrå (2015), is in direct correlation with passing nature on to successive national generations, evident in EKRE's anti-immigration attitudes. As a party member asks, "Once Estonia is full of strangers, to whom do we protect today's forests?" (Appendix A). Reserving nature to the nation's ethnic successors and limiting its protection merely to one's sovereign territory poses severe drawbacks, considering that local action is not enough in the face of a global climate change that urgently calls for transnationally binding agreements and international cooperation in reducing carbon emissions (Margulies, 2021).

### **6.2.3. Heteronormativity**

Heterosexism in EKRE's frames is conveyed through the demonization of 'freakish concepts such as the gay family' and "gender dysmorphias" that "confuse young people and destroy their opportunities to be happy" (Appendix A). Straightness is juxtaposed with intelligence while other sexual identities are portrayed as 'perverse' abbreviations from the norm. As EKRE alarms, the heteronormative values are threatened by the 'liberal elite' – also the 'feminist elite' (Agius et al., 2020) – who aim to "destroy the ethical foundations of human relationships and bring them to a more primitive level", thereby dismantling 'human communities based on love' (Appendix A).

By referring to Estonia's small population size that is easily threatened by decreasing birth rates and immigrants, heteronormativity is further tied to protecting the traditional family values that are meant to guarantee that the survival of the nation. Estonian landscape is framed as something to be passed on to Estonian successive future generations, born from a relationship between a man and a woman. Heteronormativity and 'a gift of life' are strongly tied to the viability of the forests: homosexuality is framed as a "dried-up branch of the tree of life" (Appendix). By calling attention to the abnormality of homosexuality, EKRE criticizes the Green party based on its support for same-sex marriage. More precisely, EKRE asks: "Who wants to fight side by side with the Greens for the Estonian forest, knowing that in reality, they are life deniers in every way?" (Appendix A). By binding nature protection with heteronormativity, EKRE strongly signifies that ecological protection goes hand-in-hand with safeguarding Estonian nature for its successive future generations as also suggested by Forchtner & Kølvråa (2015).

#### **6.2.4. Glorification of strong male leaders and sexism**

The glorification of strong male leaders who are seen as the protectors from the liberal ideas and thereby promise to bring back the nation's lost mythical past (Agius et.al. 2020) is closely tied to authoritarianism, sexism, and belittling 'others'. In the context of climate change, the glamorization of strong male leadership is particularly evident in the 'climate hysteria' frame. By framing climate action as hysteric, EKRE draws a strong distinction between femininity and masculinity, panicking and calculating, thereby signifying that climate change "has been turned into a revolutionary [feminist] farce" (Appendix A) and climate action is thus anti-masculine.

As a response to the Estonian new government that includes a record number of female ministers, EKRE communicates that competence matter more than gender. Despite the claims that gender does not matter and 'there is no sexism', however, EKRE's frames are deprecating the female leadership (or 'the skirt age') that has adopted more ambitious climate goals compared to the previous government that included EKRE. The new government is portrayed as weak, unreliable, and emotional, evident in EKRE's statement "one must rule with the mind and heart, not with moods and desires" (Appendix A). A strong stance against the "experimental" woman-led government is conveyed in the following quote:

I understand that the abandonment of competence and the prioritization of gender is one of the basic postulates of liberalism, but please - carry it out everywhere else, but not in my backyard. I do not want to be a guinea pig or a laboratory white mouse for some fanatical feminist to realize her utopias. The country and the nation are not, after all, Lego bricks to play one's personal childish games with. (Appendix A)

The discontinuity between gender and climate is emphasized, similarly bound to authoritarianism and belittling. An EKRE member has argued that the feminists who highlight the need for considering the gender dimensions in the climate change debates do not understand ‘how the laws of nature work’ (Koorits, 2019). By rejecting the responsibility of patriarchal privilege that has had a vast impact on ecological harm and social reproduction (Kaijser & Kronsell, 2014), EKRE discards the need for critically calling for a system change.

### **6.2.5. *Glorification of rationality over transnational altruism and empathy***

The glorification of rationality and competitiveness over transnational altruism and ecological care is evident in the ‘economic suicide’ frame, stressing the irrationality of climate mitigation policies and climate neutrality investments. By criticizing the unreasonableness of the investments needed for reaching carbon neutrality<sup>3</sup>, the problem of climate change is not being denied – however, there is a clear tendency to steer towards what Malm & The Zetkin collective (2021) call ‘climate nihilism’ – acknowledging that climate change exists but burning fossil fuels anyway. The economic irrationality argument is complemented with the ‘national security threat’ frame that further fosters the disapproval of the renewable energy resources by turning Estonians’ communist fear into hostility towards climate mitigation policies as elaborated in section 6.2.2.

Additionally, the glorification of rationality is contrasted with the ‘climate hysteria’ frame (elaborated in Section 5.2.): the need for immediate climate action is justified through keeping a ‘sane mind’ among the ‘alarmists’, stressing that one must be very attentive and humble when dealing with nature but “it doesn’t make sense to go along with every bloated hysteria” (Appendix A). All in all, by portraying ‘hysteric’ climate action as a threat to national security and economic growth, the pressing need for transnational altruism that is accompanied by a systematic change remains undermined.

EKRE’s case showed that EKRE’s climate frames are strongly embedded in toxic masculinity characteristics and align with the party’s conservative worldviews. The analysis addressed both sub-questions that guided the research (**RQ1:** What are EKRE’s main frames and how do they uphold toxic masculinity? **RQ2:** How does toxic masculinity in EKRE’s frames justify climate denial?), summarized in **Figure 5** and **Figure 6**. The analysis of EKRE’s climate frames demonstrated that toxic masculinity has a strong impact on the party’s climate denialist stance, whereas climate denial further fosters the conservative ethnocentric worldviews. Having thereby answered the main research question of the thesis, more research is urgently

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<sup>3</sup> Stockholm Environment Institute Tallinn has concluded that reaching climate neutrality in Estonia is possible “and potentially profitable with the strategically wise investments for all the sectors in long-term” (SEI Tallinn, 2019, p. 8).

needed to advance the understanding of the nexus between the far-right ideologies, toxic masculinity, and climate denial. The toxic masculinity characteristics identified in EKRE's case – (1) belittling others and glorifying self; (2) glorification of rationality over altruism merged with low empathy; (3) anti-globalism, anti-universalism, and anti-immigration; (4) glorification of strong male leaders; (5) authoritarianism and individualistic self-sufficiency; (6) heterosexism and sexism – could serve as a solid starting point for future research.

The following section aims to explore the path forward by opening a conversation on how to overcome climate denial in the far-right, guided by intersectional feminist and framing perspectives.

## **7. A path forward? Research implications**

As the case study of EKRE demonstrated, overcoming climate denial in the far-right is not an easy task, considering a strong interconnectedness between the ethnocentric values of the conservatives and toxic masculinity characteristics that strongly collide with climate change acceptance. Serious effort is needed through unique perspectives on different levels, simultaneously. The goal of the following section is to open a debate on the potential of moving from the state of denial to the state of acceptance where – as Sharry (2019) and Petersen et. al. (2019) put it – it is possible to engage in envisioning alternative social futures.

Building on the premise that the far-right remains a powerful force that cannot be excluded nor ignored in the present-day climate negotiations (Conversi & Friis Hau, 2021), more suggestions are needed on how to include the political right in climate debates. The empirical examples suggest that the far-right is more likely to engage in pro-climate action if climate action is framed as a way to demonstrate patriotism, coupled with nationalist pride and purity (Conversi, 2020; Wolsko et al., 2016). A combination of an ethnonationalist belonging and pro-climate action – characterized as 'green nationalism' (Conversi, 2020) – contrasts the traditional climate denialist stance associated with the far-right and has thus been found as a helpful concept for reaching progressive climate goals (Hamilton, 2002). However, since green nationalism is fundamentally ethnocentric – focused on reaching national self-sufficiency by drawing a strong distinction between political and ecological borders (Conversi, 2020; Margulies, 2021) –, it entails severe pitfalls. Daggett (2018) alerts from a form of climate fascism that can potentially arise from the desire to secure a nation's living space – '*lebensraum*' – through political exclusion and repression. Therefore, agreeing with Malm and the Zetkin collective (2021) in that fostering pro-climate action must

not be cultivated through green nationalism, an intersectional feminist lens can be utilized to challenge toxic masculinity that is embedded in the far-right ideologies, as the analysis demonstrated.

Building on Pease (2019) who stresses that the unemotional passivity is the root problem in climate denial, and agreeing with scholars who highlight that climate change attitudes are closely tied to identities (Daggett, 2018; Hoffman, 2011; Malloy, 2009), a proactive way forward is to challenge the hegemonic way of *thinking* of the environment as (1) inferior to humans (Richter, 2019), and (2) divided by the national borders (Margulies, 2021). This relies on the collective agency to create modes of new knowledge, bring forth different forms of political engagement, and include the perspectives of the vulnerable (Alaimo, 2009) with an ultimate goal to challenge the hegemonic masculinity that dominates over nature and other living beings (Twine, 1997; Pease, 2019). Johnson (2020) emphasizes that moving past toxic masculinity requires a rethinking of manhood; a path forward lies in fostering emotionality, developing empathy, and vulnerability (Hendriksen, 2019; Johnson, 2020). The educational institutions, workplaces, opinion leaders, family members, role models, peers, and the media all carry the responsibility to promote care and awareness. All in all, while proactively challenging the hegemonic mindsets organized around extraction, domination, and hierarchy, it may be possible to reach a more organic relationship with nature and society, centered around egalitarianism, altruism, and care that is detached from the sovereign nation boundaries (Hendriksen, 2019; Hickel, 2021; Hultman & Pulé, 2018; Miller-McDonald, 2021).

## **8. Conclusion**

To examine the role of toxic masculinity in legitimizing climate denial in the far-right, a case study of the Estonian Conservative People's Party EKRE was conducted. The research demonstrated that the party's climate denialist stance is strongly embedded in – and legitimized through – toxic masculinity that strongly resonates with the party's conservative worldview. Drawing on intersectional feminist and framing theories, EKRE's climate denial can be understood as a protest against the liberal values that threaten the 'man-made world', hinder national sovereignty, limit economic growth, and put the patriarchal power structures at risk.

The results revealed that EKRE's focus on 'more tangible' concerns obscures climate change salience in EKRE's political agenda, while the focus is on the 'real problems' that call for urgent solutions. A closer inspection of EKRE's climate frames unveiled that EKRE's climate frames are rooted in toxic masculinity through which a delay in climate action is justified. By framing the 'hysteric' climate action as a risk to Estonia's sovereignty, economy, and nature protection, a strong signal is transmitted that climate action

stands in contrast to ‘a sane mind’ and is thus anti-masculine. Additionally, by denigrating ‘corrupted’ climate scientists, deprecating the mainstream media, criticizing the inefficiency of climate mitigation policies, and stressing the economic cost of taking climate action, the status quo is continuously justified. While EKRE is calling out climate protestors to stop using the ‘white-man-technologies’, such as medicine, cell phones, and central heating, the attention is shifted from a crucial need for political action to individual blaming. In the fusion between toxic masculinity and the ethnocentric values of the far-right, the urgent need for transnational altruism that goes beyond the sovereign boundaries is undermined.

Acknowledging that overcoming climate denial is a challenge that cannot be easily fixed, this thesis has contributed to the conversation on where to start. While addressing climate change inevitably requires a systematic shift on a political, institutional, and corporate level, an identity shift is equally required to push forward pro-climate action and contest the unjust power structures that have been resting on a capitalist status quo for too long. Acknowledging that climate denial is legitimized through toxic masculinity as the analysis revealed, toxic masculinity must be deconstructed. Building on the starting premise that men are not exploitative by nature, this thesis assumes that the socially constructed ideas of ‘manhood’ can be transformed. Fostering emotional connection with the surrounding environment over exploitative market rationality, prioritizing human wellbeing over capital accumulation, and openly addressing the anxieties, fears, and ecological grief while also providing constructive hope serves as a first crucial step towards climate change acceptance. More research is crucially needed for bringing more voices to the debate, strengthening the conversation, and pushing for more proactive engagement to overcome climate denial. By bridging intersectional feminist perspectives with degrowth, de-colonialism, and environmentalism while utilizing the power of framing, it may be possible to reach a more harmonious relationship between people and the planet.

While numerous future climate scenarios are still open, there is no time for delaying climate action any longer. Pro-climate action must be promoted on all levels – simultaneously. Until further research will be done, this thesis concludes that the future of our toxic atmosphere depends on whether toxic masculinity can be deconstructed.



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## Appendix A

### EKRE's quotes from the conservative news platform *Uued Uudised*<sup>4</sup>

#### EST-ENG translations

EST	ENG	Date published
<b>5. Results</b>		
<b>5.2. EKRE's climate frames</b>		
<b>5.2.1. 'Economic suicide'</b>		
Jällegi unustab poliitik, et kaasaja tehnoloogiliste lahenduse alus on elekter, kuid kliimaneutraalsusnõuetega suretatakse välja omamaine elektritootmine ja seatakse Eesti sõltuvusse kahtlasest ja julgeolekumõjuga võõrenergiast, mis muudab selle ka kallimaks. Taastuvenergeetilised alternatiivid on kallid, vähetootlikud ja välja arendamata.	Again, the politician forgets that the basis of modern technologies is electricity, but climate neutrality requirements kill domestic electricity production and make Estonia dependent on suspicious foreign energy that affects Estonia's national defense capacity and makes the electricity more expensive. Renewable energy alternatives are expensive, unproductive, and undeveloped.	18.11.2019
Kas me oleme selleks valmis? Kas me oleme nii rikkad, et keerata agressiivse hüppega pea peale kogu senine elukorraldus?	Are we ready for that? Are we rich enough to aggressively turn our entire way of living upside down?	13.10.2019
Lisaks on täiesti jabur see, et riikideülest kliimavõitlust peetakse ainult ühel mandril, mis saastab tegelikult suhteliselt vähe – kui Venemaa Hiina, India ja kogu Kolmas maailm jätkavad reostamist või võitlevad selle vastu ainult sõnades, siis hävitab Euroopa ennast ise, et teised ellu jääksid.	Furthermore, it is absolutely absurd that a supranational climate fight is being fought on one continent only, which actually pollutes relatively little - if Russia, China, India, and the entire Third World continue to pollute and fight [climate change] only in their words, Europe will destroy itself for others to survive.	16.09.2019
<b>5.2.2. Climate denial</b>		
Ent teadlased ja eksperdid, keda alarmistide narratiivi toetavad valitsused ei rahasta, kinnitavad, et inimtekkelise süsinikdioksiidi teooriad ja nn kliimatööstuse poolt tagant ärgitatud kliimamudel ei leia mitte mingit kinnitust.	However, scientists and experts who are not funded by governments that support the [climate] alarmists' narrative affirm that the theories of anthropogenic carbon dioxide and the climate change scenario promoted by the so-called climate industry are not confirmed.	15.06.2017
Kõrgete temperatuuride tõenäosus on aga viimastel aastatel vähenenud, muuhulgas on mõõdetud uusi rekordmadalaid temperatuure. Selliseid fakte kliima kohta me aga peavoolumeediast ei leia.	The probability of high temperatures has decreased in recent years, new record low temperatures have been measured among other things. However, we do not find such facts about the climate in the mainstream media.	31.08.2019

<sup>4</sup> Uued Uudised website: <http://www.uueduudised.ee>



<p>Aga tegelikult peaksime me ignoreerima patsidega tüdrukut. Peaksime vaatama just nimelt kaljukindlat fakte, mis kõik viitavad ebamugavale tõsiasjale, mida keskkonnaaktivistid meelsasti eirata tahaksid: hukatuslik inimtekkeline globaalne soojenemine on pettus. See eksisteerib ainult kahtlastes arvutisimulatsioonides ja ärahirmutatud 16-aastase tüdruku ettekujutlustes.</p>	<p>In fact, we should ignore the girl with the pigtails. We should be looking at the rock-solid facts instead, all of which point to an inconvenient truth that environmental activists would rather ignore: disastrous anthropogenic global warming is a fraud. It only exists in dubious computer simulations and delusions of a frightened 16-year-old girl.</p>	<p>12.12.2019</p>
<p>CO<sub>2</sub> on taimede toit. Mida rohkem seda õhus on, seda kiiremini ja lopsakamalt taimed kasvavad. Mida lopsakamalt taimed kasvavad, seda rohkem on toitu ülejäänud elusolenditel, kaasa arvatud inimene. Praegune CO<sub>2</sub> tase 400 ppm (osakest miljoni kohta) on taimede jaoks sisuliselt range dieet.</p>	<p>CO<sub>2</sub> is plant food. The more CO<sub>2</sub> in the air, the faster and lushier the plants grow. The lushier the plants grow, the more food there is for other living beings, including humans. The current CO<sub>2</sub> level, 400 ppm (parts per million), is essentially a strict diet for plants.</p>	<p>03.07.2019</p>
<p>Climategate paljastas, et nn eksperdid, keda me peaksime usaldama, ei ole tegelikult usaldusväärsed. Nad valetavad, nad petavad, neid motiveerib pigem grantide saamine ja kahtlane poliitiline aktivism kui omakasupüüdmatu huvi teadmiste vastu.</p>	<p>Climategate revealed that the so-called experts who we are supposed to trust are not reliable. They lie, they deceive, they are motivated by grants and dubious political activism instead of selfless interest science.</p>	<p>18.11.2019</p>
<p>Pea igas valdkonnas on kliimamuutustel vaid väike, sageli hoopis soodne, mõju," kirjutab Goklany. Isegi merevee taseme tõus, mida on peetud globaalse soojenemise kõige hävituslikumaks teguriks, on uurimuse kohaselt arvatust palju väiksem probleem.</p>	<p>In almost every field, climate change only has a small, often beneficial, effect," Goklany writes. Even the sea level rise, which has been identified as the most devastating consequence of global warming is a much smaller problem than thought according to the research.</p>	<p>08.02.2021</p>
<b>5.2.3. 'Climate hysteria'</b>		
<p>Keskkonnahoiu eesmärgil peale sunnitav biokütus on paanilise kliimavõitluse ebaradik tulem</p>	<p>Biofuel forced upon us in the name of environmental protection is a monstrous result of a panic fight against climate change.</p>	<p>10.09.2019</p>
<p>Võib ju küsida, et mis selles kliimatsirkuses siis taunitavat on? Las veidrikud vehivad plakatitega, keda see kotib? Tegelikult on ikka küll. Tuues oma protesti avalikku ruumi, destabiliseeritakse sellega tavaelu, luuakse närviline painav õhkkond, pannakse kahtluse alla senine elukorraldus. Miks arvab käputäis kliimaväljaastumisele spetsialiseerunuid, et neil on eriline õigus kogu maailma elama õpetada?</p>	<p>One might ask, then, what is so reprehensible about this climate circus? Let the freaks wave their posters, why does it matter? In fact, it does. By bringing their protest into public space they destabilize ordinary life, create a nervous and distressing atmosphere, and challenge the old way of living. Why does a handful of climate protestors think they have a special right to teach the whole world how to live?</p>	<p>04.02.2020</p>
<b>5.2.4. 'Green totalitarianism'</b>		
<p>Kui roheline totalitarism saavutab oma eesmärgid, ootab meid ees elustandardi vabalangemine, energiahinnad muutuvad praegusest veelgi pöörasemaks, meie vabadusi hakatakse veelgi enam piirama ning linde tapvate ökokruksifikside [tuulegeneraatorid] tagajärjel kaob üha rohkem metsikut loodust ning hävib üha rohkem maastikke; vasakliberaalse oligarhia kätte koondub aga aina rohkem raha ja mitte keegi neist ei kavatse planeedi olukorra parandamiseks lillilegi liigutada.</p>	<p>As green totalitarianism achieves its goals, we will face a free fall in living standards, energy prices will become even more insane, our freedoms will be further restricted, and more wildlife and more landscapes will be lost as a result of bird-killing eco-crucifixes [wind turbines]; however, more and more money is concentrated in the hands of the left-liberal oligarchy, and none of them is going to do anything to improve the situation on the planet.</p>	<p>31.08.2019</p>

Igaüks peab lehti lugedes ise aru saame, et ta läheb kinni, kui ta valitsusele ustavate teaduritele vastu vaidleb, teadlased teavad kõike, sina oled vait või kiidad takka. Või tuleb politsei ja viib su ära.	Everyone must realize when reading the news that one gets arrested when one argues with scientists who are loyal to the government. The scientists know everything, you remain silent or you praise. Or the police will come and take you away.	13.02.2021
Greta esindab kliimaliikumise ametlikku seisukohta, on selle radikaalse ideoloogia peavool, kui nii võib öelda. [...] Ta on ohtlik. Tema poolt propageeritav ideoloogia on ohtlik.	Greta represents the official position of the climate movement, she is the mainstream of this radical ideology, so to speak. [...] She's dangerous. The ideology she advocates for is dangerous.	14.12.2019
Climategate'i ajal tundus hetkeks, et kliimapetturid on korrale kutsutud, et maailma suurim teadus- (ja majandus-) pettus on paljastatud ja kliimatööstus lammutatakse enne, kui see meie vabadusi ja meie rikkust veel rohkem kahjustada jõuab. Kuid tundub, et suure raha, räpase poliitika ja hullumeelsete masside grupimõtlemise vastu ei aita mitte miski.	During Climategate, it seemed for a moment that climate fraudsters had been called to order, that the world's greatest scientific (and economic) fraud had been exposed, and that the climate industry would be dismantled before it could further damage our freedoms and our wealth. But nothing seems to help against big money, dirty politics, and group thinking by insane masses.	18.11.2019
<b>5.2.5. Apolitical climate frame</b>		
Pealegi ei usu ma ühtegi ökokommunisti, kes sõidab autoga, elab keskküttega korteris ja tarvitab elektrit.	Besides, I don't trust any eco-communist who drives a car, lives in a centrally heated apartment, and uses electricity.	20.02.2021
Selleks, et Maad tõsiselt kaitsma asuda, pole vaja viia lapsed tundide ajast protesteerima, et mingi poliitiline jõud saaks sellest kasu lõigata.	To seriously start protecting the Earth, there is no need to make children protest for hours so that some political force can benefit from it.	27.07.2019
Soovitan kõigil antifašistidel, kliimaaktivistidel, feministidel, sotsialistidel, veganitel ja muudel headuse sõdalastel loobuda kõigist valge mehe tehnoloogiatest. Nii pääseb loodus ja pääsevad ka mõned veel järelejäänud sõltumatud tsivilisatsioonid nagu Putini Venemaa ja Kuuba kommunistide maapealne paradiis.	I advise all anti-fascists, climate activists, feminists, socialists, vegans, and other warriors of goodness to give up all white man technologies. That is how nature will survive and some of the remaining independent civilizations as well, such as Putin's Russia's and Cuba's communist paradise on earth.	14.11.2019
Ta peab mõistlikuks elada normaalselt elu – ära viska prügi maha, söö taldrik tühjaks ning tarbi mõõdukalt ning ära ole paanikas asjade pärast, mida tegelikult inimene mõjutada ei saa.	He considers it wise to live a normal life - do not litter, eat your plate empty and consume moderately, and do not panic about things that a person cannot really influence.	13.09.2019
<b>5.2.6. Nature protection over climate action</b>		
EKRE poliitik Martin Helme ütles kord, et kliimahüsteerias on täiesti unustatud keskkonnakaitse. See tähendab, et Eesti padurohelised ei tegele ammugi enam tõsiselt plastikuuputusega, nad ei tunne huvi, kui halvasti võib mõjuda nii meie kui maailma keskkonnale Rail Baltic või Tallinn-Helsingi tunnel ega ka mitte teiste valupunktidega, mis puudutavad meid siin ja otse.	EKRE politician Martin Helme once said that environmental protection has been completely forgotten in climate hysteria. This means that the Estonian greens are no longer seriously involved in dealing with the 'plastic flood', they are not interested in how badly the Rail Baltic or Tallinn-Helsinki tunnel can affect the local and global environment, nor are they concerned about other issues that affect us here directly.	18.11.2019
Mis aga puutub kliimanoortesse, siis reedese popipäeva asemel võiks nad võidelda näiteks Eesti metsade ja selle elustiku eest, kodumaad lõhestava ja raiskava Rail Balticu vastu ja nii edasi – Eestimaa loodus ei ole sugugi mitte kindlalt kaitstud, kuid lihtsam on käia	As for the climate youth, instead of striking on Fridays, they could fight for Estonian forests and their biota, Rail Baltic, which divides their homeland and wastes resources, and so on - Estonian nature is by no means secured, but it is easier to protest in front of the	07.01.2020

reedel tundide asemel Toompeal patseerimas, sest abstraktse CO <sub>2</sub> vastu võitlemine on igati mugavam.	parliament instead of attending classes on Friday because fighting against abstract CO <sub>2</sub> is more convenient.	
<b>5.2.7. National security threat</b>		
Kuidas hakkab kliimaneutraalsus kaitseväge mõjutama – kas hakkame ka Vene kindralitelt tankides biokütuse kasutamist nõudma?	How will climate neutrality affect our defense forces - will we demand Russian generals to use biofuel in tanks as well?	08.10.2019
Kas kliimavõitlejad kavatsevad oma tähtaegadeks sõjad lõpetada? Või sunnivad nad sõjaväelasi tankidel aegajalt juhtmega akusid laadima?	Are the climate fighters going to end wars by their deadlines? Or will they force the military to recharge electric batteries in tanks from time to time?	08.10.2019
<b>6. Analysis</b>		
<b>6.2.1. Belittling others</b>		
Mind on alati hämmastanud, kui rumalad on inimesed. Ja kui sõgedad ja lühinägelikud. Ja kui lühikese mälu, naiivsed ja õppimisvõimetud.	I have always been astonished by the stupidity of people. And how blind and short-sighted they can be. And how short their memory is, how they can be so naive and unable to learn.	13.01.2021
Noortel on ainult teadmine, et kliima on hukas, aga neil pole teadmist, kuidas olukorda parandada nii, et inimkond Maad päästes ise näljaohtu ja vaesusesse ei satuks, mis neelaks omakorda miljoneid inimesi. Nad ei mõtle ka praegu ise, vaid tormavad võitlusse "kliimabolševike" juhtimisel – ega need lasteaialapsed Toompea lossi ees polnud seal teadlikult.	Young people only know that the climate is bad, but they do not know how to change the situation so that while saving the Earth, humanity wouldn't fall into hunger and poverty, which would have fatal consequences for millions. They do not think for themselves now either, but rush into the struggle under the leadership of the "climate Bolsheviks" - surely those kindergarten children in front of Toompea Castle were not there knowingly.	19.02.2020
Riigikogu liige Kalle Grünthal kirjutab sellest, kui ebainimlik on loksutada haiget last ühelt kliimavõitluse ürituselt teisele, selle asemel, et lasta tal koolis käia ja areneda.	Member of Parliament, Kalle Grünthal, writes how inhumane it is to carry a sick child from one climate fight event to another instead of letting her develop at school.	27.09.2019
Riigikogu saadik võtab terava kriitika alla maailma päästmise idee, mille nimel peaksime me ennast maha salgama ja kõigest loobuma. Nii kõlavad täiesti tõsiste inimeste suust jaburad mõtted, et laste sünnitamine koormab keskkonda, elektritootmine tuleb saaste pärast lõpetada, loomad tootvat samuti liiga palju süsihappegaasi ja "maavarad peavad jääma neile, kes tulevad siis, kui eestlased on kõik välja surnud või ära läinud."	The Member of Parliament criticizes the idea of saving the world, for which we should repress ourselves and give up everything. Totally serious people come up with idiotic ideas, that giving birth is a burden on the environment, producing electricity must be stopped due to pollution, animals also produce too much carbon dioxide, and "national resources must remain for those who arrive once the Estonians are all extinct or gone."	24.06.2019
<b>6.2.2. Authoritarianism, anti-globalism, anti-immigration</b>		
Lambist kästakse meil omaks võtta „väärtusi“ nagu avatus ja sallivus. Kas avatus ja sallivus on väärtused või äkki lihtsalt neutraalsed terminid? Pigem ikka neutraalsed terminid, sest oleneb ikka väga, millele ja kellele avatud ja salliv olla.	Out of nowhere, we are ordered to embrace "values", such as openness and tolerance. Are openness and tolerance values or maybe just neutral terms? Rather still neutral terms, because it depends a lot to what and to whom to be open and tolerant.	11.01.2021

Meedias järjekordset rohepöörde uudist lugedes meenub alati Nõukogude Liit oma kampaaniatega, sealhulgas Gorbatšovi võitlus alkoholismiga.	When reading another one of the news about the Green Revolution, the Soviet Union and its campaigns come to mind, including Gorbachev's fight against alcoholism.	21.12.2020
<b>6.2.3. Heteronormativity</b>		
Abielu saab olla vaid mehe ja naise liit, sest nende suhtest sünnivad lapsed, ja riik peab lapsi kaitsma. Igasugused "soodüsfooriad" tuleb ära lõpetada, need ajavad noored inimesed segadusse ja hävitavad nende õnnevõimalused.	Marriage can only be a union of a man and a woman because children are born from their marriage, and the state must protect children. All kinds of "gender dysphorias" must be stopped, these confuse young people and destroy their opportunities to be happy.	12.01.2021
NWO (New World Order) mõte on hävitada inimsuhete eetilised alused ja viia need aste primitiivsemale tasandile – seaduste tasandile. Sellest on tingitud paljut, mida kogeme: täielik hoolimatus abielusuhete säilitamise suhtes (ehk: suhete vabadus), naistele meestega võrdse tööorjuse vajaduse tekitamine (ehk: naisõiguslus ja emantsipatsioon), internatsionalism (multikultuursus), homomeelsus (ehk: erinevus rikastab), laste kontrollimine (sooneutraalsus), ateism (ehk: teaduslik maailmavaade), teadvuse lamestamine (ehk: poliitkorrektsus) jne. jms.	The idea of the NWO (New World Order) is to destroy the ethical foundations of human relationships and bring them to a more primitive level - the level of laws. This results in a lot of what we experience: a complete disregard for maintaining marital relationships (i.e.: freedom of relationships), forcefully creating slavery for women (i.e.: women's rights and emancipation), internationalism (multiculturalism), homonormativity (i.e.: differences enrich our society), control over children (gender neutrality), atheism (or: scientific worldview), weakening of consciousness (or: political correctness), etc. etc.	29.01.2021
. Homoseksualism on kuivanud oks elupuul ja nii toetavad rohelised sümboolselt võetuna kuivanud, mitte elujõus metsi. Sest praegu vastandub samasooliste abielude toetamine otseselt mehe-naise suhtel põhinevale eluandvale abielule.	Homosexuality is a dried-up branch of the tree of life, and so the Greens support, symbolically speaking, dried up, lifeless forests. Because support for same-sex marriage is directly opposed to life-giving marriage based on a man-woman relationship.	30.01.2021
Kes tahaks võidelda õlg-õla kõrval rohelistega Eesti metsa eest, teades, et tegelikkuses on nad igati elueitajad? Sama on ka sotsidega – nad küll deklareerivad soovi kaitsta Eesti metsi, aga nende (ja ka roheliste) puhul tekib küsimus – kelle jaoks? Sest sotside muu poliitika näeb ette multikultuurset Eestit ja kui kord on Eesti võõraid täis, siis kellele me tänast metsa-Eestit kaitseme?	Who wants to fight side by side with the Greens for the Estonian forest, knowing that in reality, they are life deniers in every way? The same goes for the socialists - although they declare their desire to protect Estonian forests, a question arises (as for the Greens) - protect for whom? Because the social democrats' political vision envisages a multicultural Estonia, and once Estonia is full of strangers, for whom do we protect today's forests?	30.01.2021
<b>6.2.4. Glorification of strong male leaders and sexism</b>		
Peeter Espaki hinnangul on ülioluline teema muudetud revolutsiooniliseks farsiks: "Üha enam kerkib feministlik lähenemine kliimasoojenemisele üles ka peavoolu rahvusvahelises debatis."	According to Peeter Espak, this crucial issue has been turned into a revolutionary farce: "the feminist approach to global warming is brought into the mainstream international debate more and more."	13.08.2019
Valitseda tuleb mõistuse ja südamega, mitte tujude ja ihadega.	One must rule with the mind and heart, not with moods and desires.	20.01.2021
Saan aru, et see pädevuse hülgamine ja soolisuse esmaseks seadmine on üks liberalismi põhipostulaate, aga palun – tehke seda igal pool mujal, mitte minu koduaias. Ma ei taha olla kellelegi katsejänes või labori valge hiir, kelle peal keegi fanaatikust feminist oma	I understand that the abandonment of competence and the prioritization of gender is one of the basic postulates of liberalism, but please - carry it out everywhere else, but not in my backyard. I do not want to be a guinea pig or a laboratory white mouse for some	30.01.2021

<p>utoopiaid realiseerib. Riik ja rahvas pole siiski legoklotsid, kellega oma isiklike lapsikuid mängida.</p>	<p>fanatical feminist to realize her utopias. The country and the nation are not, after all, Lego bricks to play one's personal childish games with.</p>	
<p><b>6.2.5. Glorification of rationality over altruism and empathy</b></p>		
<p>Kui te eelnevat lugedes arvate, et ma Greta Thunbergi ja tema noorte jüngrite muret alahindan, siis te eksite. Bioloogina tean ma suurepäraselt, kui keeruline on maailm, kus me elame. Me peame loodusega suheldes olema väga tähelepanelikud ja alandlikud. Me peame loodust senisest palju paremini tundma õppima. Kuid mis kõige tähtsam – ei maksa iga ülespuhutud hüsteeriaga kaasa minna. Ja pidage meeles – maailma lõpp ei tule aastal 2030 ega ka mitte aastal 2050.</p>	<p>If you think, having read the previous text, that I underestimate the concerns of Greta Thunberg and her young disciples, you are wrong. As a biologist, I'm perfectly aware of the complexity of the world we live in. We must be very attentive and humble when dealing with nature. We need to get to know nature much better than we have so far. But most importantly, it doesn't make sense to go along with every bloated hysteria that's been blown out of proportion. And remember, the world will not end in 2030, nor will it end in 2050.</p>	<p>13.10.2019</p>