

Abstract

The master thesis analyses the perception of Information Warfare and Russia among German politicians. By using the Qualitative Content Analysis by Schreier, speeches given in the German Bundestag relating to Information Warfare, and Russia were analyzed from January 2015 until December 2018. Using International Relations (IR) theories and political psychological approaches, a theoretical framework was developed in order to determine factors which have an impact on the perception of politicians. The thesis divides this perception into three categories – friend, partner, and threat. Each category is analyzed in depth resulting in support for two of the four hypotheses. The thesis demonstrates that it is not only the political orientation, but also economic interests which determine if a state and its warfare tactics are perceived as a danger. Moreover, the deductive part of the analysis reveals that Russia's behavior which can be perceived as aggressive, irrational, and power-seeking, also determines whether the regime is perceived as threatening.

Information Warfare per se is no issue of concern in the Bundestag. However, information warfare tactics such as disinformation campaigns, the spread of fake news and propaganda, and Russia's meddling in western politics are perceived as a danger to Germany's domestic stability.