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In Case of Crisis or War

A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of the Individual's Role and
Responsibility in Swedish Total Defence 1943–2024



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Abstract

This study examines the individual's role and responsibility in Swedish total defence and crisis preparedness. Using securitisation theory, the study analyses how the state has constructed contemporary security threats and defined the individual's role and responsibility in preparing for and countering these threats. The study combines the securitisation theory with a multimodal discourse analysis to study both written text and visuals in six informational crisis preparedness brochures that were produced between 1943 and 2024. The analysis demonstrates a pattern characterised by collective belonging between individuals, a hierarchical relationship between the state and its citizens, and the individual is preferred to be loyal, resilient and to act in a quick and calm manner in case of a crisis or war.

Key words: securitisation, total defence, crisis preparedness, crisis communication, Sweden
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1. Introduction

Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014, followed by its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, has reintroduced a conventional military threat to the European security agenda. At the start of the invasion, many believed Russia to be much stronger militarily than Ukraine and some even predicted a Russian victory within a matter of days or weeks.¹ In response to the volatile security landscape that has emerged as a consequence of the invasion, European states have turned to political warfare by using military, intelligence, diplomatic, economic, and other measures in attempts to deter Russia.² European states have also returned to increasing their defence spending and improving their defence industrial bases. For Sweden, the deteriorating security environment has led to a reprioritisation of the direction of Swedish defence policy, with the accession to NATO in 2024 and increased budget allocations to Swedish Armed Forces in 2025.³ Beyond the traditional politico-military realm, Russia employs hybrid warfare methods, such as online disinformation campaigns, aimed at weakening the civilian population and fragmenting trust in democratic values. Russia has also conducted several attacks against critical infrastructure in Ukraine, which disrupts essential societal functions and directly affects the civilian population.⁴ These unconventional methods are not limited to Ukraine. The Nordic countries have also been subject to them, for example through disinformation campaigns aimed at intimidating citizens, shaping public perception, and undermining support for the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).⁵ Russia has also repeatedly violated the airspace of several European countries, including EU Member States and NATO Allies. Such drone incidents have moved closer to Swedish territory, for example through those occurring in Denmark in 2025, where multiple unidentified drones for several consecutive nights flew over Danish airports and military bases.⁶

While traditional territorial defence seems to be back on the security agenda, it is clear that military armed forces alone are insufficient to withstand the threat that Russia poses. The multitude of security threats, both civil and military, requires a broader approach. This is clear when considering the Ukrainian response to the invasion, which does not only rely on military strength and material capability but also on human factors such as effective leadership, command and control, motivation, and moral.⁷ In response to the recognition that contemporary

¹ B. Renz. Can Civil-Military Relations Explain the Ineffectiveness of Russian Armed Forces in Ukraine? A Debate. In: P. Forsström (ed.) *Russia's War Against Ukraine: Complexity of Contemporary Clausewitzian War* (2024): 1.

² K. Wither. Back to the future? Nordic total defence concepts. *Defence Studies* 20: 1 (2020): 63.

³ Government Offices of Sweden, The government presents defense investments for a stronger Sweden (2025). <https://www.regeringen.se/pressmeddelanden/2025/09/regeringen-laggar-ram-forsvarssatsningar-for-ett-starkare-sverige/>

⁴ S. Aebi. A. Hauri. & J. Kamberaj. Critical Infrastructure Resilience in Ukraine: Energy, Transportation, and Communication. Center for Security Studies ETH Zürich. (2024): 5.

⁵ Wither 2020: 64.

⁶ M. Philaire. 'Not an Inch': How Russia Puts NATO to the Test. *Policy Report* 24 (2025): 3.

⁷ Renz 2024: 1.

security threats extend beyond the military sector and directly targets civilian populations, the concept of total defence has reemerged in several countries.⁸

In Sweden, total defence is defined as “all activities preparing society for war”.⁹ In addition to the Swedish Armed Forces in the military sector, civilian actors such as government ministries, civic organisations, the private sector, and individual citizens are expected to contribute to Swedish total defence. Total defence thus encompasses both the military and civilian sectors and views the cooperation between these as essential in case of an emergency.¹⁰ Consequently, effective civil-military cooperation is a vital component in a total defence strategy.¹¹ One approach that the Swedish government has adopted to ensure effective cooperation is raising awareness about the role of the individual. Since 1943, the Swedish government has regularly distributed informational brochures aimed at instructing the individual on the course of action during crises or wartime. The brochures explain the concept of total defence, provide guidelines on emergency preparedness, and alert the population that in the event of a serious emergency, they may need to manage independently for up to seven days.¹²

The involvement of individual citizens in the total defence model rests on the concept of resilience, the process of making oneself stronger in order to be able to withstand sudden shocks, crises, or catastrophes.¹³ The idea of promoting resilience in security is to create self-helping citizens who contribute to their own protection.¹⁴ By including resilience as part of a country’s national security strategy, the aim is to safeguard against any and every threat that may arise and to minimise the impact of an outbreak of a major crisis once it has materialised.¹⁵ As such, resilience places the individual at the core of security.

The individual is thus a key component of crisis and war preparedness, as they constitute part of the collective total defence efforts. This makes it interesting to study what the individual’s role and responsibility in times of crisis and war has been understood to be. This study will investigate this by examining how the expected role and responsibilities of the individual has been constructed and communicated in Sweden.

⁸ H. Bäck, A. Remsö, Renström, E. & R. Sjöstedt. From crisis to commitment: How empowerment and threat perceptions influence individuals’ defence willingness. *European Journal of International Security* (2025): 1.

⁹ Government Offices of Sweden, Development of modern total defence (2018) <https://www.government.se/articles/2018/06/development-of-modern-total-defence/>

¹⁰ Bäck, Remsö, Renström & Sjöstedt (2025): 3.

¹¹ Renz 2025: 1.

¹² Wither 2020: 66.

¹³ C. Fjäder. The nation-state, national security and resilience in the age of globalisation. *Resilience* 2: 2 (2014): 115.

¹⁴ M. Krüger. Building Instead of Imposing Resilience: Revisiting the Relationship Between Resilience and the State. *International Political Sociology* 13 (2019): 57.

¹⁵ Fjäder 2014: 123.

1.1. Research Purpose and Question

The aim of this study is to examine the individual's role and responsibility in crisis and war preparedness. This will be done by examining how the individual has been constructed in crisis preparedness brochures that have been produced and distributed by the Swedish government between 1943 and 2024. Using Sweden as a case, the study aims at contributing to a broader field of research concerning securitisation, resilience, and crisis preparedness communication.

The research question is the following:

- How have security threats and the individual's role and responsibility in countering these security threats been constructed in the Swedish crisis preparedness brochures between 1943 and 2024?

The analysis will first examine how societal issues have been constructed into security threats and then how the individual's role and responsibility in preparing for and countering these threats has been communicated. The study will examine both written text and visual expressions in the brochures.

2. Background

Traditionally, security has been associated with a military threat from one state to another. Threats to national security have typically been perceived as military in nature, and responses to such threats have been framed in terms of military action. From this perspective, national security has tended to focus on maintaining military control within a geographically defined territory in order to guarantee the state's survival from external military threats.¹⁶ This traditional understanding of security, however, has been increasingly challenged with the introduction of new and more uncertain security threats. The distribution of and content in the Swedish informational crisis brochures has been influenced by this changing understanding of security. This section therefore outlines the development of the conceptualisation of security and examines the events that led to the distributions of the brochures. The aim is to situate the study within its timeline and historical context between 1943 and 2024.

2.1. Historical Background of the Swedish Crisis Brochures

The first edition of the Swedish crisis preparedness brochure, titled *In Case of War*, was distributed in 1943, when the Second World War was intensifying and moving dangerously close to the Swedish border. During this time, the Swedish security policy of maintaining neutrality had gained significant support among its population.¹⁷ The idea of the neutrality strategy was to minimise Sweden's involvement in the ongoing war and to avoid the country from being drawn into an armed conflict.¹⁸ From this standpoint of neutrality, the Swedish total defence model emerged.¹⁹ The idea behind this model was the fact that war was not only a military matter, but also concerned civilians, and that preparedness efforts therefore needed to include the civilian population.²⁰

After the Second World War, the European security order was characterised by a bipolar distribution of power between the United States and the Soviet Union. This contributed to a sense of stability on the continent often referred to as "the long peace".²¹ During this long peace, most European states either aligned themselves with the US-led military alliance NATO or with the Soviet-led equivalent, the Warsaw Treaty Organisation. However, some European states, including Sweden, Finland, and Switzerland, chose non-alignment. Without the security guarantees provided by a collective defence alliance, these states had to rely on their own

¹⁶ Fjäder 2014: 117.

¹⁷ M. Cronqvist. "Det befästa folkhemmet: Kallt krig och varm välfärd i svensk civilförsvarskultur." In: M. Jerneck (ed.) *Fred i realpolitikens skugga* (2009): 176.

¹⁸ J. Westberg. *Svenska säkerhetsstrategier: Från neutralitetspolitik till ansökan om Natomedlemskap*. (Studentlitteratur 2023): 183.

¹⁹ Cronqvist. 2009: 176.

²⁰ Cronqvist 2009: 178.

²¹ I. Berzina. From 'total' to 'comprehensive' National Defence: The Development of the Concept in Europe. *Journal on Baltic Security* 6: 2. (2020): 2.

defence capacities. It was in this context that total defence emerged as a security approach.²² The second distribution of the brochure took place during this time, in 1952, and a third edition of the brochure was published in 1961.²³ These brochures were an expression of total defence through outlining how every individual within society are required to contribute to the country's preparedness efforts.²⁴

During the Cold War, Swedish total defence relied heavily on the clearly defined military threat that the Soviet Union posed, but this threat would disappear with the end of the Cold War. As a consequence of the disappearance of a major military threat to European states, a period of European demilitarisation emerged.²⁵ There was a growing perception that the world order was moving towards peace, and it therefore made sense for Sweden to change security strategy. This meant that neutrality was replaced by solidarity, which included a membership in the EU and increased NATO cooperation.²⁶

The traditional understanding of security as military also underwent significant changes during the post-Cold War era, with the introduction of new and more uncertain security threats. A defining feature of the new security agenda was that security threats became less tangible, often emerged with little or no warning, and were more difficult to predict than the previously easily identifiable military threat.²⁷ Unpredictable threats, such as terrorism, climate change, pandemics, and natural disasters, were placed at the core of this new security agenda. As such, the conceptualisation of security expanded to not primarily be understood in traditional military terms, but instead defined by new and more abstract security challenges. During this period, the Swedish government produced so-called desktop editions of the informational crisis brochures, intended to be distributed only in case of a war breaking out. One of these were produced in 1987.²⁸

The post-Cold War world order proved short-lived. From the 2000s onward, Russia adopted an increasingly assertive foreign and security policy, beginning with the Russo-Georgian war in 2008, continuing with the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014, and ultimately culminating in the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. As a consequence of this changing security landscape, a new edition of the brochure was distributed in 2018.²⁹ The brochure from 2018 was the first time since the Cold War that the Swedish government informed the population about the course of action in case of a crisis or war.³⁰ The deteriorating security landscape in Europe had led to a return of viewing security through the lens of traditional defence, and in

²² Berzina 2020: 2.

²³ Försvarsmakten. *Vykort från ett land i väntans tider*. (2019).

<https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/sv/information-och-fakta/var-historia/artiklar/vykort-fran-ett-land-i-vantans-tider/>

²⁴ Cronqvist 2009: 181.

²⁵ Berzina 2020: 3.

²⁶ Westberg 2023: 193.

²⁷ Biscop 2005: 2.

²⁸ Försvarsmakten 2019.

²⁹ S. Hede. & A. Enander. Om krisen eller kriget kommer: invånares reaktioner och reflektioner. *Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap and Försvarshögskolan*. (2019): 7.

³⁰ Hede & Enander 2019: 7.

combination with the rise of abstract security threats, the Cold War-era concept of total defence made a comeback.³¹ The emergence of new security threats and challenges outside the military sector was reflected in the brochure's title through incorporating the word *crisis*. This brochure thus had a greater focus on civil preparedness and covered a range of areas not previously included in the brochures.

The most recent update of the brochure was distributed in 2024. The Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, now called the Swedish Agency for Civil Defence and Resilience, described that this new edition was distributed against the backdrop of the most serious security situation since the Second World War. Consequently, new threats such as terrorist threats, cyber-attacks, and disinformation campaigns contributing to a new security agenda were included in the brochures.³² The distribution of the brochures in 2018 and 2024 thus suggests a return to the Cold War-era of total defence.

The fact that the brochures have been given out between 1943 and 2024 means that they have been distributed in several different geopolitical security contexts. The content in the respective brochures have been shaped by the threat assessments made at the time, which, in turn, were influenced by broader developments on the security agenda. For example, periods of military deescalation allowed a broadening of security to include other threats, while major global events brought specific issues onto the security agenda.³³ As a result, the issues constructed as security threats in the brochures vary. The historical context provided is thus important to understand the content of the brochures, as well as to understand the analysis that will be conducted in this study.

³¹ Bäck, Remsö, Renström & Sjöstedt 2025: 1.

³² Myndigheten för civilt försvar. *Ladda ner eller beställ broschyren Om krisen eller kriget kommer* (2026). <https://www.mcf.se/sv/rad-till-privatpersoner/broschyren-om-krisen-eller-kriget-kommer/ladda-ner-broschyren-om-krisen-eller-kriget-kommer/>

³³ J. Ingemarsdotter & C. Eriksson. "We will be on our own": Swedish Perceptions of Threats and National Identity in the Context of Economic Defence Planning, 1962–2002. *Scandia tidskrift för historisk forskning* 89: 1. (2025): 70.

3. Literature Overview

This study is a case of how states have constructed the individual's role and responsibility in preparedness for crisis and war. The study is situated within research on security, securitisation, crisis communication, crisis preparedness, civil defence, total defence, and resilience as a security strategy. This section will present previous research concerning the individual's role and responsibility in preparedness for crisis and war, as well as research concerning resilience.

3.1. The Individual's Role and Responsibility in War and Crisis Preparedness

Scholars generally agree that it was during the Cold War that the Swedish total defence model emerged. According to Cronqvist (2009), the distribution of crisis preparedness information, including the brochures, constituted a central component of the total defence model in the Cold War-era.³⁴ In the brochures, from the Cold War, Cronqvist (2009) argues that the household was presented as the primary line of defence within civil defence efforts.³⁵ However, between 1943 and 1989, Swedish government agencies increasingly expressed that the individual needed to step up and take responsibility for their own security.³⁶ The focus on family preparedness thus gradually developed into a focus on individual preparedness.³⁷ Cronqvist's (2009) study thus illustrates the beginning of the construction of the individual as an important actor in Swedish preparedness efforts.

Scholars have continued to study the development of the role of the individual in Swedish crisis preparedness after the end of the Cold War. Rådestad and Larsson (2020) analysed how the role of the individual changed in Swedish crisis preparedness communication between 1995 and 2017, a time frame in which there were no new editions of the crisis preparedness brochures. In their analysis, Rådestad and Larsson (2020) conclude that government communication promoting crisis preparedness has increasingly been produced and distributed with the intention of unburdening public authorities in case of crisis.³⁸ Rådestad and Larsson (2020) write that "it is evident from the information campaigns that the only way now possible for the individuals to contribute to common security and preparedness is to take care of themselves".³⁹ The individual has thus been increasingly constructed as an essential contributor to security. At the same time, state's role as security provider has diminished. Rådestad and Larsson (2020)

³⁴ Cronqvist 2009: 175.

³⁵ Cronqvist 2009: 172.

³⁶ Cronqvist 2009: 191.

³⁷ Cronqvist 2009: 194.

³⁸ C. Rådestad. & O. Larsson. Responsibilization in Contemporary Swedish Crisis Management: Expanding 'Bare Life' Biopolitics Through Exceptionalism and Neoliberal Governmentality. *Critical Policy Studies* 14: 1. (2020): 95.

³⁹ Rådestad & Larsson 2020: 100.

conclude that this shift is an expression of neoliberal governmentality, meaning that the individual is preferred to be self-reliant.⁴⁰

The conclusions made by Rådestad and Larsson (2020) is further developed by Larsson (2021). Larsson (2021) argues that with the widened security concept, individual crisis preparedness has become a central and integral aspect of total defence efforts.⁴¹ In the study, Larsson (2021) investigates the role that citizens have been assigned in these crisis preparedness efforts in Sweden, and how this has been justified. Larsson (2021) finds that the shift in total defence has made it possible for the Swedish government to normalise security measures that place the individual's efforts at the forefront.⁴² Similar to Rådestad and Larsson (2020), Larsson (2021) writes that this has led to a changed relationship between the individual and the state. Larsson (2021) writes "state-citizen relationships are thereby replaced by citizen-citizen relationships".⁴³ With this, he argues that the promotion of self-reliance, in accordance with a neoliberal governmentality, has led to an increased connectedness between the individual and their community rather than a strong relationship between the individual and the state.⁴⁴

A shared conclusion thus far is that Swedish crisis preparedness communication since the end of the Cold War has transformed the relationship between the state and the individual. Not all scholars, however, agree that this responsibility shift is an expression of neoliberalism. Through a multimodal analysis of Swedish crisis preparedness communication, Ågren (2024) finds that while individual responsibility has been increasingly emphasised in Swedish crisis communication since the 2010s, this is often framed through principles of solidarity, loyalty, and collective belonging.⁴⁵ In contrast to Rådestad and Larsson (2020) and Larsson (2021), however, Ågren (2024) suggests that this indicates a return to collectivist values rather than a neoliberal logic, where individual responsibility is understood as a duty towards the community rather than as self-reliance.⁴⁶ Rådestad and Larsson (2020), Larsson (2021) and Ågren (2024) have thus all studied the individual's role in the crisis communication brochures, but have reached different conclusions. While Larsson (2021) interpreted the shift in responsibility as neoliberal logic and governmentality, Ågren (2024) concluded that it expressed a return to collectivist values and not neoliberalism.

Research examining the role of the individual in total defence has not only focused on the manner in which individual preparedness has been constructed, but also on how this has been received by the individuals themselves. Bäck, Remsö, Renström, and Sjöstedt (2025) analyse whether the 2024 edition of *In Case of Crisis or War* had an impact on defence willingness

⁴⁰ Rådestad & Larsson 2020: 101.

⁴¹ O. Larsson. The Connections Between Crisis and War Preparedness in Sweden. *Security Dialogue* 52: 4 (2021): 307.

⁴² Larsson 2021: 319.

⁴³ Larsson 2021: 320.

⁴⁴ Larsson 2021: 309.

⁴⁵ M. Ågren. Responsibilization as a Return to Collectivity? Legitimizing the Responsibilization of Preparedness: The Case of the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB). *Corporate Communications: An International Journal* 29: 7. (2024): 93.

⁴⁶ Ågren 2024: 105.

among Swedish residents. Through conducting a survey during the time when the 2024 brochure was distributed, the authors find that exposure to the brochure did in fact increase individuals willingness to defend.⁴⁷ The communication from the state to the individual, emphasising the important role and responsibilities of the individuals, has thus not only reached its intended audience, but also been accepted by the individuals through an increased willingness to participate in the total defence efforts.

In summary, previous research concerning the role and responsibility of the individual agree that Swedish crisis communication increasingly positions the individual as a responsible security actor. The construction of individuals as security actors has not only been increasingly communicated by the state, as shown by Rådestad and Larsson (2020), Larsson (2021) and Ågren (2024), but has also been increasingly internalised by the citizens, individuals, and residents of Sweden, as shown by Bäck, Remsö, Renström, and Sjöstedt (2025).

3.2. The Concept of Resilience in War and Crisis Preparedness

In addition to research about the increased role of the individual in civil defence and crisis preparedness, many scholars have also pointed to the rise of resilience in security policymaking. At its core, resilience is a psychological concept describing the individual's capacity to deal with unexpected tragedy or loss.⁴⁸ It has also been used in the social sciences, where it has been used to analyse how individuals may strengthen their capacities to resist, respond, and recover from sudden shocks. In discussing it as a way to withstand crises, resilience has gained attention among security policy scholars.⁴⁹

In recent years, several scholars have analysed the manner in which resilience has increasingly been incorporated in national security strategies and plans, as well as the consequences that this has. Some scholars highlight resilience as a necessary and essential method for countering contemporary security threats. Siewier (2025), for example, holds that as security threats are moving beyond the military sector, individual resilience is a crucial for these new threats. Siewier (2025) therefore argues that resilience is useful in countering psychological warfare and information manipulation efforts. Siewier (2025) holds that through fostering resilience, a state may contribute to enhancing cognitive and emotional capacities that enable individuals to resist disinformation.⁵⁰ From this perspective, resilience can serve as a key tool in countering psychological warfare.

⁴⁷ Bäck, Remsö, Renström, and Sjöstedt 2025: 18.

⁴⁸ B. Tonra. Resilience and the EU's Global Strategy: The Potential Promise of Justice. *GLOBUS Research Papers* 4 (2020): 1.

⁴⁹ Tonra 2020: 1.

⁵⁰ M. Siewier. Resilience as a Strategic Pillar of Cognitive Security. *Humanities and Social Sciences* 32: 4 (2025): 169.

Other scholars problematise the implications of employing resilience as a security strategy. Fjäder (2014) writes that in a world characterised by new and uncertain threats, promoting resilience may at first glance seem like a convenient security policy option. However, with the rise of promoting resilience in national security strategies and plans, the role of the nation-state in providing security to its citizens decreases while the individual's responsibility increases.⁵¹ The state thus withdraws from one of its central tasks while the individual takes on additional responsibility. As a result, by promoting individual resilience, the risk is that states no longer focus on preventing threats and as a consequence, security becomes about accepting the world as unpredictable.

The critique against resilience is further developed by Krüger (2019). Krüger (2019) emphasises how the expectations that are placed on individuals in crisis preparedness communication often assumes certain capacities in the individual. In the study, Krüger (2019) demonstrates how, in describing what the individual is expected to do in case of an emergency, the German Federal Office for Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance (BBK) presumes both socio-economic preconditions and physical capabilities that not all individuals are able to fulfil.⁵² Krüger (2019) argues that this demonstrates a neoliberal governmentality, building on "neoliberal's heightened demands for bodily capacity".⁵³ Rather than empowering citizens, Krüger (2019) argues that such communication may produce new forms of exclusion. Krüger (2019) thus shows how resilience-oriented communication efforts risks marginalising those who are unable to meet the expectations placed on them. Similar to previous research about the individual's role and responsibility in crisis preparedness, Krüger (2019) argues that this is an expression of neoliberal values.

The conclusions presented by Krüger (2019) are developed further in Montelius and Kvarnlöf's (2025) analysis of Swedish total defence, where they find that resilience and vulnerability have been constructed as opposites.⁵⁴ The authors demonstrate how the resilient citizen is positioned as necessary for total defence, and thus desirable, while vulnerable individuals are constructed as problematic or even threatening. This, in turn, risks constructing the vulnerable individual as something to fear rather than to protect.⁵⁵ From a securitisation perspective, the study conducted by Montelius and Kvarnlöf (2025) illustrates how not only threats can be constructed, but also how subjects themselves may be securitised.

Previous research concerning resilience thus provides important insights into how resilience has been increasingly incorporated into security and preparedness policies, as well as the consequences that this might have.

⁵¹ Fjäder 2014: 122.

⁵² Krüger 2014: 58.

⁵³ Krüger 2014: 60.

⁵⁴ E. Montelius. & L. Kvarnlöf. A Challenged Society: Constructions of Vulnerable and Resilient Subjects in Swedish Total Defence Policies. *Critical Studies on Security* (2025): 7.

⁵⁵ Montelius & Kvarnlöf 2025: 12, 16.

3.3. Contributions of the Present Study

While the previous research presented above illustrates valuable insights into how individual's role and responsibilities have been constructed and communicated, three research gaps exist. First, existing research has largely focused on specific time periods, a certain year, or one-time communication and campaign efforts. None of the previous research has focused exclusively on the brochures, but have rather used a variety of material. Previous research has thus often analysed limited time frames or specific campaign efforts rather than focusing on a specific communication campaign and a longer timeline. This study seeks to address this research gap by exclusively analysing the brochures, and analyse them with a longer time span.

Second, the role of multimodality, i.e. the interaction between text and visuals, is understudied. Many scholars have studied securitisation and crisis communication by focusing on what message is being put forward through text, words, sentences, and the use of language. Research focusing on the visual aspects, such as images or illustrations, on the other hand, is lacking. The present study seeks to address this through applying a multimodal discourse analysis method, where all modes of communication are taken into consideration.

Third, few studies have used securitisation study, let alone combined it with a multimodal discourse analysis, in order to study the role and responsibility that has been placed on the individual. This study aims at contributing to the research field through a multimodal analysis of how the role and responsibilities of the individual has been constructed and communicated through a securitisation process in the Swedish crisis brochures between 1943 and 2024.

By analysing Swedish informational crisis brochures produced between 1943 and 2024, this study contributes to the literature by offering a multimodal securitisation analysis of how the individual's role and responsibility in total defence has been constructed across a changing security landscape over a longer period of time. It seeks to address the three research gaps through focusing on a longer timeline, analysing all available modes of communication, and applying a securitisation theory to study the role and responsibility of the individual.

4. Theory

The aim of this study requires a theoretical approach that can enable an examination of which issues have been constructed into security threats as well as the individual's role and responsibility in preparing for and countering these threats. For this purpose, securitisation theory is a suitable approach. This section will present the foundations of securitisation and describe how the theory will be applied in the present study.

4.1. Securitisation

Security is commonly understood as a condition of being protected from danger and as a subjective sense of safety.⁵⁶ In the field of security studies, however, what constitutes a threat to security and whose security is at stake has long been contested, as the meaning of security depends on how threats are defined and which actors are considered to be in need of protection. By conceptualising security as a discursive process, Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde has fundamentally reshaped how security is understood within security studies. In their seminal work from 1998, they argue that security is not an objective condition, independent of our experience, but rather is discursively constructed and interpreted. This is done through political actors speaking of an issue as an existential threat requiring extraordinary measures.⁵⁷ This theory, known as *securitisation*, has gained significant attention among scholars within social science, international relations, political science, and security studies. It has been applied to analyse a wide range of issues, such as foreign policy behaviour, transnational crime, global health crises such as HIV/AIDS and Covid-19, and the US-led 'war on terror' following the 9/11 attacks.⁵⁸ In this study, securitisation theory will be applied to understand how issues have been constructed into security threats in the Swedish informational crisis brochures between 1943 and 2024, as well as the individual's role and responsibility in preparing for and countering these threats.

Securitisation theory presumes that any societal phenomenon may be constructed as a security threat. This assumption stems from the post-Cold War deepening and broadening of security studies. The deepening refers to the vertical expansion of the level of analysis beyond the state level, and the broadening refers to the horizontal extension beyond the military sector to include the political, economic, societal, and environmental sectors.⁵⁹ The Copenhagen School,

⁵⁶ S. Biscop. *The European Security Strategy*. (Routledge 2005): 1.

⁵⁷ B. Buzan. O. Wæver. & J. de Wilde. *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*. (Lynne Rienner, 1998): 24.

⁵⁸ M. McDonald. Securitisation and the Construction of Security. *European Journal of International Relations* 14: 4 (2008): 565; J. Kirk & M. McDonald. The Politics of Exceptionalism: Securitization and COVID-19. *Global Studies Quarterly* 1 (2021): 2.

⁵⁹ R. Sjöstedt. Assessing Securitization Theory. In: M. Butler (ed.) *Securitisation Revisited* (Routledge 2020): 29.

including Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde, has contributed to this widening–deepening debate through the securitisation theory. This theory provides a theoretical foundation for analysing how any societal issue may be constructed into being understood as a security threat.⁶⁰

The securitisation process is comprised of three core elements: a referent object (the thing under existential threat), an existential threat (the issue being spoken of as a security issue), and extraordinary measures (the justification of implementing measures above the ordinary to combat the perceived threat).⁶¹ In the securitisation process, issues are first constructed, then accepted, and ultimately incorporated onto the security agenda.⁶² Through using securitisation theory, the researcher may observe and analyse this process, beginning with how issues are constructed into security threats, how they are represented, and continuing with how this construction has been accepted and recognised as legitimate.⁶³

Securitisation first begins with the securitising actor defining an issue as a potential security threat. This actor is often a representative of a broader group or community, such as a government, a state, or an international organisation.⁶⁴ The securitising actor initiates the securitising process by framing an issue as a potential security threat through the use of language. This is called a securitising move.⁶⁵ The securitising move is done through a so-called speech act. At the core of the speech act is the securitising actor speaking of an issue as an existential threat and declaring the referent object as being at risk.⁶⁶

The referent object is the individual, group, or thing that is being threatened. Considering that any issue may be represented as a security threat and that the broadening of security includes a variety of sectors, a securitising move may securitise various issues, for example migration in the societal sector, global warming in the environmental sector, or the risk of a stock market crash in the economic sector.⁶⁷ Who or what is considered to be the referent object thus varies depending on what the threat is perceived to be, in which sector it appears, and by whom it is being constructed.⁶⁸ The next step in the process is for the securitising move to be accepted by the audience to which it was directed.

The audience is the subject that has a causal connection to the security issue and that possesses the ability to enable the securitising actor to take action to counter the threat.⁶⁹ The relationship between the securitising actor and the audience is central; it is only when the security threat has

⁶⁰ B. Buzan. & L. Hansen. *The Evolution of International Security Studies*. (Cambridge University Press, 2009): 212.

⁶¹ Buzan & Hansen 2009: 214; Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde 1998: 21.

⁶² Sjöstedt 2020: 29.

⁶³ M. Williams. Words, Images, Enemies: Securitization and International Politics. *International Studies Quarterly* 47. (2003): 513.

⁶⁴ Sjöstedt 2020: 30.

⁶⁵ Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde 1998: 25.

⁶⁶ Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde 1998: 36.

⁶⁷ Sjöstedt 2020: 30.

⁶⁸ Sjöstedt 2020: 30.

⁶⁹ T. Balzacq. A Theory of Securitization: Origins, Core Assumptions, and Variants. In: T. Balzacq (ed.) *Securitization Theory: How Security Problems Emerge and Dissolve*. (Routledge 2011): 9.

been accepted by its intended audience that action may be taken. Consequently, to ensure that the securitising move is accepted by the audience, the securitising actor needs to adapt their message to the feelings, needs, and interests of the audience. This can be done through employing a certain tonality, attitude, or identity.⁷⁰ As such, the securitising actor “has to tune his/her language to the audience’s experience”.⁷¹ The actor thus needs to identify with the audience in order for it to be accepted, put on the security agenda, and for the securitising actor to be able to implement extraordinary measures to combat the threat. The central interaction in the securitisation process is thus between the securitising actor, framing the issue as a potential security threat, and the audience at which the communication is directed.⁷²

If the security threat is accepted by the audience, the final step in the process are the measures aimed at combating the security threats. After the securitising move has been accepted, the issue may be put on the security agenda and used to legitimise the implementation of extraordinary measures. As shown above, speaking of an issue in terms of security means that a state of emergency is declared.⁷³ Securitisation is thus not only the construction of security threats, but also a construction of exceptionalism.⁷⁴ Placing an issue on the security agenda thus means that it requires immediate action. The exceptional nature of a security threat therefore justifies the use of extraordinary measures, i.e. measures that go above the ordinary, to combat the security threat. Security threats thus allow “whatever means are necessary to block a threatening development”.⁷⁵

In summary, securitisation is a process in which a securitising actor frames an issue as an existential threat to a referent object. The securitising move is done through the use of language in a speech act to convince an audience to accept the issue as a security threat. Once this has been done, extraordinary measures may be implemented. Securitisation is thus a suitable theoretical approach for the present study, which aims at examining how security threats have been constructed. However, for the purposes of the present study, two conceptual tensions in securitisation theory will be addressed and reconceptualised: the audience and the speech act.

4.1.1. The Audience in Securitisation

In this study, the audience is understood as the individuals reading the brochures. Since it is expected that the brochures will encourage the individuals to take the steps necessary to prepare for and to counter security threats, the audience are in this study understood as active agents of security. However, the Copenhagen School’s perspective has typically viewed the audience as passive participants of security. This study therefore seeks to reconceptualise the role of the audience in order to study them as active participants in security.

⁷⁰ Balzacq 2011: 9.

⁷¹ Balzacq 2011: 9.

⁷² Sjøstedt 2020: 31.

⁷³ Balzacq 2011: 33.

⁷⁴ Kirk & McDonald 2021: 3.

⁷⁵ Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde 1998: 21.

The audience is an element of securitisation theory that has been widely discussed and problematised in securitisation research.⁷⁶ At the core of this criticism is that the audience has not been credited with enough agency, even though it does play a key role in defining threats, legitimising security threats, and also contributing to countering the threats.⁷⁷ From a theoretical standpoint, scholars have criticised the contradictory nature of the audience as conceptualised by the Copenhagen School. While on one hand stating that the audience has the ultimate power to decide whether an issue is a security threat, the Copenhagen School later contradicts itself by also asserting that it is the securitising actor that decides whether something needs to be treated as a security problem.⁷⁸ Thus, the Copenhagen School has been very unclear about the role and agency of the audience.

Scholars criticising the manner in which the audience has been understood in securitisation theory have pointed at instances in which the audience has played a key role in providing security. For example, when declaring a war, the securitising actor needs to frame another country as a security threat. According to the Copenhagen School, this is done to gain audience support, but it is also done with the aim of mobilising the population for military conscription.⁷⁹ In this example, the audience is both understood as the actor accepting the issue as a security threat, legitimising the extraordinary measure of war, and as the actor needed to realise this measure. From this perspective, the audience is understood as a key actor in the securitisation process, with agency to not only accept the issue as a threat but also to provide security through countering the threat.⁸⁰ In practice, this means that the audience is playing a key role in security through participating in the actions that are employed to counter threats.

Based on the criticism raised against the Copenhagen School's perception of the audience, this study reconceptualises the audience. The audience is here understood as the individual reading the brochures. The individuals are, in turn, understood as active agents of security.

4.1.2. Securitisation Beyond Speech Acts

According to the Copenhagen School, at the core of the securitisation process is the speech act constructing an existential threat requiring urgent and extraordinary action. However, in this study, the securitisation process is understood to be constructed and communicated through both written text and visual elements. In order to study the visual aspects of the securitisation process, this study seeks to expand securitisation beyond speech acts.

⁷⁶ Sjöstedt 2020: 36.

⁷⁷ A. Côté. Agents without agency: Assessing the role of the audience in securitization theory. *Security Dialogue* 47(6). (2016): 544.

⁷⁸ S. Léonard. & C. Kaunert. Reconceptualizing the audience in securitisation theory. In: T. Balzacq (ed.) *Securitization Theory: How Security Problems Emerge and Dissolve*. (Routledge 2011): 58.

⁷⁹ P. Roe. Actor, Audience(s) and Emergency Measures: Securitisation and the UK's Decision to Invade Iraq. *Security Dialogue* 38(6). (2008): 624.

⁸⁰ Côté 2016: 543.

Public communication is no longer only expressed through words, sentences, and language, but may also include images, video footage, illustrations, or digital media. Political communication is thus increasingly expressed through visual elements.⁸¹ In terms of securitisation, this is often the case as actors may be limited in pronouncing issues as security threats, for example due to the risk of aggravating a threat.⁸² Scholars have therefore argued that the one-sided focus on language in securitisation theory overlooks situations where security cannot be verbalised through speech.⁸³ Visuals are thus increasingly contributing to securitisation processes.⁸⁴ Consequently, the construction of security is not only reliant on the use of language, since a threat may also be expressed through a visual symbol.⁸⁵ The construction of a security threat might thus not be expressed vocally through a speech act, but also silently through images, videos, or illustrations.⁸⁶ Visuals are thus directly linked to speech and also contribute to processes of securitisation.⁸⁷

Based on the assumption that securitisation may be expressed through a variety of modes beyond written or spoken words, this study seeks to include visuals in its use of securitisation theory. Particular focus will be on how the individual's role and responsibility is represented through the visuals.

4.1.3. From Theory to Practice

The present study aims at utilising securitisation theory to identify which issues have been constructed as security threats in the informational crisis preparedness brochures distributed by the Swedish government since 1943. Particular attention will be paid to how the individual's role and responsibility in countering and combating these threats has been constructed. This section will outline the operationalisation of the securitisation theory.

The main focus for this study will be how the individual's role and responsibility is constructed in the brochures. However, since the Copenhagen School did not explicitly include the individual as a unit of analysis, this study will add the individual as an analytical unit, replacing the unit of the audience in the traditional Copenhagen School. It is important to note is that the analytical focus will be on the theoretical expectations that have been placed onto the individual, and not the individual's actual behaviour in practice. It is also important to note that this study does not aim to answer the question of whether the securitisation process has been accepted by the audience, only the construction of the threats and the individual.

⁸¹ Williams 2003: 524.

⁸² L. Hansen. The Little Mermaid's Silent Security Dilemma and the Absence of Gender in the Copenhagen School. *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 29(2). (2000): 294.

⁸³ Hansen 2000: 294.

⁸⁴ D. Campbell. & M. J. Shapiro. Guest Editors' Introduction. *Security Dialogue* 38(2). (2007): 132.

⁸⁵ F. Möller. Photographic Interventions in Post-9/11 Security Policy. *Security Dialogue* 38(2). (2007): 180; W. J. T. Mitchell. *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation*. (University of Chicago Press: 1994): 160.

⁸⁶ Williams 2003: 524.

⁸⁷ Williams 2003: 527.

The table below illustrates which aspects of securitisation theory will be applied in this study and the questions that will guide the analysis.

<i>Analytical Unit</i>		<i>Analytical Question</i>
<i>Securitising Actor</i>	The actor constructing the security threat. The state or government office, agency, or committee responsible for producing and distributing the brochure.	How does the securitising actor position itself in relation to the individual, and how is the relationship between the securitising actor and the individual constructed?
<i>Securitising Move</i>	How the issue is being constructed as a security threat through language, words, sentences, images, visuals, illustrations etc.	What words, sentences, images, and illustrations are being used to construct the issue as a security threat, and how are they being used?
<i>Referent Object</i>	The individual, group, or community understood to be under threat.	Who is the referent object, and how are they described and visualised?
<i>The Individual</i>	Understood as the intended audience for the brochures.	How is the individual's role and responsibility described and visualised?

Table 1. Securitisation Theory

As presented by the table above, the analytical focus will be on the securitising actor, the securitising move, the referent object, and the individual. The analysis will thus first focus on how the securitising actor has constructed security threats through securitising moves, including both language and visuals. The securitising actor is expected to construct issues as potential security threats through a strategic use of words, sentences, images, and illustrations. The securitising actor is also expected to construct a relationship between itself and the individual, and the analysis will pay attention to how this relationship is constructed. Finally, the analysis will take into consideration how the individual's role and responsibility in preparing for and countering the constructed security threats has been communicated.

In summary, this study will use securitisation theory to examine how the Swedish government informational brochures have constructed security threats and the individual's role and responsibility in preparing for and countering them. It analyses both the textual and visual securitisation and considers the state to be the securitising actor, the individual as the audience and the referent object as either the state, the individual, or both.

5. Research Design

This section will present the research design for the study. The study will combine securitisation theory and a multimodal discourse analysis to study six informational crisis preparedness brochures produced and distributed by the Swedish government between 1943 and 2024. The analysis will examine both written language and visuals.

5.1. Material

This section will present the chosen material for the study and the considerations that have been made in the choice of material.

5.1.1. ‘In Case of Crisis or War’ Brochures 1943–2024

For the purposes of this study, many different types of material concerning crisis preparedness communication could be utilised. However, considering that the aim of this study is to understand how the individual’s role and responsibility is constructed and communicated, the material needs to be communicated to the individuals. The crisis preparedness brochures titled *In Case of Crisis or War* have been produced by the Swedish government between 1943 and 2024. The material will consist of the following six brochures:

<i>Title</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Author</i>
<i>Om kriget kommer</i>	1943	Statens Informationsstyrelse
<i>Om kriget kommer</i>	1952	Kungliga Civilförsvarsstyrelsen
<i>Om kriget kommer</i>	1961	Kungliga Inrikesdepartementet
<i>Om kriget kommer</i>	1987	Styrelsen för psykologiskt försvar
<i>Om krisen eller kriget kommer</i>	2018	Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap
<i>Om krisen eller kriget kommer</i>	2024	Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap

Table 2. Material

The crisis preparedness brochures constitute a very clear example of how issues surrounding total defence and crisis preparedness has been constructed and communicated to the population in Sweden. The fact that the brochures have been distributed to all Swedish households means that the communication has been targeted directly to individual residents. They aim at informing the residents on the course of action in case of a crisis or war. The brochures thus constitute appropriate material for this study.

The brochures will thus enable an analysis of how the individual in Swedish total defence has been constructed. However, they will not be able to answer the question of how this communication has been received and interpreted by the population. This will not constitute an issue, however, since the aim of the study is only to examine how the individual has been constructed, and not their response to this construction.

5.2. Method

Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde (1998) argued that “[t]he way to study securitization is to study discourse”.⁸⁸ With this, they meant that in order to understand securitisation, the researcher needs to study the discursive process in which a security threat is constructed. This study will therefore utilise a discourse analysis method. Considering that this study aims at examining both written text and visuals in the material, the discourse analysis will be multimodal.

5.2.1. Multimodal Discourse Analysis

A discourse is commonly understood as the use of language, spoken language, or ways of speaking.⁸⁹ Researchers analysing discourses place particular emphasis on who uses language, how it is used, as well as why and when.⁹⁰ Examining these aspects of a discourse allows an analysis of how social, political, and cultural foundations of language contribute to shaping and reflecting society as well as individuals’ interactions within society.⁹¹ Discourse is thus the manner in which language is used to assign meaning to reality, and a discourse analysis can uncover how this reality is interpreted. While traditional discourse analysts have viewed language as the primary and most powerful mode of communication, multimodal scholars argue that communication rarely occurs through language alone.⁹²

Multimodal discourse analysis emerged in the 1990s from a growing dissatisfaction among discourse scholars who perceived the focus on language to be analytically limiting.⁹³ Building on Halliday’s 1970s view of language as a social semiotic system, scholars have worked to expand the field of discourse analysis in order to examine how meaning may be constructed through modes of communication beyond language.⁹⁴ According to these scholars, communication may be done through many different modes, by talking, writing, gesturing as well as drawing, photographing, and even through the way we dress.⁹⁵ In many instances, language may not even be an available form of communication. Analysing written or spoken statements to understand how reality is constructed and communicated is thus not enough. If the researcher wants to study how meaning is constructed through discourse, they need to examine all modalities being used.⁹⁶

⁸⁸ Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde 1998: 25.

⁸⁹ T. van Dijk, The Study of Discourse. In: T. van Dijk (ed.) *Discourse as Structure and Process*. (Sage Publications 1997): 1.

⁹⁰ van Dijk 1997: 2.

⁹¹ A. Jaworski. & N. Coupland. Perspectives on Discourse Analysis. In: A. Jaworski. & N. Coupland (eds.) *The Discourse Reader*. (Routledge 1999): 3.

⁹² Jewitt, Bezemer & O’Halloran 2025: 12.

⁹³ C. Jewitt., J. Bezemer. & K. O’Halloran. *Introducing Multimodality*. (Routledge 2025): 47.

⁹⁴ Jewitt, Bezemer & O’Halloran 2025: 23, 45.

⁹⁵ R. Scollon. Modes and Modality: The multimodal shaping of reality in public discourse. In: A. Jaworski. & N. Coupland (eds.) *The Discourse Reader*. (Routledge 2014): 104.

⁹⁶ Jewitt, Bezemer & O’Halloran 2025: 45.

Within multimodal discourse analysis, there exists a range of different concepts and terms. The term multimodality refers to how different modes can contribute to constructing something as the truth.⁹⁷ This differs from traditional discourse study, which only views modality as the manner in which meaning is constructed through a written or spoken statement.⁹⁸ Multimodality, however, recognises that a public document may consist of text that appears with images, or that a political speech may appear with bodily gestures or facial expressions.⁹⁹ In such instances, multiple modalities are contributing to assigning meaning to something constructing it as the truth. Different communication forms are thus defined as modalities.

In practice, a multimodal discourse analysis examines how different modalities work together to construct meaning and communicate something as the truth.¹⁰⁰ The most important aspect of a multimodal discourse analysis is therefore the relationship between different modalities. This relationship can be understood as the way in which modalities are interacting and are connected to each other. The glue that links different modalities together is defined as cohesive devices.¹⁰¹ In textual modalities, these devices may be the choice of words, how the words are positioned, and whether the words are highlighted or written in a certain colour.¹⁰² In visual modalities, the devices may be how an image is placed, which aspects of the image that are meant to attract attention, or which colours are used to emphasise something within the image.¹⁰³ The cohesive devices are thus what connects the modalities together in order to assign meaning to things, represent something as the truth, and create the multimodal whole. Different modalities, such as texts, speeches, and images are thus interacting to create a discourse. They are linked through cohesive devices in order to present a coherent message.

5.3. Operationalisation

This section will describe the methodological operationalisation of the study. The analysis will first examine the textual discourse and then examine the visual discourse.

5.3.1. Analysing the Textual Discourse

The study of the text in the brochures will be done through a lexical analysis, as described by Machin and Mayr's (2012). In simple terms, a lexical analysis focuses on which words are used and how.¹⁰⁴ It is thus very similar to a traditional discourse analysis, which focuses on how

⁹⁷ Machin & van Leeuwen 2014: 180.

⁹⁸ Scollon 2014: 105.

⁹⁹ Jewitt, Bezemer & O'Halloran 2025: 2.

¹⁰⁰ Machin & van Leeuwen 2014: 180.

¹⁰¹ Y. Liu. & K. L. O'Halloran. Intersemiotic Texture: Analyzing Cohesive Devices Between Language and Images. *Social Semiotics* 19:4 (2009): 369.

¹⁰² D. Machin. & A. Mayr. *How To Do Critical Discourse Analysis: A Multimodal Introduction*. (Sage 2012): 39.

¹⁰³ Kress & van Leeuwen 2006: 177.

¹⁰⁴ Machin & Mayr 2012: 30.

language is used to shape how we talk about societal phenomenon and thus contributing to a discourse.

Different lexical choices, i.e. choices of words used, may symbolise different discourses and constitute expressions of certain values and identities.¹⁰⁵ The expression of certain values and identities may also be an attempt to influence feelings or encourage action in the reader, for example through choosing words that may resonate with the reader.¹⁰⁶ In terms of securitisation, certain words may be used by the securitising actor in order for the securitising move to be accepted by the audience. In the textual analysis of the brochures, the focus will be on which words are used and what explicit or implicit meaning underlies this choice of words. The main objective of analysing the chosen words is to uncover meaning in the texts, both explicit and implicit.¹⁰⁷

The first element of a lexical analysis is identifying *word connotations*. The use of certain words carry certain associations and connotations. For example, referring to ‘family’ or ‘home’ might connote something safe, stable, or worth protecting.¹⁰⁸ In this part of the analysis, the focus is on which words are used, how they are used, and whether there is a predominance of certain words, and what this may symbolise in terms of meaning-making. The use of certain words may also indicate how other words are to be interpreted. For example, in the context of describing something as ‘dynamic’ and ‘forward looking’, one might associate change as something positive, as it relates to being forward looking and dynamic, while stability might be viewed as less favourable.¹⁰⁹ In this study, the word connotation analysis will focus on which words are used in the brochures, how they are used, as well as which words are repeated.

The second element of a lexical analysis is *overlexicalisation*. This is the presence of words repeating in the material.¹¹⁰ Opposite to this is the third element – *suppression*, when a word that is expected to appear instead is absent in the material. Examining the repetition of words allows an analysis of what might be deemed as problematic in the material, while the absent words allows the researcher to identify what is not expressed in the material.¹¹¹ Analysing the overlexicalisation and the suppression will thus provide an understanding of how the government has discursively represented issues as security threats, both through examining what is expressed and what is silent in the brochures.

The final element of a lexical analysis is *structural oppositions*. This is the expression of opposing concepts such as old–young or good–bad. Both words in a structural opposition are not always mentioned, nor is the opposition between them explicitly expressed.¹¹² Therefore,

¹⁰⁵ Machin & Mayr 2012: 30.

¹⁰⁶ Machin & Mayr 2012: 42.

¹⁰⁷ Machin & Mayr 2012: 30.

¹⁰⁸ Machin & Mayr 2012: 32.

¹⁰⁹ Machin & Mayr 2012: 35.

¹¹⁰ Machin & Mayr 2012: 37.

¹¹¹ Machin & Mayr 2012: 39.

¹¹² Machin & Mayr 2012: 39.

this element of the lexical analysis requires interpretation on the researcher's part to determine which opposing words might be underlying the expressed word.

Finally, visual aspects also appear in texts through font choices, colours, line spacing and alignment of texts.¹¹³ This is particularly relevant to the brochures as they are not traditional texts, but a combination of strategically placed text and visuals. The visual aspects of the text itself will thus also be taken into consideration in the study, as the placement of text in alignment with a certain image might be a way to really emphasise the message that is being put across.

5.3.2. Analysing the Visual Discourse

The study of the visuals in the brochures will be done through Kress & van Leeuwen's (2006) concept of compositionality. Compositionality refers to the way in which an image represents people, places, and things as well as the relations between them. It is about how the different parts of an image work together to create meaning.¹¹⁴ Rather than viewing each element of an image separately, compositionality examines how different elements contribute to form a meaningful whole, i.e. how cohesive devices contribute to shaping a coherent whole.

Analytically, compositionality can be broken down into three parts: *information value*, *salience*, and *framing*.¹¹⁵ Information value concerns placement, the way in which elements are placed in the image. Whether elements are placed left or right, top or bottom, centre or margin may affect how viewers interpret the image. Salience concerns what aspects of an image are made to attract attention. For example, an element of an image may stand out because of its size, colour, or shape. Finally, framing concerns the relationship between the elements: how the different elements within the image may be connected or disconnected from each other. When they appear together, this might signal that they belong together, while if they are placed separately, this may symbolise that they do not belong together.¹¹⁶ Finally, in a study of compositionality, the researcher also needs to take into consideration the different *modality markers* that contribute to the composition of a picture.

Modality markers are the elements within a visual that indicates a certain degree of truth or credibility.¹¹⁷ They are used to signal to the reader that something needs to be interpreted as definite or possible. In terms of the securitisation in the brochures, modality markers can be understood as the aspects of the visuals that are used to really emphasise something as a security threat. These markers may be expressed through colour, contextualisation, representation, depth, illumination, and brightness.¹¹⁸

¹¹³ Machin & Mayr 2012: 39.

¹¹⁴ G. Kress & T. van Leeuwen. *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*. (Routledge 2006): 175.

¹¹⁵ Kress & van Leeuwen 2006: 177.

¹¹⁶ Kress & van Leeuwen 2006: 177.

¹¹⁷ Kress & van Leeuwen 2006: 154.

¹¹⁸ Kress & van Leeuwen 2006: 160-162.

The components of compositionality are often discussed in relation to visual images, but are equally as useful to apply to multimodal material consisting of both language and images.¹¹⁹ Compositionality is thus useful for the chosen material in this study.

5.3.3. Analytical Framework

The operationalisation of the study will be conducted through an analytical framework combining the securitisation theory with the multimodal method:

	A	B	C
1		<i>Lexical analysis (word connotation, overlexicalisation, suppression, structural opposites)</i>	<i>Compositionality (information value, salience, framing, modality markers)</i>
2	<i>Securitising actor</i>		
3	<i>Securitising move</i>		
4	<i>Referent object</i>		
5	<i>The Individual</i>		

Table 3. Analytical Framework

As the framework shows, the analysis will consist of a textual analysis and a visual analysis of the chosen aspects of the securitisation process. Four elements of the securitisation process is examined: *the securitising actor*, *the securitising move*, *the referent object*, and *the individual*. The analysis will focus on how cohesive devices have been used in the material to contribute to constructing the securitisation process. The textual analysis, in the framework defined as a lexical analysis, will be conducted through examining four cohesive devices: which associations the chosen words carry (*word connotations*), which words are repeatedly used and which words are absent (*overlexicalisation*, *suppression*), as well as if any opposing concepts can be identified (*structural opposites*). The visual analysis, defined as compositionality, will be conducted through examining four other cohesive devices concerning how the visual aspects of the brochures are composed. It will examine the placement of the images and illustrations (*information value*), what is made to attract attention (*salience*), how the elements of the visuals are connected or disconnected to/from each other (*framing*), and what aspects of the visuals that are really emphasised as being the truth, for example through brightness or colour (*modality markers*).

¹¹⁹ Liu & O'Halloran 2009: 370.

6. Analysis

This section presents the analysis. The presentation is organised thematically according to the categories of securitisation theory that have been examined. The presentation is structured around the following three time periods into which the brochures have been divided: Second World War (1943), Cold War Period (1952, 1961, 1987), and Contemporary Era (2018, 2024).

6.1. Securitising Actor

This section presents the analysis of the securitising actor. The analysis has focused on how the state has constructed its relationship to the individuals.

6.1.1. Second World War (1943)

The first brochure was distributed in 1943, in the midst of the Second World War. During this time period, Sweden upheld a neutral foreign policy approach characterised by military non-alignment and a growing total defence. This meant that Sweden was not directly involved in any armed conflicts or wars, and the government was doing everything in its power to preserve this situation. However, the possibility of the war extending to Sweden continued to remain a potential risk. In the brochure from 1943, the state therefore emphasises the important role that the individual is assigned:

Swedish society and the Swedish people in the event of a hostile attack must resist by all means possible.¹²⁰

It is made clear in the brochure that the individual belongs to a larger community, which is understood as the state of Sweden, and that they need to work together in order to combat any hostilities towards them. The relationship between the state and the individual that arises from this takes the shape of loyalty:

The civilian population has in the strict sense simply to loyally comply with the regulations of the Swedish civil and military authorities and to the best of their ability provide these authorities with all help.¹²¹

In case of an attack against Sweden, the individual is thus expected to help the state. Using words such as ‘loyally’ and ‘comply’ suggests that the individual is expected to be reliable in protecting and defending Sweden, and to do so on the orders of the state. This choice of words

¹²⁰ Statens Informationsstyrelse. *Om kriget kommer*. 1943: 3. [researcher's translation].

¹²¹ Statens Informationsstyrelse. *Om kriget kommer*. 1943: 6. [researcher's translation].

clearly establishes a hierarchical relationship between the state and the individual, where the latter is expected to be of assistance to the former. However, there is an absence of mentioning the state protecting and defending the individual.

The idea of the individual helping others is a reoccurring theme in the brochure. The individual is understood as a person who is primarily expected to help the state in fulfilling their objective of protecting and defending the state. In order to do so, they are required to help each other:

Everyone must be prepared to help neighbours and others.¹²²

The civilian authorities in the area that is in Swedish land shall in all respects be of assistance to the military command and support its work.¹²³

The idea of helping is clearly linked to the understanding of the individual as belonging to a larger community. The manner in which this help and support is described illustrates that long-term, helping each other is done with the ultimate goal of helping the state. The individual's efforts in preparing for war and in potentially participating in armed activities is thus linked directly to the protection of the immediate community, and in a broader perspective, linked to the protection of the country.

In the brochure from 1943, the survival of the state is understood to be dependent on the actions of the individual. The relationship between the state is thus characterised by help, solidarity, and loyalty. There is, however, little to no mention of the state protecting and defending the individual. As such, the relationship between the state and the individual is in 1943 slightly asymmetrical.

6.1.2. Cold War Period (1952, 1961, 1987)

After the end of the Second World War, the Cold War unfolded through rising tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union. During this time, Sweden maintained its military non-alignment and neutral foreign policy, and the principle of total defence was steadfast. The individual's central role of protecting and defending the state also remained.

The second brochure was distributed in 1952, during the early Cold War and at the midst of the Korean War. The brochure from 1952 is introduced with a clarifying statement. The statement reads that the distribution of the brochure does not necessarily mean that the war *is* coming, but rather that *if* the war comes, the individual has already been given the advice and instructions on the expected course of action.¹²⁴ This means that the state, as the securitising actor, is delegating responsibility to protect and defend the country to the individual. The underlying meaning is that the state will not be there to repeat the information and will not be available to

¹²² Statens Informationsstyrelse. *Om kriget kommer*. 1943: 7. [researcher's translation].

¹²³ Statens Informationsstyrelse. *Om kriget kommer*. 1943: 9. [researcher's translation].

¹²⁴ Kungliga Civildödsstyrelsen. *Om kriget kommer* 1952: 2.

assist the individual in taking the actions that need to be taken. The statement thus implies that the state is withdrawing from the task of protecting its residents. Thus, from the very first page of the 1952 brochure, the state is continuing to construct its relationship to the individual as somewhat unbalanced. Responsibility to protect and defend is placed onto the individual and it is made clear that the state may not be available to assist later on in case of an emergency.

Similar to the brochure from 1943, being loyal to the state is viewed as important in 1952 as well. Here, this description appears in connection to the threat of espionage. While describing the threat that espionage constitutes for Swedish national security, the state describes the consequences that may follow for anyone who is not loyal to the state:

Swedish law stipulates very severe punishment even in peace time for anyone who provides information that is detrimental to the nation's defence or public security. [...] A single careless word can cause irreparable harm.¹²⁵

The individual is thus expected to be loyal to the state, an idea that reoccurs in the brochures:

Be loyal to your country.¹²⁶

It is your duty to obey the lawful government and follow its directives.¹²⁷

The expectation of being loyal to the state is, in 1952, fulfilled through being quiet about the information about national security that the individual may possess. This is presented visually in a very unique way¹²⁸:



Image 1. Spy as a spider (1952)

In the image, red and black colours are used to instil a serious impression and perhaps give a dramatic effect to the message. The encouragement to ‘look out’ is also written in a red colour

¹²⁵ Kungliga Civilförsvarsstyrelsen. *Om kriget kommer* 1952: 19. [researcher's translation].

¹²⁶ Kungliga Civilförsvarsstyrelsen. *Om kriget kommer* 1952: 5. [researcher's translation].

¹²⁷ Kungliga Inrikesdepartementet. *Om kriget kommer* 1961: 4. [researcher's translation].

¹²⁸ Kungliga Civilförsvarsstyrelsen. *Om kriget kommer* 1952: 18–19.

to really emphasise the message. The main takeaway is that the individual does not want to get involved in this tangly net and needs to be extra careful in choosing their words when speaking to someone unfamiliar in order to not constitute a potential threat to the state.

The individual is thus expected to be loyal to the state. Additionally, the state is positioning itself as having authority over the individual. This is emphasised when the state describes itself as having control over the individual (and its possessions):

In times of preparedness and war, the total defence may have to use things that you own. [...]. You will receive compensation (money) for this and at the same time, you are helping Sweden.¹²⁹

There are reserves for preparedness and war, but they will go to the total defence.¹³⁰

The individual's efforts are thus linked to the protection of the state. For example, in 1961, the individual is expected to cover the costs for evacuation transport and accommodation. The government and its authorities will help only if necessary.¹³¹ The individual is also encouraged to find out where their closest shelter is, know how to get there, and help their closest family members and neighbours in the event of an evacuation.¹³² In 1987, the individual is continued to be constructed as responsible for their own protection and security through identifying their closest shelter, knowing how to make a shelter completely safe, protecting themselves from external attacks, and evacuating in case their home becomes unsafe.¹³³ These actions are also visualised through illustrations, showing the step-by-step instructions of the measures.

During the Cold War Era, the individual is protecting the state, but the state is not necessarily protecting the individual. However, in 1987, there are instances where the state does take on this role and responsibility:

The municipality where you arrive will help you with food and clothing. If there is a war, respiratory protective equipment will be distributed.¹³⁴

The military defence and emergency services will provide care units.¹³⁵

The state is thus, in 1987, presented as an actor that assumes responsibility for providing food, clothing, and care to the individual. At the same time, the state presents the individual as responsible for their own security. It thus seems as though the individual is the primary security actor responsible for their own safety, and that the state is willing to help only if necessary.

¹²⁹ Styrelsen för psykologiskt försvar. *Om kriget kommer*. 1987: 25. [researcher's translation].

¹³⁰ Styrelsen för psykologiskt försvar. *Om kriget kommer*. 1987: 23. [researcher's translation].

¹³¹ Kungliga Inrikesdepartementet. *Om kriget kommer* 1961: 24.

¹³² Kungliga Inrikesdepartementet. *Om kriget kommer* 1961: 27.

¹³³ Styrelsen för psykologiskt försvar. *Om kriget kommer*. 1987: 5, 9, 10.

¹³⁴ Styrelsen för psykologiskt försvar. *Om kriget kommer*. 1987: 12. [researcher's translation].

¹³⁵ Styrelsen för psykologiskt försvar. *Om kriget kommer*. 1987: 22. [researcher's translation].

During the Cold War, the individual is continued to be constructed as responsible for their own protection. The state remains its strategy of delegating responsibility for preparedness and defence actions to the individual. The relationship that appears is one characterised by loyalty. Similar to in 1943, this loyalty seems rather one-sided, as there are very few mentions of the state expressing that it will protect the individual.

6.1.3. Contemporary Era (2018, 2024)

After the Berlin Wall fell and the Cold War was officially over, Swedish foreign policy underwent significant changes. With the threat of the Soviet Union seemingly gone, Sweden aligned itself with Western states, joined the EU and later became a member of NATO. During this contemporary period, the state is continuing to construct itself as part of the community to which the individual belongs:

We must be able to resist different kinds of attacks on our country.¹³⁶

To resist the threats, we need to stick together and take responsibility for our country.¹³⁷

Together, we make Sweden stronger.¹³⁸

Using the words ‘we’ and ‘our’ indicates that the state views itself as part of the individual’s community. What differs from previous brochures is the indication that the state will help the individual in its defence efforts. This shift in focus may be due to the fact that with the absence of war as a genuine threat to national security, the state is able to focus on protecting the individuals from other issues rather than being preoccupied with preparing for war. This is exemplified in the illustrations, as the state is not as focused on portraying war. Rather, the brochures contain significantly more peaceful illustrations than previously.¹³⁹

¹³⁶ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2018: 12. [researcher’s translation].

¹³⁷ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2024: 3. [researcher’s translation].

¹³⁸ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2024: 6. [researcher’s translation].

¹³⁹ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2024: 6.



Tillsammans stärker vi Sverige

I kris och krig behöver vi alla bidra till Sveriges motståndskraft.

Image 2. Community (2024)

Thus far, the brochures of 2018 and 2024 seem to be very different from the previous brochures. The state is positioning itself as belonging to the individual's community, and they are portrayed as working together in order to stay resilient. The state is also describing that their offices, agencies, and authorities do play an important and valuable role in protecting individuals in case a crisis breaks out:

Government agencies, counties and regions, municipalities, companies, and organisations are responsible for the functioning of society.¹⁴⁰

Authorities, regions, and municipalities have a big responsibility when our security is threatened.¹⁴¹

The state is thus recognising that they have a responsibility to protect the individual. At the same time, the state is also ensuring that the individual understands their role in a crisis:

[...] the responsibility for our country's security and safety is shared by everyone residing here.¹⁴²

If something serious happens, help will first reach those who need it most. Most of us need to take care of ourselves for at least a week.¹⁴³

The state is thus recognising that government agencies, regions, and municipalities play important roles in the total defence efforts. This may be because with the absence of war during this era, the state is able to direct energy onto its citizens and not protecting the borders of the

¹⁴⁰ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2018: 3. [researcher's translation].

¹⁴¹ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2024: 6. [researcher's translation].

¹⁴² Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2018: 3. [researcher's translation].

¹⁴³ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2024: 6. [researcher's translation].

country. At the same time, the state is also ensuring that the individual is aware of their responsibility in case a crisis does occur. This message reoccurs in the brochures:

Your municipality is responsible for ensuring that elder care, water supply, emergency services, and schools continue to function even during a crisis. [But] you as a private person also have a responsibility.¹⁴⁴

The state is thus balancing the role of themselves as a security provider with the expectation that the individual will fend for themselves in a crisis. In addition, the state is also ensuring that it is still viewed as the superior authority:

[...] during times of heightened preparedness, other laws may also be used. For example, the state can take over private property that is particularly important for total defence.¹⁴⁵

Similar to the previous brochures, the relationship between the state and the individual is portrayed as the latter being subordinate to the former. However, the relationship during this time period is also portrayed in a significantly more equal manner, as the state is explicitly taking responsibility for the security and safety of the individual.

6.2. Securitising Move and Referent Object

This section presents the analysis of how the state has conducted its securitising moves and who the referent object is. These categories are presented together, since the securitising move requires referring to the referent object. It focuses on which issues have been constructed as security threats, particularly on the choice of words and the ways in which images and illustrations have been used, and who is referred to as the referent object.

6.2.1. Second World War (1943)

The ongoing war is present throughout the entire first brochure from 1943. In the brochure, Sweden is positioning itself as standing outside the conflict, while at the same time also emphasising the need of preparedness in case it reaches Swedish territory. The war is thus in the brochure understood as constituting a potential threat to Swedish security. It is described as having the potential to affect anyone in any societal sector:

¹⁴⁴ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2018: 5. [researcher's translation].

¹⁴⁵ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2018: 13. [researcher's translation].

The modern war is not only a measurement of military forces. It affects everything and everyone.¹⁴⁶

The quote above illustrates how the war is understood as all-encompassing, meaning that it does not only risk affecting the military sector, but rather that the entire society and all of its sectors are at risk. The referent object is thus society at large, which includes the state and its residents. In order to highlight the consequences of a potential war, the state is warning the Swedish population of the risk of occupation:

In the event of war, however, it must be expected that certain areas may be occupied by the enemy for a shorter or longer period of time.¹⁴⁷

The issues that are being constructed as security threats in 1943 is thus the risk of war and the consequences of war, which includes occupation. The security threats of this time are thus somewhat limited, which is likely due to attention being largely focused on the ongoing war. At the very beginning of the brochure, the protection of the state is described as the ultimate objective. This indicates that the referent object is the state. But it is not only the state that requires protection, it is also the values associated with it:

Sweden's government and the people of Sweden are united in their determination to safeguard their freedom and independence of the kingdom.¹⁴⁸

The state is thus described as united with the population of Sweden to protect the country. It is made clear that the referent object is not only the country itself, comprised of territory marked by borders, but also the values of freedom and independence that is understood to be associated with the country. Using the words 'freedom' and 'independence' may also be done with the aim of illustrating to the reader what they risk losing in case the security threat materialises. The state also encourages the individual to defend their country against these threats.¹⁴⁹ The war is thus understood as imminent and as an existential threat not only to the residents of Sweden, but also as an existential threat to the values of Sweden, and this requires preparedness.

The words used in the securitising moves from 1943 draw connotations to a sense of collective belonging and community. This community is understood to be Sweden and its territory as well as the values associated with it. The defence of the country is thus not only expressed in traditional terms, but also through normative values. In addition, the subsequent use of words such as "the Swedish people"¹⁵⁰ further emphasises the message about a unified people in a collective belonging. Consequently, this community is deemed as worthy of protection from external threats. Taken together, the securitising move is done through identifying with the individual, constructing a community worth protecting, and describing that the threat of war is existential since it risks affecting all sectors of society.

¹⁴⁶ Statens Informationsstyrelse. *Om kriget kommer*. 1943: 2. [researcher's translation].

¹⁴⁷ Statens Informationsstyrelse. *Om kriget kommer*. 1943: 8. [researcher's translation].

¹⁴⁸ Statens Informationsstyrelse. *Om kriget kommer*. 1943: 2. [researcher's translation].

¹⁴⁹ Statens Informationsstyrelse. *Om kriget kommer*. 1943: 12.

¹⁵⁰ Statens Informationsstyrelse. *Om kriget kommer*. 1943: 3.

6.2.2. Cold War Period (1952, 1961, 1987)

In 1952, the Second World War had formally ended seven years prior. Despite this, the security threat in this brochure is still described as the risk of war. This is not entirely unsurprising, however, since this era constituted the beginning of the Cold War, marked by continued political and military tensions.

The continued political and military tensions were in the brochures understood as the source of the security threat of war. The clearest example of this appears in the brochure from 1961. This brochure begins with a message signed by the Prime Minister. It is directed at the individual and formatted in a cursive font to appear almost as a letter from the Prime Minister to its constituents. The message emphasised in this letter is that while Sweden is hopeful that peace will prevail, preparedness maintains key in ensuring national security:

Our hope is that a truce between the great powers will be possible. [...]. As long as the international tensions exist, however, the threat to peace remains. Our country must therefore be prepared for the worst to happen – that war comes.¹⁵¹

The above quote summarises the overall message expressed in all three brochures from the Cold War period. The security threat is framed as tension between the great powers, and Sweden is positioning itself as standing outside this conflict. Protection of the state is therefore understood as the ultimate objective in this insecure geopolitical situation. But it is not only the physical aspects of the state that requires protection, it is also the values associated with it:

Sweden's government and the people of Sweden stand united in the determination to safeguard the freedom and independence of the kingdom.¹⁵²

The referent object is thus Sweden and its freedom and independence. Freedom and independence are here understood as embedded in Sweden's identity. The underlying meaning is that someone or something is trying to take this away. This theme is brought into the brochure from 1961 and 1987 as well:

The people of Sweden are united in their determination to safeguard the country's neutrality and independence.¹⁵³

We all want Sweden to be free and independent.¹⁵⁴

Throughout the brochures, the potential aggressor or initiator of war is described as an actor intending to undermine Sweden's freedom and independence. This implies that the aggressor constitutes the opposite of these values. The threat of war is thus not only a threat against

¹⁵¹ Kungliga Inrikesdepartementet. *Om kriget kommer* 1961: 1. [researcher's translation].

¹⁵² Kungliga Civilförsvarsstyrelsen. *Om kriget kommer* 1952: 3. [researcher's translation].

¹⁵³ Kungliga Inrikesdepartementet. *Om kriget kommer* 1961: 1. [researcher's translation].

¹⁵⁴ Styrelsen för psykologiskt försvar. *Om kriget kommer*. 1987: 2. [researcher's translation].

Sweden and its territory and borders, but also against the principles that are understood to constitute key components of Sweden. The situation is further described as time-sensitive:

We must count on [the fact] that war may come with no prior warning.¹⁵⁵

An attack might happen so fast that there is no time to set the alarm off.¹⁵⁶

This construction of the threat as sudden implies a sense of urgency, which may contribute to a sense of worry. To further underline this sense of worry, in 1952, the state also makes it clear that if a war breaks out, it is a matter of life or death:

The war has begun – now it is a matter of life.¹⁵⁷

Even though the word ‘death’ is not explicitly articulated, this choice of words does imply that death is a potential consequence of war. The previous sense of worry might now shift into a feeling of fear within the person reading the brochure. The state thus appeals to the readers’ emotions in order to construct war as something sudden and as a deadly.

The security threat of war is thus constructed as a full-scale war that may appear suddenly without warning and that may lead to death. At the same time, war is constructed as something that not only constitutes a threat to the individuals residing in Sweden, but also as a threat to Sweden’s independence and freedom. The threat is not only described through the use of language but also visualised through illustrations. One example is the cover page of the brochure from 1952, which contains illustrations of fighter jets and warships. Similar illustrations reoccur in this brochure¹⁵⁸:

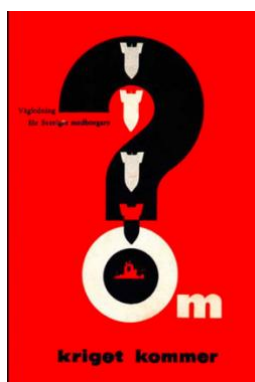


Image 3. Cover page (1952)



Image 4. Illustrations of the war (1952)

Beyond war itself, the brochures from this time frame other issues as security threats, many of which are closely linked to the threat of war. For example, the brochure from 1952 describes modern warfare as a reckless form of conflict aimed at not only destroying Sweden’s defence

¹⁵⁵ Kungliga Civilförsvarsstyrelsen. *Om kriget kommer* 1961: 7. [researcher's translation].

¹⁵⁶ Styrelsen för psykologiskt försvar. *Om kriget kommer*. 1987: 7. [researcher's translation].

¹⁵⁷ Kungliga Civilförsvarsstyrelsen. *Om kriget kommer* 1952: 10. [researcher's translation].

¹⁵⁸ Kungliga Civilförsvarsstyrelsen. *Om kriget kommer* 1952: 10.

efforts, but also as intended to spread confusion among the population and discourage them through false rumours and propaganda.¹⁵⁹ Propaganda is thus constructed as a potential security threat:

Counter the enemy's propaganda. It aims to break our resilience, and it works through using all possible means.¹⁶⁰

When further describing the threat of psychological warfare, the brochures continues to use the word 'enemy':

Be on your guard against the enemy's propaganda.¹⁶¹

The enemy wants to break our willingness to defend not only by armed forces but also through psychological warfare.¹⁶²

In war, the enemy will not only use weapons against us. He will also try to deceive us.¹⁶³

Beyond misinformation and propaganda, another security threat that is constructed in relation to the enemy is the risk of espionage:

Already in peace time, spies seek to explore as much as they are able to [...]. Expect that an enemy will spy even more during a state of war.¹⁶⁴

Already in peace time, enemies try to investigate our total defence.¹⁶⁵

Choosing to use the word 'enemy' in this manner implies that there exists something *other* out there, different and dangerous from what can be understood as 'we' or 'us'. In creating a we-versus-them narrative, the state is identifying with the audience in its securitising move. In addition, describing the threat of spies by using the word 'already' indicates that the security threat is already present, which indicates a sense of urgency. What is interesting about the threat of espionage is also that the individual itself is being constructed into a potential threat:

The disclosure of defence secrets can cost us great losses. [...] Espionage is treason, which may result in a death sentence.¹⁶⁶

If someone tells them about the defence, it may hurt Sweden and everyone residing here very badly.¹⁶⁷

¹⁵⁹ Kungliga Civilförsvarsstyrelsen. *Om kriget kommer* 1952: 4.

¹⁶⁰ Kungliga Civilförsvarsstyrelsen. *Om kriget kommer* 1952: 20. [researcher's translation].

¹⁶¹ Kungliga Civilförsvarsstyrelsen. *Om kriget kommer* 1952: 18. [researcher's translation].

¹⁶² Kungliga Inrikesdepartementet. *Om kriget kommer* 1961: 12 [researcher's translation].

¹⁶³ Styrelsen för psykologiskt försvar. *Om kriget kommer*. 1987: 31. [researcher's translation].

¹⁶⁴ Kungliga Civilförsvarsstyrelsen. *Om kriget kommer* 1952: 18. [researcher's translation].

¹⁶⁵ Styrelsen för psykologiskt försvar. *Om kriget kommer*. 1987: 31. [researcher's translation].

¹⁶⁶ Kungliga Inrikesdepartementet. *Om kriget kommer* 1961: 14–15. [researcher's translation].

¹⁶⁷ Styrelsen för psykologiskt försvar. *Om kriget kommer*. 1987: 31. [researcher's translation].

The securitising move is here conducted through describing the individual may constitute a threat to the state by sharing information to individuals or groups who are not entitled to it. If they are not careful, the individual may thus constitute a threat to national security.

The securitisation of war during the Cold War period were done mainly through emphasising the totality of the threats, but also through establishing a community, understood to be Sweden and its population, which needs to stay together in order to face the threat of the enemy. The main referent object is Sweden as a state and as a country, which is understood to embed the values of freedom, independence, and neutrality.

6.2.3. Contemporary Era (2018, 2024)

After the end of the Cold War, armed conflict began to be understood as something of the past. Consequently, other issues arose on the agenda as security threats, some which were not always easily defined. The brochure of 2018 therefore begins by asking the reader a question:

What would you do if your everyday life was turned upside down?¹⁶⁸

Introducing the brochure in this manner illustrates that the potential security threats will affect life as we know it. It also indicates that there are multiple potential threats that may affect Sweden's security. This choice of words is thus seemingly a reflection of the variety of security issues that may become security threats during this time. Subsequently, the issues being constructed into security threats in 2018 range from climate change, food scarcity, cyber-attacks and so on.¹⁶⁹ There are, however, mentions of war as a security threat, but this is limited to only one page, and it seems as if the risk of war is not understood as limited only to traditional armed conflict:

Possible attacks may be:

- Cyber-attacks that knock out important systems.
- Sabotage of infrastructure (for example roads, bridges, airports, railways, power lines, and nuclear power plants).
- Terrorist attacks that affect many people or important businesses
- Attempts to influence Swedish decision-makers or residents.
- Disruption of transport that causes shortages of food and other goods.
- Military attacks, such as airstrikes, missile attacks or other acts of war.¹⁷⁰

Military attacks appear as the final category of attacks on the list. It thus appears as if the security threat of war has diminished significantly in 2018. Instead, the individual needs to

¹⁶⁸ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2018: 4. [researcher's translation].

¹⁶⁹ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2018: 4.

¹⁷⁰ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2018: 12. [researcher's translation].

assume responsibility over other threats. Aside from the list above, the only threats that are explicitly mentioned are the spread of disinformation and the potential risk of a terror attack, threats which the individual is expected to prepare for. Overall, however, the potential threats that may arise seem to be dependent on the environment and context in which the individual resides in:

Think about what risks may affect you in your local area.¹⁷¹

The individual is thus expected to prepare for a variety of security threats, while also considering which threats are most likely to affect the area in which they live in. In 2018, there is thus a range of security threats that risk affecting the individual's everyday life and that the individual needs to prepare for. War is only mentioned briefly, and there seems to be a higher risk of cyber-attacks and terror attacks than armed conflict. In 2024, however, this changes, as the very first page of the brochure from 2024 describes war as the ultimate threat to Sweden:

The military threat against Sweden has increased and we must be prepared for the worst – an armed attack. [...] There are other ways than military aggression to affect or hurt our country, for example cyber-attacks, disinformation campaigns, terrorism and sabotage.¹⁷²

The situation thus seems to have changed significantly in 2024. While cyber-attacks, disinformation campaigns, terrorism, and sabotage are described as potential security threats, the risk of war is mentioned first. This indicates that war has returned as a major security threat to Sweden. The state is also in the brochure from 2024 referring to nuclear weapons and bombs, radioactive waste, chemical and biological weapons, which instils a sense of fear and puts weight on the situation.¹⁷³ Describing disinformation campaigns as occurring on a daily basis indicates that psychological warfare is already happening, which further instils a sense of urgency and a need to be vigilant.¹⁷⁴

The main difference between the security threats of this era is that in 2018, war is understood as not likely to affect Sweden, while in 2024, it is constructed as the main security threat. This is evident when examining the illustrations in the respective brochures, as the brochure from 2018 mostly includes illustrations of civil defence efforts during peace time, while 2024 brochure depicts a soldier on the cover page.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2018: 5. [researcher's translation].

¹⁷² Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2024: 5. [researcher's translation].

¹⁷³ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2024: 12.

¹⁷⁴ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2024: 22.

¹⁷⁵ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2018: 4.



Image 5. Civil defence (2018)



Image 6. Military defence (2024)

The brochures from 2018 and 2024 thus seem to emphasise civil and military defence to varying degrees. What the two brochures have in common, however, both with each other and with previous brochures, is the referent object:

Although Sweden is safer than many other countries, there are threats to our security and independence. Peace, freedom, and democracy are values that we must protect and strengthen every day.¹⁷⁶

Sweden's collective defence efforts work to protect and defend the country, our freedom, and the right to live as we choose.¹⁷⁷

We cannot take our freedom for granted.¹⁷⁸

Once again, the referent object worth protecting is not only Sweden but also the values of independence, peace, freedom, and democracy that are understood to be embedded in Sweden's identity. In 2024, the referent object is extended further to also include other allied countries in NATO:

Sweden is part of the NATO defence alliance. [...] If a NATO member country is attacked, the other countries in the alliance will contribute to the defence.¹⁷⁹

The threats during the contemporary era are thus mainly focused on threats outside the military sector. In 2018 and 2024, the security threats thus vary from armed military conflict to cyber-attacks and terrorism, sabotage and psychological warfare. It also appears as if these threats may arise both knowingly by a malicious actor wanting to hurt Sweden, or accidentally as the result of an incident. Either way, the individuals are instilled that they need to remain prepared. The referent object, however, continues to be Sweden, its values and norms, as well as the territories of other NATO allies.

¹⁷⁶ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2018: 3. [researcher's translation].

¹⁷⁷ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2018: 8. [researcher's translation].

¹⁷⁸ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2024: 5. [researcher's translation].

¹⁷⁹ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2024: 7. [researcher's translation].

6.3. The Individual

In this section, the analysis of the individual's role and responsibility will be presented. The focus will be on how the individual's role has been understood, how it has changed, and which responsibility has been placed onto the individual in times of crisis or war.

6.3.1. Second World War (1943)

In 1943, the main security threat is constructed as a potential war reaching Sweden. It is understood as imminent due to the ongoing Second World War, which has moved geographically closer to Sweden. In an effort to prepare the country for a potential war, the Swedish government and state are placing their citizens at the forefront of the country's total defence. Every individual's efforts are therefore described as important and valuable:

Every Swede must be clear in advance about their position and task.¹⁸⁰

The entire population of Sweden is thus included in the description of who needs to participate in the total defence efforts. The population is understood as united in standing against any potential attack against their country, and the individual's role in preparing for and countering a potential armed aggression is explicitly described as important. Considering the totality of the potential war, the individuals' responsibility is further described as comprised of both civil defence efforts, such as preparedness or local community engagement, and through military defence efforts, such as enlisting in the Swedish Armed Forces:

it requires the deployment of all forces and participation of all citizens, men and women, young and old, armed and non-armed, military and civilians, authorities and individuals.¹⁸¹

Efforts from each individual in Sweden is thus described as necessary in order to protect the country from external threats. The structural opposites – young and old, men and women etc. – are here explicitly expressed, and this seems to be done in order to emphasise that no matter the individual's age or gender and regardless of whether they belong to the military or civilian sector, their efforts are considered important. Similar to the securitising moves and the description of the referent object, the message of collective belonging and community is reoccurring in the descriptions of the individuals as well. Mentioning both the authorities and the individuals as part of the total defence efforts, for example, contributes to understanding the defence efforts as something that is to be done together. The individual is thus positioned as part of a collective belonging. The excerpt above is clearly an expression of this community, in which the state and the individual are understood to collaborate in order to achieve the common goal of protecting the country against external threats.

¹⁸⁰ Statens Informationsstyrelse. *Om kriget kommer*. 1943: 2. [researcher's translation].

¹⁸¹ Statens Informationsstyrelse. *Om kriget kommer*. 1943: 2. [researcher's translation].

The brochure from 1943 continues by indicating that individuals are allowed to take on different roles in the country's collective defence effort:

The civilians, i.e. those who do not belong to the armed forces [...] are not deprived of the right to defend their country with arms in hand.¹⁸²

The population of an unoccupied area can voluntarily take up arms to fight the enemy.¹⁸³

The state is making it clear that even if the individual is not enlisted in the Swedish Armed Forces, they are still allowed to use weapons in defending the country. The defence efforts are thus understood to be comprised of civil and military actors, belonging in a community working together to protect and defend the country.

In the brochure from 1943, it is thus made clear that the individual's actions are deemed very important in the country's total defence efforts, regardless of whether they belong to the military or the civilian sector. The different roles that the individuals can take – as conscripted soldiers or as civil volunteers – are also written in a cursive font in order to underline the message¹⁸⁴:

1. Värnpliktiga och krigsfrivilliga

Till *krigsmakten* eller den väpnade styrkan (till skillnad från civilbefolkningen) höra de *värnpliktiga*. vare sig de tillhöra armén, marinen, flygvapnet, hemvärnet, luftbevakningen eller sjövärnsskåren, ävensom de *krigsfrivilliga*, d. v. s. icke-värnpliktiga som frivilligt låta inskriva sig vid krigsmaktens förband.

För den som är **krigsplacerad**¹ — vare sig han är värnpliktig eller krigsfrivillig — gäller vid *krigsutbrott* och vid *beredskapslarm* (se bilaga) den enkla grundregeln:

Image. Individual's role in cursive and bold fonts (1943)

Thus far, the impression is that the individuals are existing and living together in a community and that they need to work together in order to protect this community. The individuals are thus part of a larger collective. From a bigger perspective, this collective community is the state, and the individuals are working to not only protect themselves but also to protect the state.

6.3.2. Cold War Period (1952, 1961, 1987)

As previously shown, during the Cold War, the main security threat continued to be war and the potential consequences of war. The object deemed worthy of protection was Sweden, its territory and borders, as well as the values of freedom, independence, and to some extent also

¹⁸² Statens Informationsstyrelse. *Om kriget kommer*. 1943: 5. [researcher's translation].

¹⁸³ Statens Informationsstyrelse. *Om kriget kommer*. 1943: 6. [researcher's translation].

¹⁸⁴ Statens Informationsstyrelse. *Om kriget kommer*. 1943: 4.

neutrality, that was understood as embodying the country. In the brochures from this time, the individual is continued to be presented as a central actor in both protecting themselves and defending the country. The international tensions and the risk of continued war is thereby understood as something critical, requiring the defence efforts of all individuals:

If someone attacks Sweden, we need to defend ourselves in every way. Everyone residing in Sweden needs to help.¹⁸⁵

In the brochure from 1961, the individual is understood to be able to take on a range and variety of roles in contributing to protecting and defending the country:

Every citizen must be prepared to make his or her contribution to the utmost in the total defence – in the armed forces, civil defence, war production, public supply, health care, at home.¹⁸⁶

It is clear that the responsibility of the individual can be accomplished in different ways, and that the individual is allowed to take on different roles in fulfilling this responsibility. The visual aspects of the brochure from 1961 illustrates this, as it shows Swedish total defence through depicting the military, civil, economic, and psychological defence sectors¹⁸⁷:



Image 7. Total defence (1961)

The key message is that the individual has a central role in the country's defence efforts, regardless of which sector they belong to. This central role of the individual is further exemplified through presenting national defence as dependent on the efforts of the individual:

Resistance must be made consequently and in all situations. This is dependent on you.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁵ Styrelsen för psykologiskt försvar. *Om kriget kommer*. 1987: 2. [researcher's translation].

¹⁸⁶ Kungliga Inrikesdepartementet. *Om kriget kommer* 1961: 1. [researcher's translation].

¹⁸⁷ Kungliga Inrikesdepartementet. *Om kriget kommer* 1961: 6.

¹⁸⁸ Kungliga Civilförsvarsstyrelsen. *Om kriget kommer* 1952: 5. [researcher's translation].

It depends on you – your effort, your determination, your will to survive.¹⁸⁹

The role and responsibility placed onto the individual is thus very substantial and, considering the seriousness of the threat of war, critical. In the brochure from 1952, this responsibility is understood as an obligation which requires the individual to make personal sacrifices.

Every citizen must be prepared to participate in the defence of the kingdom through personal efforts and sacrifices.¹⁹⁰

The idea that the individual is expected to sacrifice, help each other and be loyal to the state are reoccurring themes in the brochures. On the very first page of the brochure from 1961, the individual is encouraged to not only act to protect themselves, but also consider how to best protect their family.¹⁹¹ The importance of helping oneself and one's family is then repeated throughout the entire brochure.¹⁹² Individuals are thus firstly expected to help their community:

Bring family members or neighbours in the car if there is room.¹⁹³

The family should be together, not walk in separate groups!¹⁹⁴

Helping one's family and community is also illustrated in 1961 by depicting a family unit, along with the encouragement to stay with one's family in case of an emergency¹⁹⁵:



Image 8. Family unit (1961)

The idea of helping one's immediate family and community is thus valued as an important aspect of the individual efforts. This immediate community is understood as comprised of family members and neighbours. The use of the word 'help' can be associated with solidarity,

¹⁸⁹ Kungliga Inrikesdepartementet. *Om kriget kommer* 1961: 3. [researcher's translation].

¹⁹⁰ Kungliga Civilförsvarsstyrelsen. *Om kriget kommer* 1952: 3. [researcher's translation].

¹⁹¹ Kungliga Inrikesdepartementet. *Om kriget kommer* 1961: 1.

¹⁹² Kungliga Inrikesdepartementet. *Om kriget kommer* 1961: 22, 27, 29.

¹⁹³ Kungliga Inrikesdepartementet. *Om kriget kommer* 1961: 22. [researcher's translation].

¹⁹⁴ Styrelsen för psykologiskt försvar. *Om kriget kommer*. 1987: 11. [researcher's translation].

¹⁹⁵ Kungliga Inrikesdepartementet. *Om kriget kommer* 1961: 19.

which is the opposite of acting according to self-interest. Thus, the individual is expected to act in solidarity in relation to its immediate community rather than acting selfishly to only help themselves.

In carrying out their duty of protecting their community and defending the country, being calm and fast is described as desirable traits:

When you get to the shelter, be calm and collected. [...] If your community is startled by a bomb attack without an alarm, it is even more important to act fast. [...] If your society is startled by an atomic bomb, extreme speed is of extreme necessity. [...].¹⁹⁶

You need to know: Where is the nearest shelter? How do I get there quickly? [...] Go in quickly – shelters are best. [...] Put on your protective gear quickly. [...] Hurry in as fast as you can.¹⁹⁷

The individual is thus instilled that they need to stay calm if the worst case scenario, a bomb or an atomic bomb, materialises. They are also expected to act fast, be ‘wise’ and ‘act reasonably’.¹⁹⁸ At the same time, the individual should also stay rational and not make any thoughtless decisions:

Don't do anything hasty.¹⁹⁹

The construction of the individual as a calm, efficient, and solidary is not only expressed verbally but also depicted through illustrations in the brochures. Often, the individuals are depicted in connection to a piece of text that describes what they are expected to do in case of an emergency. In 1952, for example, the description of what the individual needs to do at home when the air raid siren rings is accompanied by illustrations of an individual conducting these steps in what appears to be a calm and efficient manner.²⁰⁰ This appears in the brochure from 1961 as well, where individuals are portrayed as carrying out the actions that need to be taken in case the air raid siren rings.²⁰¹ In addition to describing and depicting the individual in a certain manner, the actions the individual is encouraged to take are often highlighted in a bold or cursive font, or sometimes in a different colour. It is thus clear that the visual elements of the brochures serve to reinforce the message conveyed by the text.

Taken together, the individual is expected to be loyal, act in a calm and quick manner and in solidarity with their family and neighbours in order to protect the country, its territory, borders, and values from external threats. The long-term objective is for the individual to help the state.

¹⁹⁶ Kungliga Civilförsvarsstyrelsen. *Om kriget kommer* 1952: 12. [researcher's translation].

¹⁹⁷ Styrelsen för psykologiskt försvar. *Om kriget kommer*. 1987: 9, 19. [researcher's translation]

¹⁹⁸ Kungliga Civilförsvarsstyrelsen. *Om kriget kommer* 1952: 23.

¹⁹⁹ Kungliga Civilförsvarsstyrelsen. *Om kriget kommer* 1952: 8. [researcher's translation].

²⁰⁰ Kungliga Civilförsvarsstyrelsen. *Om kriget kommer* 1952: 8.

²⁰¹ Kungliga Inrikesdepartementet. *Om kriget kommer* 1961: 11.

6.3.3. Contemporary Era (2018, 2024)

Between the end of the Cold War and the distribution of the brochures in 2018 and 2024, Sweden's total defence underwent significant reductions. In 2018, the state explicitly recognises that there have been limited efforts in crisis and war preparedness efforts in Sweden, and admits that the current geopolitical situation requires renewed efforts to strengthen Swedish total defence:

For many years, preparations for war have been very limited in Sweden. [...] But in line with a changing world, the government has decided to strengthen the total defence.²⁰²

The individual is understood as having an important role and a great responsibility in these renewed total defence efforts:

We all have a role to play if Sweden is threatened.²⁰³

Everyone has a responsibility to contribute and everyone is needed.²⁰⁴

And we must have the will and courage to defend our open society, even if it means sacrifices.²⁰⁵

You are a part of Sweden's preparedness.²⁰⁶

The individual is thus expected to be a part of these renewed efforts at strengthening Sweden's total defence. In these efforts, the individual is assigned concrete tasks. In 2018, the brochure includes a list of categories that the individual is expected to assume responsibility over. This list includes food, water, heating, communications and other things such as extra medications, cash, and paper documentation of insurances, bank account numbers and so on. The individual is also encouraged to share these supplies with each other.²⁰⁷

The individual is thus expected to take responsibility over a wide variety of sectors and expected to act in solidarity through sharing supplies. In both 2018 and 2024, helping is described as valuable:

²⁰² Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2018: 9. [researcher's translation].

²⁰³ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2018: 8. [researcher's translation].

²⁰⁴ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2018: 9. [researcher's translation].

²⁰⁵ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2024: 5. [researcher's translation].

²⁰⁶ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2024: 3. [researcher's translation].

²⁰⁷ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2018: 10–11.

One of our most important assets when something threatens us is our willingness to help each other.²⁰⁸

In crisis and war, we must all help each other.²⁰⁹

The choice of words in describing the individual's role are associated with understanding the individual as part of a larger community. Similar to previous brochures, the individual is expected to primarily help their immediate community, understood to be family and neighbours:

Think about how you and the people around you can manage a situation where society's normal services are not functioning as usual.²¹⁰

Resilience is built every day with relatives, colleagues, friends, and neighbours.²¹¹

The idea of community is also illustrated in the brochures. In connection to the threat of terrorist attacks, for example, the individuals are illustrated as helping each other²¹²:



Image 12. Individuals helping each other (2018)

In the image, the individuals are not running by themselves, but in groups and the people at the very front of the illustration are helping each other. This illustration thus further emphasises the values of solidarity, unity, and community. Helping each other is thus described as the most important action that the individual can take, which indicates that the individual is responsible for themselves but also the people around them.

Thus far, the words used and the illustrations in the brochures indicate that solidarity, unity, and community is important. In addition, the individual is expected to assume responsibility over a range of threats in a variety of sectors. In 2024, this is illustrated already on the cover page

²⁰⁸ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2018: 3. [researcher's translation].

²⁰⁹ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2024: 15. [researcher's translation].

²¹⁰ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2018: 4. [researcher's translation].

²¹¹ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2024: 3. [researcher's translation].

²¹² Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2018: 7.

through depicting the military defence on the right of the image, and the civil defence on the left. Together, they illustrate Sweden's total defence:



Image 13. Civil and military defence (2024)

The individual can thus contribute to the strengthening of the total defence in both the civil and military sector. However, it seems as though the individual's help is preferred in the military sector. In the image above, this is illustrated through placing a soldier at the front, signalling that the military remains the first line of defence. This also appears in 2018, where fighter jets, representing the military sector, are placed at the very top and centre of two pages, while fire fighters, representing the civil defence efforts, are placed at the bottom in a smaller illustration.²¹³ Both brochures thus indicate that the civil defence only plays a supportive role to the military. This supportive relationship is also expressed in the text:

During war, the civil defence must also be able to support the Armed Forces.²¹⁴

One of the most important tasks of the civil defence is to support the military defence.²¹⁵

The idea that the military defence constitutes the primary line of defence is thus confirmed through both text and visuals. This may also indicate that the individual should prioritise being part of the military sector.

In contrast to previous brochures, in 2018 and 2024, there are not many descriptions of the traits that the individual is preferred to have. There are only a few mentions of this. For example, in 2024, acting quickly in times of crisis is described as preferred.²¹⁶ However, there appears illustrations seemingly showing individuals acting in a calm manner²¹⁷:

²¹³ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2018: 8–9.

²¹⁴ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2018: 8. [researcher's translation].

²¹⁵ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2024: 7. [researcher's translation].

²¹⁶ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2024: 24.

²¹⁷ Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2024: 21; Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap. *Om krisen eller kriget kommer*. 2024: 9.



Image 14. Individuals calm in shelter (2024)



Image 15. Business as usual (2024)

These illustration show how the individual acts to uphold essential societal functions even during a crisis. Even if it is not written through text, these expectations are expressed through the visuals.

In 2018 and 2024, the individual is thus being constructed into an active security agent, providing security for themselves and their immediate community. They are expected to help each other and preferred to act in a calm manner. The military sector is explicitly described as the most important line of defence, while the civilian sector is understood as having a supportive role. The main objective of these measures is to maintain operations as usual even during a crisis.

6.4. Summary of Findings

The table below summarises all findings from the six brochures as they have been analysed through the analytical framework. The findings demonstrate a pattern characterised by collective belonging between individuals, a hierarchical relationship between the state and its citizens, and the individual as preferred to be loyal, resilient and to act in a quick and calm manner in case of a crisis or war.

	<i>Lexical analysis (word connotations, suppression, structural opposites)</i>	<i>Compositionality (information value, salience, framing, modality markers)</i>
<i>Securitising actor</i>	Hierarchical relationship characterised by the individual helping the state, using words such as ‘loyal’, ‘help’, and ‘comply’. Indications that the state will help the individual is mostly suppressed. Indicates a superior state and a subordinate population.	Illustrations of the state/government are suppressed. However, information concerning the government and/or rules and laws during war and crisis are highlighted through being placed at the top of a page, in an information box, or through red, yellow colours.
<i>Securitising move</i>	War and crises are threats. Matters of life or death. Affecting all of society, requiring a total defence approach. ‘Swedish people’, ‘Swedish society’ reoccurs to establish a community. Connotations drawn to the protection of a common community in order to motivate extraordinary measures to protect Sweden.	Red, black, and yellow colours are used to emphasise components in the illustrations. Bold or cursive fonts are used to emphasise a written message. Indicates the seriousness of the threats.
<i>Referent object</i>	Four stages: individual, community, state, Sweden.	Individuals as belonging together are reoccurring illustrations.
<i>The Individual</i>	‘Loyal’, ‘quick’, ‘calm’, ‘resilient’ reoccur as desired traits. Expected to help one’s immediate community in order to help the state. Structural opposites are explicitly expressed and are understood as complementing each other.	Individuals illustrated as conducting the suggested preparedness measures in the preferred manner.

Table 4. Analysis Summary

7. Discussion

7.1. Theoretical Implications

This study has shown how the individual's role and responsibility in crisis and war preparedness has been constructed in Sweden. This section will present the similarities between the results of this study and previous research. One shared conclusion between previous research and the present study is that the role and the responsibility of the individual in preparedness for war and crisis has expanded over time. Similar to Rådestad and Larsson's (2020), this study has shown how these expanded expectations are increasingly connected to unburdening public authorities. Throughout the brochures, the state is making it clear that the individual is responsible when a crisis occurs or a war breaks out. The unburdening is thus particularly evident in the relationship that the state constructs to the individual. Similar to the conclusions drawn by Larsson (2021), the previously existing relationship between the state and its citizens is increasingly replaced by a relationship between the citizens, a so-called citizen-citizen relationship. This is particularly present through describing the individual as part of a larger collective, a community, which they are expected to be loyal to through protecting and defending it. The references made in the brochures during the Second World War and the Cold War to helping one's family and immediate neighbours were also increasingly replaced by references to help oneself in 2018 and 2024, which draws parallels to Cronqvist (2009), who concluded that there has been a shift from the household to the individual.

There has thus been a shift from the state protecting its citizens to the citizens protecting themselves and the state. Something that previous research disagreed on was whether this shift is an expression of neoliberalism or collectivist values. Krüger (2019) argued that resilience meant placing certain expectations and presuming capacities on the individual that they may not be able to fulfil, and that this is inherently neoliberal. This is certainly present in the Swedish brochures, which assume that the individual has the socio-economic and physical capacities required to be resilient against crisis or war. This suggests that the shift from state-citizen to citizen-citizen relationships is a move from a collectivist values toward a more neoliberal logic of increased individual responsibility and expectations of self-reliance. In addition, the absence of descriptions of the state helping the individual also indicate neoliberal self-reliance. This study thus concludes that the expansion of the individual's role is increasingly an expression of neoliberalism.

A final similarity between the previous research and the present study is the securitisation of the individual. As concluded by Montelius and Kvarnlöf (2025), resilient citizens have traditionally been understood as desirable from a total defence perspective, while vulnerable individuals are deemed undesired. As this study shows, citizens at risk of being influenced by propaganda, affected by psychological warfare, or accidentally contributing to espionage are

understood as potential threats to the state. These individuals are understood as vulnerable and undesirable. On the other hand, strong and resilient individuals are deemed desirable.

The conclusions in the previous research are thus largely applicable to the results of this study. However, this study also makes theoretical contributions to securitisation theory. By adding the individual as an analytical object, this study has shown how the traditional view of the audience limits an analysis of a securitisation process. Through reconceptualising the audience as the individual, this study has also illustrated the idea of the audience as active, not passive, agents in security. The individual thus constitutes a key component of the securitisation process which needs to be taken into consideration in future analyses of securitisation processes. Finally, the study shows how a securitisation process may be constructed and communicated both through language and visuals, which suggests that visual components, when available, also need to be taken into consideration when studying securitisation.

7.2. Conclusions

This study has examined the individual's role and responsibility in crisis and war preparedness as constructed in Swedish informational crisis brochures between 1943 and 2024. The following conclusions are drawn from the study. First, the role of the individual has been described in similar manners throughout all six brochures, however, the individual's responsibility has expanded. Concerning the role, descriptions of the individual as loyal, resilient, and acting in a calm and quick manner stay consistent throughout all brochures. At the same time, the sectors which the individual is expected to take responsibility over have expanded. Thus, the individual is expected to act in the same manner in 2024 as in 1943, but their responsibility is larger in 2024 than in 1943. The role of the individual has thus remained the same, but their responsibility has expanded.

Second, the individual's role and responsibility in crisis and war preparedness has throughout the brochures been maintained as essential for the purpose of protecting the state. This has been done in several steps. The securitising actor has first constructed its securitising moves through identifying with the individual and establishing a community. In turn, the individual is responsible for not only themselves, but also their family members, neighbours, and immediate community. The individuals therefore protect each other rather than relying on support from the state, while the state seems to withdraw from the task of protecting its citizens.

Third, in describing the individual as needed to fulfil the goal of protecting and defending the state, the state has constructed a relationship with its residents that can be characterised as hierarchical. The individual is expected to act in a certain manner with the end goal of protecting and defending the state. At the same time, a relationship between the residents has emerged, characterised by a shared community and a sense of collective belonging, solidarity, and loyalty.

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