

Abstract

Over the last couple of years, the world has witnessed an intensifying competition over 5G networks, triggered to a large extent but not exclusively by the geopolitical rivalry between the United States and China. To the backdrop of allegations that the Chinese government could force Chinese telecom company Huawei and ZTE to spy, sabotage or take other actions on Beijing's behalf, Washington ordered prompt restrictions on products from Huawei and pressured its allies to do the same. From a European perspective, Sweden stood out early as a country with a strong stance on 5G security by outright banning Chinese telecom providers Huawei and ZTE from taking part in Sweden's 5G frequency auction. This thesis seeks to understand how the securitising process of Sweden's 5G networks was initiated and evolved, through a comparative case study of the four main securitising actors' official discourses. Derived from previous studies on cybersecurity and securitisation, this thesis constructed an analytical framework tailored for the securitisation of 5G networks. The thesis is carried out as an idea analysis, looking for articulated threats pertaining to three distinct threat dimensions: 'network security', 'data and information protection' and 'China's assertiveness'. The analysis showed that all four securitising actors took part in the securitising process during different time periods and identified distinct security threats. In particular, the Swedish Security Service (SÄPO) took on the strongest role as a securitising actor and identified threats pertaining to all three threat dimensions.

Title: 5G security – A case study on the securitisation of Sweden's 5G networks

Czech title: Bezpečnost 5G - Případová studie sekuritizace švédských 5G sítí

Keywords: securitisation, 5G, cybersecurity, Sweden, network security, data and information protection, China, Huawei