UP CLOSE AND PROFESSIONAL

A Case Study of Norway’s Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg’s Communication on Social Media

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Abstract
It did not take too long before the politicians found the social media sites Twitter and Facebook as good ways to connect to the people and spread their politics. However, due to the somewhat personal origin of these sites, how much of their personal lives do they include within their political reasons for being there? How do they balance the combination of presenting their political and professional self and the personal self? That is what this thesis aim to find out.

This is not the first research about political communication on social media, but most of the research in this field has focused on the social media communication during an election. This research however, aims to expand this knowledge by gathering material from a non-election period in order to investigate the day-to-day political communication on social media. Due to the length and structure of this thesis I limit my aim and topic to investigating one politicians social media use and thereby making it a case study. Using an interpretive coding with a grounded approach method I investigated Norway’s Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg’s communication on Twitter and Facebook during the year 2012. By applying theories about visibility, the presentation of the self, image creation and political communication, the aim is to understand how Stoltenberg use these social media sites.

The focus will be on the content of the communication, the mentioned balance between the professional politician and the personal person, and lastly what of these that create the most engagement from the followers in terms of “likes” and retweets. I find and argue that the balance between the Twitter and Facebook content is relatively even, consisting mostly of professional and informational content, while the balance between the professional Stoltenberg and the personal Jens is uneven in favour for the professional. However, due to Stoltenberg’s popular appeal and “folkelig” image, the person Jens Stoltenberg becomes visible on the sites as well.
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

It did not take too long before politicians found the social media sites as good ways to connect to the people and spread their politics. However, the somewhat personal origin of these sites raises the question of how much of their personal lives they include within their political reasons for being there? How do they balance the combination of presenting their political and professional self versus the personal self? That is what this study aim to find out.

The element of trust is important in politics, and often our trust is made up of knowledge about who the politicians are and what they stand for. In addition to the political standpoints, their personas and private life has come to play an important part in who gets elected to be in power, and might often be more important then the political party itself (Corner et.al 2003:7). While the media provides some information about the private life of the politicians, the social media platforms give the politicians the opportunity to share the information they themselves want to share, both in terms of who they are and what they stand for. Furthermore, they allow a communication between the audience and the politicians to be up close and personal, and it is up to the politician to decide just how personal, and just how close.

What this study further aims to understand is just how politicians can use social media in their role as a public figure. What can be expected of them and what can they gain from it? Is it so that they mostly use if for informational purposes (Aharony 2011/2012) or do they act closer to the popular celebrities who strive to maintain a good relationship to their fans and followers (boyd and Marwick 2011)? In an attempt to investigate a politician's daily appearance on social media this study takes place in a non-election year, away from the heavy pressure during an election period. As such, this study can fill a gap and add to the knowledge derived from the many researches preformed on political communication during campaigns (See for example Vergeer (2012) and Utz (2009)).

Due to the length and structure of this thesis I have limited the research to investigate one Norwegian politician’s social media use. While I am fully aware that this will not provide answers in describing all politicians’ use of social media, I still believe it can shed some light on how it can be done, as well as function as a possible comparison to
other studies on other politicians. Using an interpretive coding with a grounded approach method, I will investigate Norway's Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg's communication on Twitter and Facebook during 2012. By applying theories about visibility, the presentation of the self, image creation and political communication, the aim is to understand how he exploits these social media sites. In choosing the Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg as my case study, this thesis can also shed light on how a Prime Minister uses social media to stay in touch with “his people”. Even though I emphasised how 2012 is a non-election year, they say that there is always an election. Meaning, even when in office the campaign is ongoing and never ending in the sense that one is continually tested and held accountable to answer about what you have done and will do. As such the importance of being visible but respected and personal but professional are some of the topics I will investigate further in this thesis.

1.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS
To answer my aim of understanding a politician’s communication on and use of social media I have divided the aim into three research questions.

1. What does Norway's Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg communicate on Facebook and Twitter during a non-election year (2012)? And 1.1. Does this communication vary between Facebook and Twitter?

2. Judging by the tone/language, purpose and content of the Facebook-posts and tweets, how is the balance between the professional Prime Minister Stoltenberg and the personal Stoltenberg presented?

3. What content, and which of the two personas - the professional or the personal - seems to engage the most Facebook- and Twitter users in terms of “likes” and “retweets”?

Altogether these three research questions will provide answers and knowledge about the total social media communication and use by Jens Stoltenberg. The first will concentrate on the topics and themes he brings up. These will create a basis of knowledge that will guide and help through the other two questions. The second can enlighten the interest in what part of him he chooses to focus on, which consequently can reveal his reason for appearing on social media. Whereas the last question can provide an insight into what his audience seems to like or engage the most in, which can further either support or not support Stoltenberg’s reasons to be active on the social media sites.
1.2 EARLIER RESEARCH
While there has certainly been many studies conducted on social media and politics during the last years, I will in the following present a few of these studies that are relevant to this study and the analysis to come. In a Swedish context Annika Bergström did a research on the Swedish peoples perception of politicians on social media during the Swedish election in 2010 where she intended to find out the potential of social networking during campaigning and whom it might attract. Her starting point regarding the context of politicians on social media is interesting as she states that political online communication shows diverse patterns and has thus far not attracted the masses. Social network sites involve more and more people, but it seems that contact with friends who are already familiar and personal expressions attract the most. Politicians are simply stumbling into people’s living rooms. From what is known from online political involvement, it is also likely that social network sites will constitute yet another platform for people already engaged in online activities and in politics (Bergström 2011: 245).

She found that politicians are expected to be found on the social media sites, however, more as providers of information that as a friend. Her respondents found it important that the politicians used social media for communication, and Bergström concludes that “if politicians do not involve themselves in social media as expected, people may not pay attention to them” (Bergström 2011: 255). In regards to this thesis, Bergströms findings of how the people expect the politicians to act and communication on social media raises the question of what politicians communicate on these sites. As Bergström did not focus of the content of the communication, this thesis will.

Noa Aharony is one researcher who did focus on the content of politicians’ communication on social media. In her study from 2011, she examines the twitter content on three political leaders’ Twitter accounts during three months in 2010. Of the examined politicians Barack Obama (President, US), David Cameron (PM, UK) and Benjamin Netanyahu (PM, Israel), she found that Obama tweeted the most and Cameron the least. However, they all used Twitter for the same reason, namely for transparency and outreach and the most common tweets were the “information about”- and “statements about” tweets (Aharony 2011/2012).

As politicians are public figures they can be compared and connected to celebrities in terms of status and appearance. Alice Marwick and danah boyd did a study on how famous people use Twitter and found that the practices of celebrities on this site
“reveals how social media can be used to maintain celebrity status. Entertainers, public figures and technologists actively contribute to the construction of their persona through public interaction with fans” (boyd et.al 2011: 155). Furthermore, they found that “celebrity practice involves presenting a seemingly authentic, intimate image of self while meeting fan expectations and maintaining important relationships” (boyd et.al. 2011: 140). It will prove interesting to see if the study at hand will come to similar findings as to how a Prime Minister uses Twitter, and also Facebook.

In relation to the European Parliament Election in 2009 Liesbeth Hermans and Maurice Vergeer studied the way “politicians use specific aspects of the personalization strategies on their websites to inform and connect with their potential voters” (Hermans et.al 2012: 73). While they saw the politicians’ own websites as a “digital brochure, aiming not only to inform citizens on their political viewpoints but also on their professional résumé, personal interest, likes and dislikes” they also looked at eventual links to their respective profiles on social network sites (ibid.). The findings indicated that the usage of own individual websites for each candidate improved their opportunity to communicate directly with the voters (Hermans et. al 2012: 84). Moreover, they found that “candidates inform citizens mostly about their professional background and somewhat less about their family background. Sharing private information about their preferences appears not to be very common in most European countries” (Hermans et. al 2012: 85). What more, they found that the social media networks were poorly used in the sense that they were underutilized in the campaign (ibid.). Considering how Hermans and Vergeer compared politicians from all the European Union countries their study is “one of the first that examines different dimensions of personalization in politics within a broad international scope” (Hermans et.al. 2012: 89).

As the mentioned studies concern the presentation of the self and the presence in the media, this study aims to move closer in on one politician’s usage of and presentation on social media. Taking place in a Norwegian context and with material from a longer time period outside of an election, the findings will be more specific and contribute to the knowledge in the field of political communication online. By focusing on two social media sites, Twitter and Facebook, and analysing them in relation to each other, this study also touch upon a more total social media usage and strategy deployed by a politician.
2.0 OPEN UP: THE SOCIAL MEDIA
The social media sites chosen for this study are Twitter and Facebook. Danah boyd and Nicole B. Ellison define such social media, or as they say social networks sites, as,

web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system (boyd et.al 2008: 211).

Boyd and Ellison notes how the earliest online communities were created and structured around discussion forums and larger topics while the social network sites are more structured around the personal individual as the centre of the community (boyd et.al 2008: 219). Following this, these sites “more accurately mirrors unmediated social structures, where “the world is composed of networks, not groups’’” (Wellman, 1988: 37, in boyd et.al 2008: 219). When compared to the traditional media like radio or newspapers, one of the biggest differences is its dialogical aspect. These social media sites function as communication media and facilitate a kind of “computer mediated interaction” (Thompson 2005: 34). Before presenting theories relevant for the political communication that later will be analysed, I will in the following go further into explaining what Facebook and Twitter is and how they function. This is reasoned in that the understanding of the medium is important when you aim to understand the communication done through them.

2.1 FACEBOOK
Facebook was launched in 2004 with the idea to connect college students to each other. In 2006 it opened up for everyone, and today they explain their mission as; “...to give the people the power to share and make the world more open and connected” (Facebook, n.d). It is now seen as one of the biggest social media network platform, accessible anywhere in the world with an Internet connection. You can log onto Facebook from different technical devises like you computer, tablet or Smartphone, providing easy and constant updates on the go. As a user you start by creating your own personal profile. Here you can present yourself with name, age, nationality, occupation, civil status, interests, and pictures. On your profile page you can upload pictures, videos and links to different types of content as well as your “what are you doing now?” status. When you make friends on Facebook, they can see all your updates as well as posted content on your profile directed at you. Both your friends and you can comment, share and like all
the posts visible on your profile. When you log onto Facebook you start at the “newsfeed” page where you can see the most popular updates and activities performed on Facebook by your friends and the pages you follow. Pages are the official profiles of organisations and celebrities and functions the same way as your personal profile. The biggest difference is that when you ask a person to be friends on Facebook, they have to accept the invitation, whereas you can become “friends” by simply following a celebrity’s page without them having to accept you. The way Facebook functions with people making connections and sharing personal information can, according to Adrian Athique, possibly constitute the “largest single store of personal information in human history” (Athique 2013: 103). Moreover, Athique points out how Facebook successfully mix former Internet formats like dating-sites, blogs and file-sharing, and has thus become a popular and “primary forum for the storage and exchange of digital images via the Internet” (ibid.).

Daniel Miller did an anthropologic study of Facebook usage in Trinidad that exemplifies different effects and aspects of Facebook in the society. Although they are, as he states, not generelisable, his findings suggest trends and behaviours on Facebook that I, as a user from Norway, also can somewhat identify with. Consequently, I find his examples of Facebook uses and effects relevant in understanding this social media network, and furthermore to shed light on how political communication can fit into this later on.

On an individual level, Miller points out how Facebook can help to make relationships. Just as you hang out with your friends physically, you can hang out with your friends on Facebook, chatting and commenting on each other’s posts. This form of communication is nothing new, and Miller makes sure to note that “Facebook doesn’t invent social networking, but it certainly facilitates and expands it” (Miller 2011: 165). Furthermore, just as in any society “people are judged according to the degree of which they seem normal, where the term “normal” carries clear moral overtones. It is a judgement as to how people should behave” (Miller 2011: 186). Miller uses the term netiquette to explain this phenomenon on Facebook (ibid.). It does not really matter how long you have been a Facebook user, once you have started sharing or commenting on the site you are supposed to know the right way to act according to the rules in your society. Much like how normal, face-to-face interactions follow certain cultural norms so does Facebook, even if it is used on a global scale.
Another found aspect of Facebook in society is how it “transmits, sometimes several times a day, the current state of people. We no longer depend on mediation of others to obtain such information” (Miller 2011: 192). In doing so, it replaces the delay in traditional mediums. A good example of this is when a politician wants to comment on something that is happening now; he can instantly post a comment of Facebook instead of waiting for the evening news. Moreover, the politician can take advantage of Facebook as a great possibility for self-promotion and crafting a personal image (Miller 2011: 200). Athique notes how “liking” the right things on Facebook can be very important in relation to the creation of a “cultural capital” and image around one’s persona (Athique 2013:106). Miller concludes his study by mentioning how often and easy the Facebook society and everything included or associated to it are changeable and furthermore unpredictable. As a Facebook user since 2007, I have experienced several changes to profile settings, layouts and functions over the years. With this in mind, I believe the changes are likely to continue and the Facebook we experience today might look or behave differently in a year or two. However, considering that all these changes haven’t seemed to scare the users away, it is to be expected that the role of Facebook will remain and function close to how it does today. At least for a little while, or till someone creates the next big thing. By looking at boyd and Ellingsen’s overview of the launches and closing of different social network sites during the past few years, it becomes evident that the changes are rapid and thus likely unpredictable (boyd et.al 2008: 212).

2.2 TWITTER
Twitter label themselves as an information network and further explain that they are “a real-time information network that connects you to the latest stories, ideas, opinions and news about what you find interesting. Simply find the accounts you find the most compelling and follow the conversation” (Twitter, n.d.). The idea is that it should be easy to get the updates and information you are looking for and you can choose how much you want to contribute or not contribute at all on the social network. If we compare Twitter to Facebook, Twitter is basically just the “what-are-you-doing-now?”- status. A tweet can only consist of 140 characters including links, and it is possible to attach pictures. However, Twitter has developed more functions in order to facilitate discussions and categorisation of the Tweets. There is an option to write to someone by using their Twittername with an @ in front of it. For example, if I want to write
something to Jens Stoltenberg I write @jensstoltenberg, as this is also his Twitter-name, and the following message. Another function is to tag your Tweet with a hashtag. A hashtag is created by placing the sign # in front of a topic or name associated to something or someone. It might look like; #election12 or #CNN. These hashtags are searchable so that if you want to see all the tweets that contain a certain topic there is a search function that allows you to find all the Tweets with the hashtag you are interested in. Moreover you have the ability to retweet someone else’s Tweet. When doing this you choose to share this Tweet with your followers by including it in your own Twitterflow.

As of March 2013 Facebook has 1,11 billion users, and Twitter contain about half the amount. But, whereas Facebook might be a larger social network when it comes to users world wide, Twitter is usually seen as a bigger contributor to the larger discussions in society. In political programming and reporting it has for example become increasingly popular to include Twitter-streams and comments (Corner et. al 2013: 100,108). What more, it is visible in how the traditional media take advantage of Twitter by finding information as well as promoting certain hashtags, related to for example TV series, so the public can easily discuss with each other (ibid.). One of the biggest Swedish newspapers, Svenska Dagbladet, mentioned Twitter approximately three times a day during 2012, proving its status as a powerful source in traditional media (Brandel, 12.03.2013). Moreover, the space limitation of 140 characters creates the need to be short and precise. This again makes Twitter an easier site to screen messages and quickly pick up the content compared to when scrolling down the newsfeed on Facebook where the content are more diverse in shape and size. When having a face-to-face discussion the arguments from each part are usually short and quick. The tweets can be said to function in the same way due to the conversation functions of the mentions @ and hashtags. As such, I will argue that Twitter is better suited for discussions than Facebook where the arguments usually are longer and more extensive. For the media and the journalist, the shorter tweet is easier to quote and might therefore also be a reasoning as to why Twitter plays a larger part in the mediated discussions. Adding to the notions of the implications and affects that come with Twitter, Kay Richardson, Katy Parry and John Corner notes in their study of the new political culture that
although it is too early to assess the degree to which Twitter and other social media redefine or disrupt official political culture, certainly in the UK context, the generic affordances and possibilities promote an interpersonal sense of interconnectivity and informality that may further reconfigure the ‘personalization’ of politics for the twenty-first century (Corner et al 2013:182).

3.0 CLOSING IN: THEORIES
After having established what the social media is and how Twitter and Facebook function, we move on to relevant theories that will work as a backdrop for the analysis to come. This will help the understanding of the different aspects of the communication made on Stoltenberg’s accounts, and furthermore strengthen the analysis of it later.

3.1 THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPHERE
In order to be able to say anything about the social media communications being of a professional or private character it is useful to look into the notions of the public and the private sphere. This divide has been present as long as humans have interacted with each other and felt the need to separate the home from the society. The Greek philosophers emphasised the public in relation to the political society. The private was the home and related activities and the public was where discussions about the politics and society took place, making the public man “a citizen of the world, a member of civil society with civic duties” (Papacharissi 2010: 28). Politics has therefore been in centre of what it means to be public, for how can you control or change society if you are not open and sharing your opinions?

Today this divide is somewhat more complex. With the technologies enabling us to be active and participant in society from our own living room, the Greek definitions seems a little outdated. The mentioned social media networks has been said to challenge and blur the line between what is private and what is public, but before we can get further into this, a definition of the two can prove helpful. Jürgen Habermas formally conceptualised the public sphere and defines it as

a sphere which mediates between society and sate, in which the public organizes itself as the bearer of public opinion, accords with the principle of the public sphere, that principle of public information which once had to be fought for against the arcane politics of monarchies and which since that time has been made possible the democratic control of state activities (Habermas, 1973: 351, in Papacharissi 2010: 114).

Zizi A. Papacharissi explains further that the value of the public sphere is to “facilitate uninhibited and diverse discussion of public affairs”, and thus enabling the citizens to
directly affect democracy (Papacharissi 2010: 114). However, the public sphere should not be confused with the public space as a public space does not guarantee a healthy public sphere (Papacharissi 2010: 115). Habermas saw the public opinion as only created when “a reasoning public is presupposed” meaning that individuals arguing for their own opinions could not lead to a public opinion (ibid.). What more, Habermas argued that the commercialisation of the mass media had turned to prioritise the rhetoric of public relations and advertising and thus transformed “the spheres of civic engagement to spaces of commercial exchange” (Papacharissi 2010: 39). Thus, Papacharissi sees, in accordance with Hambermas’ arguments, that the public sphere is best understood as a metaphor. As such, I will for the clarity of this study deploy another broader and more simplistic definition of the public sphere in today’s society by Papacharissi who states that,

[the]public is that which does not remain private, and thus can be shared in common; is associated with the greater public good; can serve as a mask of fiction for private desires for power and position; can suggest a way for members of a public to become associated and effect action; and can exist within or outside the realm of the state (Papacharissi 2010: 26).

On the other hand, the private sphere can just as simply be defined as

that which does not become public, and thus remains under private ownership, in the realm of the personal or domestic, possibly considered unofficial, and involving actions and consequences structured around the self (Papacharissi 2010: 27).

To help clarify this distinction, and at the same time make them easier to analyse, she puts forth Weintraub’s two criteria of visibility and collectivity. The first relates to the public being what is open and accessible while the private remains hidden, the second separates what is shared individually as opposed to a collectivity of individuals (Papacharissi 2010: 27). In relation to Facebook and Twitter, it proves difficult to place them in a single category. On one hand they can be said to be very open and accessible, but in terms of content and a couple of privacy adjustments available, they can also be said to be private and accessible to only those you want to receive the information.

What is true of both Facebook and Twitter is the notion of how they are used as a tool for presentation of the self. The more we reveal about ourselves the more intimate we become with our followers. Papacharissi mentions how the move towards a more intimate society started already in the Victorian age when the Victorians became aware of how they behaved in front of others and how this affected others impression of them.
Moreover, “as private life choices became a way to validate the credibility of political belief in the nineteenth century, the private further imposed itself on the public” (Papacharissi 2010: 42). Meaning that what one chooses to support and believe in becomes part of one's character and personality. Not only does the display of these choices affect how a person is perceived, it also affects our trust in them. Say the person in question shares the same opinions or interest as you; chances are you will trust this person more than someone with different beliefs. As such, people often base their judgment on others on their person and character (Pels 2003: 48). The current updates on what a person is doing on Facebook can be seen as a continuation of this trend, however, the new technology facilitates the presentation and sharing of this presentation and might therefore also change it.

However intimate we choose to be on Facebook and Twitter, we still value our privacy. Papacharissi notes how

> in Western nations privacy is recognized as a basic human right – the “right to be left alone,” as invented by Warren and Brandeis’ (1890) Harvard Law Review article. It is rumoured that Warren was inspired to write this article following some unfavourable news coverage of society parties his wife had given (Papacharissi 2010:43).

Even though Papacharissi mainly states this in relation to surveillance technology and personal information such as personal number, income, address and the like, the same idea can shed light on what we chose to protect and what we chose to share when it comes to private life experiences like for example a wedding party or a funeral. It all comes down to the element of control. Normally, the average citizen is free to choose what is private and what is shared publicly. However, for those of us that hold a central position for society, say political leaders or celebrities, this element of control is sometimes lost when the media is constantly following their moves in order to hunt down a good story. Especially tabloid media challenge this “right to be left alone” and might therefore portray personal information the person in question did not intend to be shared. In relation to social media, these tabloid stories are easy to share and can quickly become what “everyone” is talking about on the social media platforms. Neither here does the person in question have control over the situation. However, what they do control on social media is their own profile and actions online. This is the aspect that I will investigate further in this thesis. When a well-known politician, who is the subject of
the tabloids hunt for personal gossip and information, communicate on Facebook and Twitter, what does he choose to portray, and what is left out and kept private?

3.1.1 No sense of place

In relation to what mentioned above about the politicians loss of control over what personal information becomes public, Joshua Meyrowitz wrote already in 1985 of how these known public figures have difficulties protecting their personal information.

The inability of high status persons to isolate themselves informationally by isolating themselves physically leads to an inability to separate situations and the behaviours appropriate to them. [...] Presidents have greater difficulty hiding their behaviours in "private" locations and this leads to a necessary change in the image they project in "public" (Meyrowitz 1985: 170).

In other words, politicians can be in control to the extent that they are aware of their own behaviours also in “private” settings. In addition, they have to be aware of the common knowledge about his or hers private life, when acting on the public stage. In their book *The Restyling of Politics*, John Corner and Dick Pels continue this idea by stating that

for professional politicians, “the presentation of self in everyday life” involves the management of a number of different roles, many of them performed in a cultural context where the relationship and interplay between “public” and “private” realms is indeterminate and changing (Corner and Pels 2003: 10).

The politician has to be aware of which role to play where and when. This can prove difficult when the line between the public and private sphere, and consequently its fitting roles, becomes blurry. This ties in to Meyrowitz idea about us having “no sense of place”. He has suggested that the evolution in the media have changed our reception of what is physical space and what is social space, creating a new way for us to receive and transmit social information (Meyrowitz 1985: 308). Moreover, he states that,

many formerly private and isolated behaviours have been brought out into the large unitary public arena. As a result, behaviours that were dependent on great distance and careful rehearsals have been banished from the social repertoire. The widened public sphere gives nearly everyone a new (and relatively shared) perspective from which to view others and gain a reflected sense of self (Meyrowitz 1985: 309).

Thus, when the sphere is broadened new sides of the people around us becomes visible, and reveals new knowledge about both them and us. To keep the example of the politician, when parts of his preparations before an event become visible the people have the possibility to apply this knowledge to, not only what it says about the politician
in question, but also how they themselves act in similar situations. Hence, we gain a new reflected sense of the self in addition to the politician’s self.

3.1.2 Spheres of action
Rather than speaking of the public and private sphere as the only two options in which to act, John Corner presents a theory about placing the political persona in different spheres of action. Corner separates the sphere of political action and the sphere of the public and popular. The first is the sphere where the politicians “establish their identity as politicians and enjoy career development, taking on various posts and duties” (Corner 2003:72). In other words, this is where they do their job as politicians. The actual debates and decision making, negotiating with other parties and so on. The presentation of the self is therefore performed mostly in front of other politicians and is usually not a subject to direct media projection. The second sphere, the one of the public and popular, is the “fully mediated complex of settings in which politicians are seen as ‘public figures’” (Corner 2003: 74). The actions performed in this sphere can be viewed as largely presentational ones, including ways to develop reputations, being judged as a good or bad politician and undergoing steady advancement or decline (ibid.). Thus, the actions can be both positive and negative, but they all interfere with the politician as a public persona, not merely as a politician. “It is in this sphere that the identity of the politician as a person of qualities is most emphatically and strategically put forward” (Corner 2003: 75). The aim is to project the popular and most valuable sentiments that the politician inhabits, like for example youthfulness, charm and ordinariness. In addition to strong national, as well as international, features

the projection of the optimal political self will often require careful attention to popular values in the light of the range of possible projections that any given politician has available to them. These limitations will very likely include factors of age, ethnic origin and gender and in many countries they will also include factors of wealth, social class and education (ibid.).

Although Corner separated the actions into the two mentioned spheres he also does include a private sphere and states how “clearly, the private realm and personal background of a political figure will feature in the formation of their identity and career in political institutions as well as in their more public projections” (ibid.). This third sphere then affects the other two, which in turn connects all the three spheres together.
3.2 VISIBILITY

What the ideas above have in common is the notion of visibility. John B. Thompson wrote about the changes in visibility caused by the media in his book *The Media and Modernity* (1995). He focuses on how the performance of power has changed due to the extended mediated visibility. During the Greek city-states era, the element of visibility could be said to have been of high importance considering the fact that one had to be present where the actual political discussion took place in order to take part and share one’s opinion. Furthermore, this provided that anyone, well any Athenian man over 20, could take part. This open and visible political debate changed during the Middle Ages where kings, princes and Lords were in power and made all decisions behind closed doors, leaving their visible presence to the grand public events where power was executed (Thompson 1995: 124). Today, in democratic societies, we expect to be let in on the political decision-making and to be able to state our opinions in important matters like elections and general political standpoints. We, the audience, don’t always need to be visible, but the politicians and those in power do. Even though Thompson points out that the exercise of power in our modern society is still mostly done behind closed doors, the visibility of who our “rulers” are, in terms of persona, characteristics and political standpoints, have changed drastically since the Middle Ages. These changes have emerged after the rise of communication media, which Thompson, in an article written ten years after the book, describes as

> not merely technical devices which transmit information from one individual to another while leaving their relationship unchanged; rather, by using communication media, individuals create new forms of action and interaction which have their own distinctive properties (Thompson 2005:32).

With the development of communication media the visibility have expanded from being only existing as to what we can see at the place you are and at the time you are there, into being free from both place and time frames. As Thompson explains, “the field of vision can be stretched out in space and may also be stretched out in time” (Thompson 2005: 35). With recording devices an event can be viewed while it is happening through live TV coverage and it can also be viewed after the event took place, not only once but also repeatedly, through technical viewing devices. Moreover, “individuals can be seen by many viewers without them being able to see these viewers, while the viewers are able to see distant other without being seen by them” (ibid.). The need to be co-present has been replaced by communication media and the relationship between performer
and audiences have shifted, and I will return more closely to this point later. The increasing visibility of public figures alters, as previously mentioned, the ways in which they can present themselves as well as their ability to control their image. While this has always been a challenge for politicians, the rise of the Internet has made this even more challenging due to the enormous amount of content and how easily and quickly this content can be shared (Thompson 2005:38). In sum, “The development of communication media thus gave rise to a new kind of de-spatialized visibility which allowed for an intimate form of self-presentation freed from the constraints of co-presence” (ibid.).

In comparison to the political climate before the printed press, the modern political arena is more of an open kind and it is more difficult for the politicians to act secretly and behind closed doors (Thompson 2005: 41). By noting how the press can take the politicians actions and utterances and present them in the light of their choosing Thompson sees the new mediated visibility as connected with a distinctive kind of fragility (Thompson 2005: 42). Even though the politician will work hard on managing their own visibility, they are never completely in control, and their sharing of a personal self can both work to their advantage and disadvantage. Thompson further places this notion in relation to the political scandals that have increased in numbers since the early 20th century. He explains the increase of scandals, especially from the 1960’s, not as a result of a decline in moral standards, but rather as a consequence of the increased visibility of politicians’ actions and presence (Thomson 2005: 43). When the politicians present themselves as “one of us”, talk to the audience like they were family and friends and generally act more open, the media will also have more to “take them on”. Thompson partly blames the journalist for the increase of the scandals by stating that, “once it was accepted that the curtains that shrouded the upper regions of power could be drawn back, it would be very difficult to maintain a sharp distinction between secrets bearing in the exercise of power and secrets concerning the conduct of private life” (Thompson 2005: 45). All the political scandals presented in the media created a bigger scepticism towards politics and politicians. Especially the Watergate-scandal caused a new look and investigation also into the top politicians (ibid.). Finally, “these broad transformations help us to understand what we could loosely describe as the gradual decline of ‘ideological politics’ and the growing importance of the ‘politics of trust’” (Thompson 2005:46).
Thompson mostly discusses the new kinds of visibility in relation to the evolution in communication mediums like print, radio, television and Internet, and how the politicians are more visibly presented in these mediums, thereby leaving out social media. However, it is likely the changes and trends in visibility that took place in these traditional mediums moulded the social media that in turn were created with the aim of being a place for self-presentation visible to others. Manuel Castells has taken this notion further and termed this new mediated communication and presentation of the self as mass self-communication. He defines it as a historically new form of communication that is characterized by

the capacity of sending messages from many to many, in real time or chosen time, and with the possibility of using point-to-point communication, narrowcasting or broadcasting, depending on the purpose and characteristics of the intended communication practice (Castells 2009: 55).

Moreover, the individual plays a much stronger part in the sense that the mass self-communication is also, “self-generated in content, self-directed in emission, and self-selected in reception by many who communicate with many (Castells 2009:70). In other words, it is not only politicians or journalists that take advantage of this mass self-communication, but anyone with an access to the Internet. While Thompson discusses the relationship between journalist and politicians and how this effects how visible the politicians are in the media, the social media allows the politicians to be their own editor of their own presentations. What then becomes interesting is how the politicians chose to take on this role as their own editor. In following I will look closer into the presentation of the self which includes the image and performances and what aspects within these categories that have usually been connected to politicians.

3.3 THE POLITICIAN AND THE IMAGE
Social media sites like Facebook and Twitter allow us to control, to some extent, our own appearance online. What we choose to communicate and share with our followers can shape and make our image. Moreover, social media allows the politician to be viewed at all time, thus, when the content is constantly available so is the opportunity to create an image (Hogan 2010: 348). It is therefore interesting and crucial to investigate the content of the communication being made on these channels. Corner and Pels mentions how
the ‘styling of the self’ in politics, the projection of political persona, is partly a matter of choice (a conscious ‘branding’ exercise designed to sharpen profile) and partly a required reaction to the terms of media visibility that now frame and interpret political action in many countries (Corner and Pels 2003: 10).

This notion of branding is something we recognize in many aspects of society. It is not only products that are in need of a good and well known brand in order to be successful, the same goes for organisations and celebrities. What often become apparent are the similarities between politicians and celebrities, in the terms of people having an interest in what they are doing and who they are. John Street sees the business of political communication as focused on turning the politicians into celebrities.

By focusing on politicians as celebrities, rather than as traditional commodities, our account of political communication can be enriched in a way that enables us to make sense of, and accord prominence to, what might otherwise appear trivial and irrelevant (from a traditional political perspective) (Street 2003: 92).

Street draws on David Marshall’s (1997) ideas about how the politician represents a thought or emotion to the public in the same way a celebrity does to his audience (Street 2003: 91). One can argue that making a political speech, or participating in a political debate holds many of the same elements as an artist performing onstage. In order for the audience to engage in the concert, the artist has to be convincing and comprehensible, just like the politician works in order to get his argument through. Furthermore, when the artist is off-stage, he has to stay in the spotlight enough to attract an audience to come to his concerts, but not so much that they loose interest. The politician needs fans, or rather voters, to help get elected and can consequently not be invisible between the official debates but available enough for the voters to get to know him.

However, politicians as celebrities are nothing new as the notion of leading a nation, whether elected or not, demands that the people know who this person is. Therefore, politicians and leaders have found ways to portray themselves and make connections to their “audience” according to the communication ways of their time (Krieken 2012: 99). Robert Van Krieken points to several theories about studies of earlier celebrity politicians or rulers. One of these being Kevin Sharps theory that this phenomenon go back to Henry the VIII who constructed an “action-man” figure around himself by appearing in every major cultural events, particularly sport events (Krieken 2012: 102). Due to his acts of representation in many parts of the society, Krieken talks about Henrik
VII’s reign as “an archetypal example of the need for kings not just to be kings, but to perform kingship” (ibid.). Similar approaches were later to be seen in politics and are indeed present today as well. Politicians making appearances on different platforms in society is a well-known scenario and can be seen as important performances.

3.3.1 The use of rhetoric to form the image
A typical way for a politician to gain the voters trust and attention is to speak of and place him and his audience in what they all have in common, namely their country. Thus, considering that my subject and case study is the Prime Minister of Norway, it is relevant to add theories about nationalism and the rhetoric that go with it to the understanding of the political communication. Michael Billing wrote in his popular book, Banal Nationalism, of how the political rhetoric is highly influenced by the nation.

“In classical rhetorical theory, the topos, or rhetorical place, referred to the topic of argument. In the rhetoric of established nationalism, there is a topos beyond argument. The argument is generally placed within a place – a homeland – and the process of argumentation itself rhetorically reaffirms this national topos. […] This rhetorical reaffirmation of the national topography is routinely achieved through little, banal words, flagging the topos as the homeland” (Billing 1995: 96).

What Billing suggests is that the political communication usually contains references and common words from the homeland of which the politician, as well as the audience, belong. Moreover, when mentioning the homeland and ‘its people’, it is done in a positive, bragging-like manner, which Billing sees as a way of “holding up a mirror so the nation can admire itself” (Billing 1995: 98).

However, when representing the country and speaking of it as “our country”, the politician implies that he is also a part of the nation’s population, with the same rights as his audience. In Norway, there is an ideal image of being “folkelig”, which implies being one of the people, sociable and “down to earth”. It is likely a politician will not be able to get far without this quality, and thus it has become an image many politicians strive to keep in order to earn the trust from the people. Torbjørn Røe Isaksen, a politician from the Conservative Party in Norway, wrote about what he terms “the Norwegian Equality” in a newspaper column in 2010. He describes and reasons it with,
“We [Norwegians] are relative homogeneous culturally, and have common arenas like the church, the school or the athlete-team. Norwegian firms are less hierarchical than in many other countries, the line between the employees and the boss is shorter. There are to a lesser degree than in traditional, class-divided societies clear cultural codes that separate the top from the bottom, even if it evidentially also can be found here” (Isaksen 2010) [my own translation].

In relation to the national rhetoric, the style and image of being “folkelig” is thus connected to the notion of the homeland. I won’t go further into Norway’s ideals and culture, but note how this image of being “folkelig” is popular among Norwegians, as I will come back to this and explain it further during the presentation of the results.

3.4 THE POLITICIAN AND THE PERFORMANCE
A cultural approach to politics focuses on politics as performance. The performances will naturally vary depending on the situation and context. By portraying different emotions and actions in different scenarios, the politician shows versatility that can also be seen as a way of connecting with different types of people. Due to the strongly competitive structure of politics, where every politician wants to stand out, these performances are important in order to gain trust and authority from the people. By using performative tools like the mentioned rhetoric, as well as gestures and posture, the aim is to gain validity for their politics. John Street sees these performances as a way for the politicians to gain political capital, “the resources by which a politician is enabled to act” (Street 2003: 96). Without political capital chances are it will be difficult or impossible to stand out and make way for an argument. Political capital can also add to the formation of a personal political style. An example of political style is the way politicians try to represent themselves as “cool”. One way of doing this is to be seen with other cool personalities like rock or sport stars.

“The reason politicians want these associations derives from the general cultural value placed on cool, and the notion of “authenticity” associated with it. “Cool” represent being in charge and in touch. [...] The sense of being in charge and in touch chimes with the criteria that define someone as authentically representative” (Street 2003: 96).

However, the meanings and associations linked to being “cool” can also be linked to certain cultural aspects that a politician does not want to be associated with. For example, many rock stars are known to be “cool” for their I-don’t-care-attitude, smoking, and lawless behaviour (ibid.). Consequently, the politician face challenges when they try to earn these stylistic cultural notions and apply them to politics. Street points out that when analysing these kinds of self-representation, the point is to
“analyse them through the repertoire and conventions of the popular culture upon which they draw and through which they are articulated” (Street 2003:97). When I later will analyse Stoltenberg’s communication on social media, it is therefore an advantage that I as a Norwegian have good knowledge of the Norwegian culture and most likely the stylistic topics he might try to become associated with.

In relation to how an individual is likely to act in a certain way in order to promote a certain response, association or emotion, Erving Goffman notes an interesting aspect on the judgement of the act.

Knowing that the individual is likely to present himself in a light that is favourable to him, the others may divide what they witness into two parts: a part that is relatively easy for the individual to manipulate at will, being chiefly his verbal assertions, and a part in regard to which he seems to have little concern or control, being from expressions he gives off (Goffman 1959: 18).

Goffman uses the example of a host asking the guest at a dinner party if the food was to his liking and while the guest could easily say it was delicious, his expression while eating would either confirm or put into question his statement (ibid.). Applying this to the political communication on social media where a facial expression is missing alongside with the statement, unless there is an attached picture or video to the statement, the politicians image or usual habits might replace the expression and reveal if the communication made seems genuine or not. Goffman labels this the information game and explains it as “a potentially infinite cycle of concealment, discovery, false revelation, and rediscovery” (Goffman 1959: 20). Put differently, the witnesses are likely to be unsuspicious when meeting the actor who thereby will gain on performing his “act”. However, this “act” might be discovered by the witness who consequently look at the actor again but in a different light shaded by the actor’s intention to manipulate his “act”. Goffman finally notes that, “regardless of how many steps have occurred in the information game, the witness is likely to have the advantage over the actor, and the initial asymmetry of the communication process is likely to be retained” (ibid.).

Applying this again to the political communication, the politicians need always be aware that the witnesses, or the audience, will have the advantage of trying to look through a possibly manipulated act. The less the act seems manipulated the better. For a Prime Minister it is not enough to act like one, he has to be the Prime Minister in order to get the best and most engaging attention from the audience. It is all a matter of authenticity, if the performance doesn’t seem real, it will most likely never work.
3.5 THE ORDINARY POLITICIAN IN THE MIDDLE REGION

When performing these acts the context is of outmost importance. Every place has its norms and thus its fitting acts. As earlier mentioned, Meyrowitz thought we had lost our sense of place and consequently earned difficulties in finding the right role to the right scene. He continues to see this as especially damaging to politicians and notes how they lose their authority by appearing less mysterious.

The great leader image depends on mystification and careful management of public impressions. Through television, we see too much of our politicians, and they are losing control over their images and performances. As a result, our political leaders are being stripped of their aura and are being brought closer to the level of the average person (Meyrowitz 1985: 270). Meyrowitz are in other words quite occupied with the idea that a great leader should seem superior to us. It is possible he would prefer how it used to be when the politicians were more restricted in their media appearance. Most people had never heard the political leaders’ voices before the 1920s, and most politicians, including US President Eisenhower, denied journalists to quote them unless they got permission (Meyrowitz 1985:170). Today the scene is very different, and a politician has to prepare to get quoted at all times. Meyrowitz mentions television’s many cameras and recording devises as capturing many aspects of the politicians’ behaviour and thereby creating a “sidestage” or “middle region” view of their lives (Meyrowitz 1985: 271). This region is what covers the behaviour from a politician when he moves from backstage to onstage and then to backstage again. For example the way we can see the politician walking into a press conference discussing with his advisers and then greeting the political followers that wants to talk to him after the press conference (ibid.). With cameras and tape recorders easily accessible to anyone with a Smartphone anywhere, that furthermore are easily shared through both television and social media, this middle region can be said to be even further expanded as almost any action performed outside of the home can be caught on tape. Due to this “middle region” stage the politician is consequently in need of a “middle region”-role. Meyrowitz explains this role as a “behaviour that lacks the extreme formality of former front region behaviour and also lacks the extreme informality of traditional back region behaviour” (ibid.). The way I see it, this explanation matches the specifics of the behaviours on Facebook and Twitter, and the social media can therefore be said to be a “middle region” stage.
3.5.1 The middle region online

Bernie Hogan has studied Goffman’s previously mentioned ideas about the presentation of the self but in the social network setting. Hogan states that the Backstage is not necessarily a private space following Goffman’s definition that “anywhere can be a back stage to another front stage” (Hogan 2010: 379). Meaning that while much of the content on Facebook can be said to be of a private character, it is still a front put up to present yourself to your Facebook-friends. It seems many of the social media sites, like Facebook and Twitter, states their mission in creating these sites are based on the intention of connecting people together by users being visible and easily accessible. The need to present the self, to yours and others liking, is consequently needed in order to connect to the largest possible audience. Adding Thompson's notion of the shift in the relationship and actual visibility between the performer and the audience (Chapter 3.2), what the social media sites bring with it is the uncertainty of who is on the other end. This affects the front one puts up in the sense that what you upload and present can reach not only the intended audience but also the unintended (Hogan 2010: 381). To illustrate, every social media user has a choice of how much they want to share, where they want to share it and when. However, the implications of this sharing might not always be predicted. Nancy K. Baym and danah boyd use the example of a home video that go viral on YouTube, and suddenly your family is, to some extent, famous (Baym et al. 2012: 321). I say “to some extent” to highlight the fact that although the video is available for everyone who wants to see it, one has to search for it to find it and moreover, know how to search for it. When uploading a home video on YouTube, or even Facebook, one can never be quite certain of which audience you are uploading it to. For most people it might not matter who the audience are, but for politicians it is certainly important to have an intended audience in mind in order to create the best communication possible to gain followers.

Having to imagine one’s audience is a fundamental human problem rather than one distinctive to social media. But social media make it particularly challenging to understand “who is out there and when” and raises potential for greater misalignment between imagined and actual audiences (Baym et al. 2012: 323).

Following this, the politicians will have to consider the implications their social media communication might lead to, whom it will target and what they will do with it. The mentioned rhetoric of nationalism can be one way to deal with this as in picturing the
nation as the audience. Although the people of the nation are different they all have something in common in the belonging to Norway.

3.6 THE POLITICIAN ONLINE
Whether social media transform communication or not, it is clear that these new media platforms require skills in how to use it. Especially Twitter, where you only have 140 characters available, demands knowledge about how to best take advantage of the relatively small space. Meyrowitz argues that the ones who want to attain a high status in society have always needed to master the skills of the communication happening in their era (Meyrowitz 1985: 160). If we say that social media are a big part of today’s public communication, the ones in power should therefore be able to take part in the dominating discussions happening in the social media sphere. Moreover, he states: “new conceptions of communication competence and new prerequisites for control over information tend to alter the relative political and social power of different people and various sectors of the population” (ibid.). Following this statement, those who possess the most power on social media might challenge the politicians who otherwise enjoy a higher status. Consequently the politician has to work up authority and status in social media. Normally, to match the ones most popular, it is likely one try to copy or take after the way they communicate. Therefore, the political communication made on social media might change according to this new site and new skills of communication. However, this is just a suggestion in need of empirical studies of politicians’ communication before and after to be true. Nevertheless, it proves that studying the communication made on social media is important in order to understand more of what characterises this kind of communication and how they hope to gain advantages of this new communication platform.

4.0 UP FRONT: BACKGROUND ON JENS STOLTENBERG
Jens Stoltenberg, born 1959, has been Norway’s Prime Minister since the election in 2005. Earlier he had a long career in the Norwegian Labour Party (Arbeiderpartiet), where also his dad was an active member with different ministerial posts in the Norwegian government. The Stoltenberg name has therefore been associated with the Labour party for a long period of time. Jens Stoltenberg first achieved great attention for his use of social media during the Volcano outburst in Island 2010 that left people stranded on airports all over northern Europe. The Prime Minister was said to “tweet his
way home” from Spain, updating his followers on where he was, what he did and asking for advice on what to see or do on the way (Solstad 19.04.2010). CNN even did a story around a picture of Stoltenberg “running the country” on his iPad from JFK airport in New York (Viksveen 2011: 54). Since then he has kept his presence in social media and is among the most active Norwegian politicians. In 2012 he was the second most influential Norwegian figure on Twitter (Christiansen, 29.12.2012). The same year he also won two social media award for best tweet and best crisis management on social media during the time after the attacks on the 22nd of July 2011. The jury said he won because, “The Prime Minister's persona and presence online is an excellent example of crisis management, also for other leaders. Stoltenberg has managed to balance between being a great political leader while at the same time being “folkelig”, personal and close” [own translation](Fossbakken et al. 2012). Thor Viksveen published in 2011 a book about, and based on conversations with, Jens Stoltenberg. Here Viksveen describes Stoltenberg as fascinated by and with enormous beliefs in new technologies. He signed on to Facebook in 2008 and Twitter shortly after, and use them according to Viskveen in both trivial and important cases (ibid.). Since Stoltenberg sees the social media as a great opportunity to discuss politics with the people, he advised all the members of the Labour party to sign on to both Twitter and Facebook at the general party-convention as early as in 2009 (Viksveen 2011: 55). Viksveen presents Stoltenberg as a Prime Minister for the new communication age. But if he hadn’t been like this, he wouldn't have been Prime Minister either. It is simply not sufficient to just make politics anymore. You have to be able to sell politics in new and constantly changing ways adapted to a younger generation who in growing numbers are saying goodbye to the newspaper and seeking information from quicker and smarter alternatives (ibid.) [my own translation].

Thus, as mentioned above, Stoltenberg’s decision to be active on social media is probably not just because of his fascination with the technology, but also based on an agenda to capture the younger, and future, voters and engaging them in politics. These are the main reasons for why I chose Jens Stoltenberg as an example for this thesis. Moreover, his role as Prime Minister is also interesting since he is not only a leader of a political party, but also a leader for the whole nation with different political views. Being the Prime Minister, what he chooses to mention on his Facebook and Twitter accounts are often noticed and picked up by the media and sometimes they cause discussion. Worth noticing is the fact that Norway is a rather small country with only a little over
five million inhabitants. Consequently the Norwegian celebrities and public personas are not that many, and Stoltenberg having been part of this group for at least two decades can be considered a well known figure in Norway.

5.0 GETTING CLOSE: METHOD AND MATERIAL
In the following I will present my choice of method for answering my research questions. In addition to how I applied the method to my research, I will also mention the reliability of the study before I finally present how the coding procedure went on.

5.1 THE METHOD
In order to answer my research question I will analyse my material with an interpretive coding method following a grounded approach. James A. Anderson describes interpretive coding as not seeking to demonstrate theory but in generating theory through, “the identification and selection of a set of texts, the close reading of that set, and, finally, the coding of the units of analysis within the text using a grounded or emergent approach” (Anderson 2012: 287). In the following I will explain how I will go through each of these interpretive coding steps, first, the selection of the texts that will make the material for this thesis.

Since the research question is limited to only cover the year 2012 it consequently limits the amount of possible texts. The selection of text is therefore quite straightforward in that every tweet and every Facebook-post generated in the time frame of 2012 constitutes the selection of texts. When the texts have been collected, I started with the second step that is the close reading of these texts. “Close reading is the foundational method for critical empiricism” (Anderson 2012:73). The most important gain of this method is to break through the surface of the texts and find the underlying meanings and structures (ibid.). Furthermore, it provides a way to explore the range and quality of the content (Anderson 2012:228). Basically, the close reading is done by reading through all the material several times while taking notes and getting familiar with the different elements and content of the text. Only by getting close and familiar with the material can the researcher find a good ground for the interpretation. After reading a lot about qualitative methods I am somewhat amused by how many writers mention how the researcher gets intimate with the material. Although it doesn’t have the same meaning as being intimate with a person, I do understand the meaning of really knowing
your material. While this creates a deep knowledge and understanding of the texts, I believe it would be beneficial to pair this knowledge with a more quantitative method to support or verify the fairly personal understanding of the text. This leads me over to the final step in the interpretive coding method, the actual coding.

The coding of the texts can not only provide a better overall view of the content, it can also make you see the material in a different light. Anderson has some of the same idea when he states that,

not only does coding rub one’s nose in the text so to speak, but the codes (and the coding software) allow the texts to be manipulated and investigated in ways nearly impossible through the simple strength of one’s memory. Coding is powerful evidence of effective engagement (Anderson 2012: 103).

Coding is usually associated with content analysis that is used for analysing a large body of text or other types of material. As Daniel Riffe, Stephen Lacy and Frederick Fico define it,

Quantitative content analysis is the systematic and replicable examination of symbols of communication, which have been assigned numeric values according to valid measurement rules, and the analysis of relationships involving those values using statistical methods, in order to describe the communication, draw inferences about its meaning, or infer from the communication to its context, both of production and consumption (Riffe et al. 1998:20).

While this is a fairly large definition it touches upon several of the advantages that come with the method that this research also will employ. However, the interpretive coding with a grounded approach I will execute differs slightly from this purely quantitative definition.

When using a grounded theory approach the first step involves coding as many categories as possible in order to cover as many alternative interpretations as possible. However, “what keeps this process under some control is the fact that the analyst is comparing each incident to other incidents in order to decide in which category they belong “ (Lindlof et al.2002: 219). In other words, every unit is compared to the units that came before, creating a cohesive set of codes. When reading through all the units I compared the second to the first and so on, and was thereby able to spot the different content categories that led me into the second step that is making a codebook based on these findings. Although a procedure like this can result in a large and extensive set of categories, I took Thomas R. Lindlof and Brian C. Taylor’s advice about keeping it
relatively simple and limited to a broader set of categories. As they say, “Sometimes a simpler set of codes, designed only to navigate the data more easily, is the better way to proceed […] “The map is not the territory”. Translation: The code (map) is not the interpretation” (Lindlof et al. 2002: 222).

Another distinction from the purely quantitative content analysis is the researcher’s position. Instead of letting anonymous and several different coders do the coding; the only one that matters is the author of the study. In an interpretive coding the “interpreter” matters and is “personally responsible for the interpretation” (Anderson 2012: 289). Anderson mentions how the researcher is defined as the most important instrument during interpretive methods. However, it is important to note that

this instrument is not some Cartesian individual – a right mind thinking well – but rather a culturally located and informed agent engaged in somewhat conventionalized practices that are intended to provide the resources for interpretation. In the end, the argument will stand or fall on the ability of the researcher to produce a coherent and resonant narrative (Anderson 2012: 100).

Thus, as with most research, transparency is of outmost importance, not only for clarity but also for the quality and verification of the study. This leads me over to the notion of reliability.

**5.1.2 Reliability**
Reliability concerns the strength of the study in regards to if the study can be replicable and then yield the same results as when first conducted. Should the results differ greatly the study can be regarded as unreliable and thus not valid (Lindlof et al. 2002: 238). Although reliability is not as big a concern for qualitative researchers as for quantitative, considering how many qualitative studies are non-repeatable, there are still ways to measure some kind of reliability in order to validate the study (Lindlof et al. 2002: 239).

Due to the relatively small amount of material for this study, and the somewhat subjective approach I choose in interpreting it, I see my study as more qualitative than quantitative. Therefore, the requirements for the reliability are less strict than for the quantitative researchers, but still important for the study as a whole. The first part, the close reading, can be said to be a highly subjective method that would very likely yield different results if performed by another researcher, especially if that researcher was a non-Scandinavian. However, by being clear and transparent in my arguments for how I interpret what I read, the reader is able to follow and thus understand where the
findings come from. Furthermore, by choosing to interpret the same content again but with a different interpretive coding approach, the study is in some way repeated although by the same researcher. Should it be that the results from the coding would surprise or differ greatly from the close reading results, the study can be said to lack reliability. Had my coding been of the purely quantitative kind my study would have benefited greatly by having another researcher coding parts of my material to check the reliability. However, when choosing the more interpretive and thus more qualitative kind, I choose to rather focus on my own findings and let them stand on their own. I will argue that the results from the close reading and thus the close relationship to the material functions as a backbone and support for the coding result. Should they match it proves that both results lends support for the explanation of each other. In other words, it resembles a triangulation of multiple methods to verify the reliability in spite of using multiple researchers for the same purpose (Lindlof et al. 2002: 241).

5.2 THE CODEBOOKS
As mentioned above I created the codebooks, one for each site, based on my impressions from the close reading with the research question as a base and main motivation. When performing a counting of something it is important that what you count can provide you with the answers you are looking for. The variables need thus be in line with the aim of the research question and thesis. Due to my intention to not only investigate the content on Stoltenberg’s Twitter and Facebook accounts, but also compare them and see if there were any similarities or differences, I chose the same content categories for both of the codebooks.

My main aim is to investigate the topics and purpose of the communication made during a non-election year and the balance between them. The variables I choose were, based on what I have seen during the close reading; “political statement or achievement”, “event based”, “encouragement”, “condolence” and “greetings/congratulation/thanks”. What is useful to note is that one tweet or Facebook-post can contain several of these variables. Meaning, that they don’t necessarily fall under just one category variable, but can contain several. For example one tweet can contain both an encouragement and a greeting. To be even more specific in the coding of the content, I added the variables of “who is greeted/congratulated/thanked or given condolences to” as well as a “main tone/language” variable to further shed light on the substance and value of the tweet or
Facebook-post. Furthermore, an open “main purpose” variable was added to describe what I believe could be the intention behind it and provide a more analytic descriptive explanation of it. I will explain a few of the categories and what I include in them in a little bit. Finally, an overall feel of the tweet or Facebook-posts characteristic was coded as either sent from the professional Stoltenberg or the personal Stoltenberg based mostly on the content, but also on the tone and context.

The two codebooks differ regarding the coding variable for the specific functions of the two sites. For the Twitter coding, the variables “Retweets” and “Favoured” was created to be able to tell what tweets engage the most recipients. Moreover, I coded whether the tweet contained “Mention@”, “Hashtag”, “Picture”, and “Link” to measure both Stoltenberg’s ability to use the features of the site and if this had any impact on the engagement from the other Twitter users. Lastly, it was also relevant to code whether the tweet was a retweet by someone else or a reply since this can give an impression of his usage of Twitter. What more, if the tweet was a retweet, I added the variable of what part of society the owner of the original tweet represented, since this can shed light on why Stoltenberg chooses to retweet these tweets. On Facebook, the engagement was measured in “likes”, “comments” and “shares”, as these are indicators of how the posts are perceived by the Facebook-users. In addition I coded if the post included a picture or link, just as with Twitter, but here I added a “video” variable since these stand out more on Facebook than on Twitter where the videos appear as a link. Moreover, I coded if he had used the “check-in function” that allows you to show where you are when the post is written or picture is taken. These variables all signal how much he shares on the Facebook page, as well as being indicators of the familiarity with the site’s functions.

5.3 THE CODING AND HANDLING OF THE MATERIAL
Although I collected all the tweets from Twitonomy, I choose to code them directly via the Twitter site while simultaneously checking with the collected material that the tweets matched. By doing this I was able to read more out of each tweet than strictly from the downloaded excel sheet. For example I could click on the profile summary of whom he retweeted or replied to and see what category they belonged to judging by their profile presentation. Most journalists or politicians state where they work or what party they belong to in this presentation, and I was therefore able to separate them from the “ordinary” people with Twitter accounts. Furthermore, the intention of the tweet
might be easier to read and conversation topic easier to understand. Moreover, when coding on Twitter, by clicking on each tweet, if the tweet is a reply-tweet, the original tweet Stoltenberg’s tweet is a reply to, shows up. Consequently it is easier to understand the reason for replying and how to interpret his response.

Also on Facebook, I coded the material direct from the Facebook-page by scrolling down to the first post in 2012 and going up to the last uploaded post in December the same year. Due to earlier experience with coding from Facebook with certain posts not showing up or changing when going back to the site, I took a print screen image of every post so that I would have the possibility to go back and code the exact same post again. In addition I copied the text in each post into a word-document in order to easier get an overview and compare the content to the tweets. An advantage of coding directly from the Twitter- and Facebook site is the importance of coding text with their original medium in mind. The tweets and Facebook posts then function in their own context where they were created. When I read and code them, I see them as any person on Twitter and Facebook.

5.4 THE CATEGORIES AND DEFINITIONS
Due to this thesis’ deployment of a method that acquires much transparency throughout the steps of the research, I will in the following explain the most important categories in the coding scheme more thoroughly. For more details on the requirements for the other categories, see the full codebooks in the Appendix.

5.4.1 Political statement/achievement.
When reading through all of Stoltenberg’s tweets and Facebook-post I noted a lack of strong or controversial political opinions and statements. I therefore decided to put all political references into one category. What I coded as political statements is what could also be described as opinions or standpoints. This can be the typical general points that The Norwegian Labour Party is known for, everyone’s right to work and the like. Since the political standpoints sometimes can be confused with achievements, I choose to include these. Typical political achievement is considered the presentation, or even bragging, of what Stoltenberg’s government have completed or accomplished like fulfilling promises, making sure Norway stays out of the financial crisis etc.
5.4.2 Tone/ Language
In coding the tone and language Stoltenberg deploys, I divided it into formal, informal, humours, and not definable for the post with no explicit text. What I consider formal is the text where he uses full names and title of the persons he is mentioning, where the sentences are complete and there is no use of slang. Furthermore, when it seems he is speaking on behalf of others, for example the government or the country, this also falls into the formal category. Informal on the other hand is what I consider the more personal based, friendly conversational style. It includes the use of only first name, no titles and short incomplete sentences, much like an oral conversation. Moreover, Stoltenberg only speaks for himself sending a message from him to us. When he is communicating informally while at the same time trying to be funny or witty, I coded it as humours. I choose to keep this as a separate category due to a curiosity if Stoltenberg would employ this rhetorical move to attract followers. In cases where there is a mix of two or three of the tones, I coded it as the most prominent one. Finally, I added the variable “not definable” for the picture album updates or sharing of links with no additional text written by Stoltenberg.

5.4.3 Professional/Personal
Finally, as the last category when coding, I determined whether the tweet or Facebook-post could be said to be sent from the Professional Prime Minister Stoltenberg or the personal Jens Stoltenberg. Here I based my decision on the content, tone and context. Although I recognise that he as a public person will likely never be completely private, I still believe he can, and will, present parts and aspect of his private life worth analysing as personal sharing from Stoltenberg. Thus, in order to separate the two “roles” of Stoltenberg, I coded the professional Stoltenberg as to when he was communicating in his role as Norway’s Prime Minister on subject that covers politics, general national concerns or national holidays. Furthermore, condolences on behalf of the government or country, as well as greetings to Norwegian athletes, were included here. The personal Stoltenberg was coded as to when he mentioned personal preferences not related to his work as a politician or Prime Minister. Examples of this can be taste in music, hobbies, private holidays and friendly comments or replies, which does not connect to official events he participated in as the Prime Minister. It is important to note that this is my distinction between the two roles and not a universal one as I am aware that there are several possible ways to make this distinction. Furthermore, one could argue that this
should not have been its own category but rather something to be read out of the other results. However, I saw it as relevant for the ability to later compare these results with the other categories in order to also get numeric results to go with my impression results after the close reading.

6.0 CLOSER: RESULTS AND ANALYSIS
In the following I will present the most interesting findings gathered by using the method presented above. The results will first be presented following the research questions. During the presentation of the impressions and coding I will use examples from the material to highlight the typical traits of his communication. After the results have been presented they will be seen in relation to the earlier mentioned theories and I will thus be able to present a final answer to the research questions. Finally, I will look into all the answers combined and create a total impression of Jens Stoltenberg's social media use during 2012.

6.1 JENS STOLTENBERG’S ONLINE PRESENCE
Even though this study focuses on Stoltenberg's Facebook and Twitter use, it is worth noting that he also figures in other online- and social media networks. As a part of his political party The Norwegian Labour Party's website, he has his own blog. As of early May 2013, his last update was January 3rd 2012 when he posted his annual new years speech (Jens Stoltenbergs blogg). Considering the significant gap between last update and now I will assume that he possibly have decided to take a break from the blogsosphere and chosen to concentrate more on the other social media. One of these might be the popular Smartphone App, Instagram, which he recently joined. Instagram is a site where one can upload a picture, and caption if needed, to share with your followers much like how you share tweets on Twitter. The founders of Instagram state that they made the App to allow users to share instant picture updates from their lives and they “imagine a world more connected through photos” (Instagram, n.d). Since Stoltenberg’s first picture update on the 25th of September 2012 he has shared 27 photos with his 8706 followers as of early May 2013 (Jens Stoltenberg’s Instagram Photos, n.d.). Compared to the updates on Facebook and Twitter, it seems like the

1 The examples are all my own translation from Norwegian to English, unless else is specified.
Instagram App is not of highest priority of all his social media profiles. However, looking at the last 4 pictures being from the general party meeting, and with the upcoming election and previous US election in mind, I assume the uploading rate will increase significantly towards the election date.

6.1.1 Twitter Profile
As of 6th of May 2013, Jens Stoltenberg has 206 546 followers and follows 36 941 Twitter users. This creates a following/follower rate at 5.59 that according to Twitonomy suggests that Stoltenberg has some influence on Twitter considering the relatively high ratio (Twitonomy, 06.05.2013). According to Tvitre.no, a site that sets out to cover all Norwegian Twitter users, there are, as of early May 2013, 310 364 Norwegian users. The same site rank Stoltenberg at first place of all the Norwegian Twitter users judging by number of Norwegian followers (98 505) (Norsktoppen, 06.05.2013). During 2012 Stoltenberg’s account consist of 302 tweets, including retweets and replies, and all of these then make the material for the Twitter reading and coding.

6.1.2 Facebook Profile
As of 6th of May 2013 Jens Stoltenberg has 313 978 fans or followers on his Facebook fan Page. Based on statistics from Socialbakers.com, Stoltenberg rank as number 4 out of all Norwegian pages with most Norwegians fans, and as number 17 out of all Norwegian Pages with the highest total number of fans (Facebook Pages Statistics & Number of Fans, 06.05.2013). This signals a strong position among the Norwegian Facebook users. No other politician or Political party Facebook Page outranked his page, neither in the local fans nor the total fans listing (ibid.). Moreover, the same site shows that out of all his fans 254 419 fans are Norwegian and 38 070 fans are from Sweden and Denmark, leaving 21 489 fans as non-Scandinavians. This indicates that his communication on Facebook mostly stays within the Norwegian and Scandinavian boarder, which, most likely, will affect the content he chooses to spread through this site. During 2012 Stoltenberg’s profile consist of 129 posts including shared posts. These then make the material for the Facebook reading and coding.

2 Note that the statistics are based on Twitter users that are registered as Norwegian users. Since not all users state their country of origin one can suspect the real number to be higher.
6.2 THE CONTENT
In order to investigate and get a grip of the content on Stoltenberg’s Facebook and Twitter page I started with the close reading. Since my initial interest in this study came after having followed Stoltenberg on Twitter for a while, I already had somewhat familiarity with the texts at hand. However, my earlier readings of the tweets were simply quick scrolling down his profile, so although I had an impression I was not sure what the actual content of them all would be. Therefore, after first simply reading through all tweets and posts on Facebook, and then reading them again more closely while taking notes, I was able to create a better impression of the different types of content communicated through the sites.

6.2.1 Twitter Content
On Twitter I first noticed how the majority of the tweets he retweeted were political or on the more formal side. It seemed to me most of them came from his office’s official Twitter account, other politicians or government colleagues with a political statement or achievement. Moreover, many of the retweets concerned him, his party The Norwegian Labour Party, or the government in some way. In contrast, his own tweets, not the retweets, seemed less political and instead either trivial or informing about his daily events. The informational based tweets usually started with a “Today I’m on my way to...” or “Today I visited...”, what I in the following will call the event-based tweets. The other trivial, and less formal, tweets appeared to concern either his sharing of what he did during his spare time, say skiing or hiking, and replies to “ordinary tweeters”. I found it striking how many of the tweets merely answered a trivial request or humours tweet that mentioned a meeting or spotting of him. An example, and favourite of mine, is this tweet directed at him with his response;

03.09.2012 @ninastrand: I like to walk by Prime Minister @jensstoltenberg on the street #onlyinoslo

04.09.2012 @jensstoltenberg: @ninastrand next time you should stop and say hi.

This reply shows sings that he pays attention and reads through many of the tweets directed at him. The tweet from @ninastrand did not need a response, but he still took the time to answer her as a friendly gesture. On the other hand, this was a positive, harmless tweet, and his reply can certainly be read as a strategy in creating a popular appeal about himself, without the danger of being misinterpreted politically or saying something wrong. This can also be seen in relation to the mentioned study by boyd and
Marwick on celebrities staying in touch with their fans and trying to maintain a relationship with them (chapter 1.2). Although he has only answered one “fan”, the rest of his followers might see this as making an effort to maintain a relationship with the followers that reach out to him.

Another way he creates a popular appeal is through his many general greetings. The common “God Helg!” appears frequently as well as the typical holiday greeting. His interest in sports and Norwegian athletes doing well in international competitions becomes apparent, as he is quick to congratulate them on their gold and silver medals. Note that the ones he congratulate always win either gold or silver, signalling that’s what it takes to get a congratulation from the Prime Minister. Another way to look at it can be that he, as a proud Prime Minister of Norway, supports and endorses the athletes that promote Norway abroad in such a great manner. As such, it can be read as he is congratulating them on behalf of the Norwegian people. An example of the latter is;

11.08.2012 @jensstoltenberg: Congratulations to The Women's Handball team for the gold. All of Norway is proud of you!

As mentioned above, a politician will typically make appearances and try to be connected to something or someone that can result in the politician gaining a popular style or cool image. What becomes apparent when reading through the tweets is the connections he makes with cultural celebrities in Norway by discussing music and TV-series. Some examples are:

22.02.2012 @jensstoltenberg: I have to admit that I take great joy in #Lilyhammer and Frank Tagliano. I also like that the people from New York are back again.

13.11.2012 @jensstoltenberg: @aslaknore That’s correct. Pine Barrens is my favourite. #Sopranos @asbjorn1975

31.12.2012 @jensstoltenberg: @mariesimonsen Haven't seen Breaking Bad. Do you recommend it?

Stoltenberg is known for his fondness of mafia and crime series, and lists The wire, Sopranos and The Godfather-movies as his favourites on his Facebook profile information (Stoltenberg (n.d)). The topic of his cultural preferences is then often brought up when these series are discussed. If the Prime Minister likes it, and finds the time to watch it, then it better be good. It is common that celebrities share their favourites in everything from food to holiday locations. Take pop star Justin Bieber for example who got all his most eager fans to wear purple after stating it is his favourite
colour. Other politicians like Barack Obama also shares his cultural preferences, and in an interview with an American TV guide journal, note close to the previous election, he shared his and his family's TV habits, among which his favourites were, just like Stoltenberg, The Wire (Battaglio, 2012). TV preferences are an easy matter to share. While it does say something about one’s taste and personality it cannot be said to be of a very revealing kind, since it is nothing he can be responsible for or have to answer to as a Prime Minister. Nevertheless, as mentioned in chapter 2.1, it is important to like the right things as what you state you like is how you choose to present yourself in matters of taste. Moreover, these small shares create a bigger impression of closeness to the politicians or celebrities. In relation to controlling the presentation of the self, this is a good example of giving a little bit away while gaining a lot more.

Although there are many examples of tweets aiming to create a popular persona, the politician and Prime Minister Stoltenberg is simultaneously visible. I mentioned how most of the retweets seemed to be of a more political and official nature than Stoltenberg's own tweets. Some typical examples of these are:

19.06.2012 @jensstoltenberg: RT @Arbeiderpartiet: Record high employment in private sector [link]

09.10.2012 @jensstoltenberg: RT @MaritArnstad: 75% of the money spent on roads are granted from the government. 25% are toll money. The growth is much larger in public funds than toll money.

In his own tweets, the politician is often presented in relation to an official event rather than in relation to political standpoints. A typical tweet mentions where he is heading, or where he has been and what he will do or did there. A few examples are:

05.01.2012 @jensstoltenberg: Nice day at #NHO2012. Warned against too high salaries for CEO's and executives [link] and showed my #favouritegraph

28.02.2012 @jensstoltenberg: On the road to Meråker vgs. One of the country's best schools in cross country skiing and biathlon [link]

24.04.2012 @jensstoltenberg: Soon National Party Meeting. I will talk about employment and the time after 22.july. See the speech directly at 14.20 [link]

Note that although the tweets have a somewhat formal content and tone, Stoltenberg’s language can in general be said to be a mixture of both formal and informal, creating a more “folkelig” tone and a popular appeal. Meaning that both the formal and informal tone is borderline close to each other since neither of them appears in their extreme versions. As such, it can sometimes be hard to separate the two, as he creates a
distinguished communication style of his own. This lead me to note during the reading the flow and same use of language throughout the tweets, indicating that he is in fact writing the tweets himself. Or, if it isn’t him, it seems like it is the same person behind all the tweets. I will return to this matter of style in the language under the results from the interpretive coding, where the mixture of tone and sender again becomes apparent.

6.2.2 Facebook Content
My initial thought before starting this study was that Stoltenberg’s Facebook page was quite personal and revealing. I expected to find several pictures of him skiing and hiking as well as Spotify links to favourite tunes. I believe this impression was mostly based on those of his post had appeared on my newsfeed after some of my Facebook-friends had chosen to like or comment on these kinds of post. While the close reading certainly confirmed that these posts were present, what surprised me was the large number of politically charged and formal post he presented on his site. Quite many of the posts contain a relatively short, yet precise description of political decisions, accomplishments or actions backed with statistical facts and a link to more information. Many of these are in relation to official events he participates in, and the explanation for why the event is important, and consequently why he is there, is presented thoroughly. An example on this kind of post is:

02.11.2012 – Preparing sushi with Norwegian salmon at a sushi restaurant in Tokyo together with Minister of Fisheries and Coastal Affairs Lisbeth Berg-Hansen. Almost two million fishmeals are shipped from Norway to Japan daily. It takes less than two days from the time the salmon swims in Norwegians fjords till it’s ready for sale in Tokyo. That is impressive. In 2011, Norway exported seafood for more than 2,8 billion Norwegian kroner [picture]

By adding facts about the Norwegian export of fish he legitimises the reasons for him making sushi in Tokyo. Furthermore, it can be read as a trade-achievement for Norway abroad. Other similar post can be interpreted as pure information and enlightenment on political issues, for example this post about the European financial crisis:

07.01.2012 – Every day we see news about the financial crisis in Europe. Several countries have great problems. Some have over the years spent more money than they got, and have to pay for this now. Official budgets are tightened, real-estate prices are falling and the banks are struggling with uncertain loans and losses. Many countries have a high unemployment rate, especially among the youth. We are doing better here at home, but we are not un-affected by what’s going on in our neighbour countries. That is why we keep a high alert and follow the situation closely. You can read and learn more about the financial worry here [link].
With these posts the Facebook followers learns about his position in a political issue and can, if they choose to open the link, be enlightened by the Prime Minister. By using the Facebook page as a site to share information about political issues and actions, the content stays mainly at an informative level. On this note Stoltenberg fulfils the Swedish people’s expectation of how a politician should be informative on social media, according to Bergström’s mentioned study (Chapter 1.2). However, just like on Twitter, the Facebook page can also be used to spread content that can shape an impression of his persona, which relates to the previously mentioned presentation of the self. The content of these personal revealing posts are based on the same topics as the equivalent posts on Twitter, namely TV and music preferences. From the earlier mentioned tweets, we can see the resemblance in the following Facebook-posts;

01.02.2012 – Looking forward to tonight’s episode of Lilyhammer on NRK. Good Norwegian entertainment.

28.02.2012 – I listen to a lot of different music, here are some songs that I’ve been listening to the last few days. I would love to get some good tips from you. [Spotify-link]

While these posts connect him to certain cultural products, what I found to also be prominent in the Facebook-post are the almost “post-card”-like updates from his vacation trips. Like these posts:

Text: 1 Happy Easter! Still a great winter at Finse.  
Text: 2 Summer-evening at Krokskogen
When Stoltenberg chooses to greet everyone a good Easter or summer with a picture of a smiling, happy self in sport gear, most people immediately get the reference to their own holiday pictures, not to say the other holiday greetings on Facebook that tend to be of the same character. In other words, Stoltenberg’s holiday greetings blend in with the other posts on the newsfeed creating the illusion that Stoltenberg is just one of your friends also enjoying the holiday.

Overall, I would say the content contain mostly the same features and events on both sites. However, the way they are communicated is the way they differ from each other. For the political statements the statements are more extensive on Facebook. The tagline might be similar to the tweet, but the Facebook-post contains a longer reasoning for it. The character of the two sites’ form of communication can reason this. On Facebook there is more room that creates space for longer political reasoning as well as bigger pictures. The 140 characters limit on Twitter, undoubtedly limits the political reasoning of arguments. In spite of this, Twitter’s conversational character facilitates more dialog and communication with his followers. The content communicated take form as an oral headline. The conversational style of Twitter makes a good platform for the presentation of the self as a politician with a popular appeal.

6.2.3 The interpretive coding results
After having established what Stoltenberg communicates through his social media profiles through the close reading impressions, I will apply the results from the interpretive coding to give substance to what presented above. The results from the coding showed that the content on Twitter and Facebook are very similar in terms of how often the different categories of content appear on each site.

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<th></th>
<th>TWITTER</th>
<th>FACEBOOK</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLITICAL STATEMENT/</td>
<td>23,2%</td>
<td>76,8%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>EVENT BASED</td>
<td>47,4%</td>
<td>52,6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENCOURAGEMENT (Directly</td>
<td>29,8%</td>
<td>62,2%</td>
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<td>and indirectly)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONDOLENCE</td>
<td>2,6%</td>
<td>97,4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GREETING</td>
<td>35,8%</td>
<td>64,2%</td>
</tr>
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Table 1. Professional content. (Twitter n = 302, Facebook n= 129)

The only category that slightly stands out when it comes to the difference between the two sites is the encouragement category. The results show that Stoltenberg is somewhat
more encouraging on Facebook than on Twitter. A reasoning for this might be the invitation to the followers to share their stories as a comment to his personal video-greetings where he shares how he will spend the summer and Christmas holiday and the like. Although there are tweets that ask for contributions and ideas in connection to upcoming events, the Facebook site are better used for sharing longer stories or ideas, and that might also be a reasoning for encouraging followers to contribute on Facebook rather than Twitter. What might be surprising is the low percentage of political statements or achievements. This indicates that Twitter and Facebook are mostly used for other things than spreading political points or opinions. I believe it is important to note here that 2012 was not an election year, and the need to convince voters about having the best politics was probably not a priority. Rather, when being elected it is more important to show that you are doing your job. This becomes evident in the high percentage of event-based updates. The presentation of the meetings he attends and places he visits portrays a Prime Minister at work. After all, that is what he was elected to do, work.

By counting how many of the tweets and Facebook-posts contain one or more of these professional content categories, we find that only 24 tweets and 14 Facebook-post don’t fall into any of them. Thus, the majority of the content fall under one or several of the mentioned categories signalling a trend on both sides of following these five themes. However, by looking at the other end of the scale, we find only one tweet and two Facebook posts containing four of the categories in one update and none contain five. As such, we can say that all the categories are hardly ever merged together, and neither are three of them. But, it is interesting to note that about a third of all the tweets and posts contain two categories. It is common that a post that is mainly about an event also includes a greeting to whom he met, or that a political standpoint or achievement is pared with an encouragement to keep up the good work or do more. What this proves, is that usually, the posts with the highest category value will be the most political posts. Meaning that, bearing in mind how all these categories are typical of how a Prime Minister communicates, the paring of several of them will likely increase its political force. Therefore, considering the low amount of zero category-value, we can again see how most of what Stoltenberg communicates on these sites is related to his work as a Prime Minister and/or politics. It is worth noting that by looking at table 2, we once
again see that the content on both Twitter and Facebook are similar and follow the same trends.

![Graph showing category-value of tweets and Facebook-posts. (Twitter n=302, Facebook n=129)](image)

Table 2. Category-value of tweets and Facebook-posts. (Twitter n=302, Facebook n=129)

I mentioned that I during the close reading noted how most of the political tweets were retweeted tweets. The coding results showed that 18,9% of all the retweets (26,8% of all tweets) were tweets from other politicians, The Norwegian Labour Party’s Twitter account or his office “Statsministerens kontor” account (Appendix, Table 5). Thus, the impression that most of the retweets were political is further strengthened by these results. Also worth noting is that journalists or news media are the second most retweeted group. These retweets were mostly in relation to political news or articles concerning official events or statements. In other words, both these groups accounts for much of the more political or professional content on Twitter. The focus on politicians, parties and news journalism is also evident in who he chooses to greet, congratulate or send thanks to (Appendix, Table 6). Together they are the largest group of those who received these kinds of messages and consequently also were mentioned in the tweets. When comparing this to Facebook however, we find that the politicians and party organisations are almost never mentioned in the same way and news journalism not at all. This indicates that Stoltenberg doesn’t communicate with politicians as much on Facebook as he does on Twitter. The majority of these kinds of greetings on Facebook are directed as general greetings to all his followers, closely followed by athletes and
other sport teams. While the athletes and general greetings also appear on Twitter, what further separates the greetings on Twitter from Facebook is the communication made to “ordinary people”. These appear in Stoltenberg’s replies to the typical trivial tweets mentioned above. To summarise, even though the greetings appear just as frequently on both sites, the receiver of these differ. The politicians are neglected in favour of the people on Facebook, but highlighted on Twitter.

6.3 THE BALANCE
In order to answer my second research question regarding the balance between the appearance of Prime Minister Stoltenberg and the Person Jens Stoltenberg, I will apply statistical data retrieved from the interpretive content analysis in addition to the impressions mentioned above. When coding the tweets and Facebook posts I determined, based on both content and tone, as well as the defined distinctions described above, which part of Stoltenberg acted as the most prominent sender. The results showed that the professional Prime Minister Stoltenberg was the most prominent on both sites, however, more so on Facebook than Twitter.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TWITTER</th>
<th>FACEBOOK</th>
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<tr>
<td>PROFESSIONAL</td>
<td>70,5%</td>
<td>82,9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERSONAL</td>
<td>29,5%</td>
<td>17,1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100% (n=302)</td>
<td>100% (n=129)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3: Professional Stoltenberg vs. Personal Jens*

What becomes clear is that the balance between the professional and personal Stoltenberg is not even. The Prime Minister is more visible than the person, especially on Facebook. How can we explain this? Well, I believe some of the explanation lies in the specifics of the sites. On Facebook you can either post your own content or share somebody else's post on your page. Out of the 129 posts from 2012, only 7 where shared posts, meaning the majority of the content was his own creation. Twitter on the other hand offers possibilities to both retweet (similar to sharing a Facebook-post) and reply. When the reply functions as its own tweet, and many of the replies are, as seen above, of trivial non-political content, the person Jens Stoltenberg who are behind many of these replies consequently becomes more prominent. Had Facebook shown his responses to other Facebook-posts, if he even answers any, as posts on his wall, the balance might have looked more like the Twitter-balance. Thus, the more he interacts the more personal he is.
Another argument is Stoltenberg’s own perception of these sites. In an interview done in November 2012, at a morning radio show, Stoltenberg mentioned that he does have his own private, and secret, Facebook account and notes how his Facebook page is in fact a page and not a regular personal profile (Stoltenberg, 2012). Thus, when Stoltenberg wants to say something on Facebook he chooses which out of two sites, the secret profile or the official page, he wants to update. Most likely, then, the sharing of the most personal updates will be uploaded to the secret personal account, leaving the more image-creating personal updates for the official page. Whereas, when it comes to his Twitter profile he has, to my knowledge, only one profile. As I see it, when the choice of profile to update is gone, the shorter personal tweets often thought of as an impulse, might easier find its way to the single Twitter account than one of the two Facebook accounts. For example, the tweet from December 25th saying:

25.12.2012 @jensstoltenberg: It’s a good start to the Christmas-days that @maritbjoergen says she’s in good shape.

Marit Bjørgen is one of Norway’s best cross-country skiers, and the fact that she is in good shape might indicate even more gold medals to Norway during the ski tournaments that take part during the Christmas days. I believe this is an example of an impulse update, probably published shortly after the news of her recovery. The same event was not mentioned on Facebook, indicating that Stoltenberg more often turn to Twitter for these kinds of quick and impulsive updates that neither can be said to be of any political or professional value. As a result, Twitter becomes the site where it is most likely Stoltenberg will post the spontaneous, non-political updates. The higher volume of tweets (302) compared to Facebook post (129) also reason this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TWITTER</th>
<th>FACEBOOK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FORMAL</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
<td>57.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INFORMAL</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>HUMOURS</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDEFINED</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (n=302)</td>
<td>100% (n=129)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Tone/Language

The results regarding the formality of the communication (Table 4) concur with what I mentioned above regarding how Stoltenberg sees and uses Twitter. The more impulsive and spontaneous tweets also increase the use of an informal and humours language. Several photo-album updates, as well as the sharing of news articles, with no additional
text from Stoltenberg, cause the relatively high number of undefined tone among the Facebook-posts. One can speculate, that if these posts would have additional text, it is likely that they would have been of the formal kind, considering that the pictures and articles can be related to his work. This would have led to an increase in the percentage of formal tone on Facebook, separating itself further from the tone on Twitter.

When looking at the different types of tone/language in comparison to the two roles of Stoltenberg, the professional and personal, we get a clearer view of the mixture of the two roles an just how “folkelig” he is on social media (Appendix, Table 7 & 8). On Facebook, where I have earlier shown that he is the most professional out of the two sites, we see the clear distinction between the formal professional and informal personal. However, the popular appeal does appear in his professional posts with 15,5 % of them being of an informal tone. Note how there is less attempt to be witty or humours on Facebook, at least from the professional side of him where there was none humours posts detected. On Twitter the gap between the formal and informal tweets from the professional Stoltenberg is smaller than on Facebook, with just over half of the tweets sent from this part of Stoltenberg falling under the informal and humours tone. What is interesting to note is how, very few, but still some tweets from the personal Stoltenberg are written in a formal tone. Indicating yet again his distinctive style in language as a mixture of the two.

To sum up so far, there is a relatively fair balance between Twitter and Facebook content, and an uneven balance between the professional and personal Stoltenberg in favour for the first. However, the person Stoltenberg appears in the communication itself by often using an informal approach, gaining a popular appeal. In other words, while it appears Stoltenberg is quite personal on both Facebook and Twitter, most of the content of the sites are actually more on the professional, political side, although, the strongest – or most controversial- political opinions and standpoints are left out.

6.4 THE ENGAGEMENT

Finally, to end the analysis of the results, I will answer my last question about what of the content, and consequently what part of Stoltenberg, the Twitter- and Facebook-users seem to be most engaged in. I will measure the engagement here by the amounts of retweets on Twitter and likes on Facebook. While I am aware that Twitter also have a
“favourite”-function, and Facebook engagement also can be seen in amount of comments and shares, I choose to focus on the retweets and likes since I find these comparable and therefore more relevant to discuss in relation to each other. However, it is important to note how audiences and society might also engage in other ways, say larger discussions in both traditional media as well as in private settings. Nevertheless, for this study I choose to focus on the material at hand, thus the retweets and likes, and the answers this material can provide.

If we start with the retweets on Twitter, we see that the overall amounts of retweets are quite low (Appendix, Table 9). Actually, most tweets received fewer than 10 retweets, proving a low general engagement from his Twitter followers. Looking at the coding results, 50% of all tweets received between 0 and 12 retweets. The remaining 50% are spread out ranging from 13 to 3529. On Facebook the numbers are a little higher, ranging from 110 to 56 346 likes (Appendix, Table 10). But again the majority of the post are at the lower end of the scheme, 74,4% of the posts received under 5000 likes, 13,2% ranged from 5001 to 10 000 likes, leaving the posts with over 10 000 likes to 12,4%.

The tweet that was retweeted the most was, not surprisingly, from 22.july saying; “We will never forget”. It is worth mentioning that the identical post on Facebook was the most liked post on Facebook as well with 56 346 likes. With the 22nd of July being a special case, the second most retweeted tweet, with 1037 retweets, concerned the sudden death of the young Norwegian Olympic swimmer, Alexander Dale Oen. This happened on the 1st of May, a national day off, which might be one of the reasons for why this exact condolence tweet received more retweets than others of the same sort. In addition, the shock of a young athlete dying as a result of a heart attack, a few months before the summer Olympics, grew to be a great tragedy that received a lot of attention in the press and consequently on social media. Regarding the “part” Stoltenberg played in this tweet, he sent his condolences by saying:

01.05.2012 @jensstoltenberg: Alexander Dale Oen was a great athlete for a small country. My thoughts go out to his family and friends.

The first part can be seen as the Prime Minister Stoltenberg representing Norway in paying tributes for what he did for the country. While the latter part is a common, and also seen as a formal phrase that often accompany condolences, it is also somewhat
personal in the sense that it is his thoughts, not ours, that go out to the family and friends. This illustrates what discussed above about how Stoltenberg manages to be slightly personal while at the same time keeping the professional distance. If we compare the tweet to the similar Facebook post, we find a good example of how the lack of space limitation on Facebook provides Stoltenberg with an opportunity to say more and act more strongly as a Prime Minister.

01.05.2012: It was with deep sorrow I received the message about the death of Alexander Dale Oen. My thoughts go out to his family, friends and the large sport-environment of which he was such a vivid part. Alexander Dale Oen was a great athlete for a small country. Norway has lost a role model for many youths and one of our biggest hopes for the Olympics this summer.

This post received 10 870 likes and is then among the total of 16 post that received over 10 000 likes in 2012. We find the same personal touch in the use of “I” and “my”, but the part where he speaks on behalf of the country is more extensive in the Facebook-post compared to the tweet.

Looking at other tweets that received high amounts of retweets, an interesting result is that many of them can be said to be of newsworthy content. Just like the death of Dale Oen proved to be a great news story, other updates about the current events receive a high volume of retweets. Examples are the school shootings in Connecticut in December, and the crisis in Syria, but also more joyful current events like the Olympic Games in London and Norwegian award ceremonies. However, even though I assumed Twitter to have a higher amount of engagement on the current affairs content than on Facebook, the trend seem to be the same among the Facebook users. Also Facebook users engage more in the updates that relate to what is happening at the time of the upload. The second most liked Facebook post for example was his congratulation to Barack Obama on winning the US election, written in Norwegian. This finding supports yet again Bergström’s finding of how the audience expects the politicians to provide them with information (Chapter 1.2 & 6.2.2). What the findings here can add to this is that the audience seem to not only expect these kinds of updates, but also engage in them. It is interesting to note how these updates often concern matters out of Stoltenberg’s control. Meaning, Stoltenberg does not create the topic or event he is referring to, but it is the fact that he is referring to it that matters. It is likely he aims to present his awareness for what is happening in both Norway and the world in order to appear updated and thus be associated with the major happenings. This can create an image of
an up-to-date and responsive Prime Minister, much like how being associated with celebrities can create an image of being cool (Chapter 3.4).

At the other end of the scale, almost all of the tweets that did not get retweeted were replies from Stoltenberg. Many of them are short and do not make much sense on its own without the original tweet. Thus, it is understandable that Stoltenberg’s followers did not choose to retweet and share these kinds of tweets with their own followers. Part of the reason for the low engagement in general on Stoltenberg’s Twitter profile might be that the thresholds to press retweet on Twitter is higher than to press like on Facebook. I reason this with how the effect of pressing like or retweeting a tweet plays out. When you press like on something on Facebook, the effects of this is barely noticeable to your Facebook-friends considering how it doesn't show up on your profile that you liked a picture or a status. On Twitter however, when retweeting a tweet, not only does it show up on your profile among your own tweets, it also shows up in the twitterfeed to everyone that follows you with your name on it. Thus, you may become associated with the tweet in mention’s content and its sender. Consequently, I believe many think more before retweeting a tweet than liking a Facebook-post.

The lowest amount of likes on Facebook appeared on posts that dealt with The Norwegian Labour Party’s politics or party meetings. This suggest that the majority of his followers might be of other political origin than The Norwegian Labour Party, that they follow him since he is the Prime Minister and thus don’t care too much about the post concerning his party. Surprisingly, many of the picture album updates, especially the ones without explicit text, also received a low amount of likes. This shows that although Facebook is a good medium to share pictures, the lack of text or explanation concerning the context might be part of the reason for why they don’t engage the Facebook users to the same extent as the current affairs posts. However, there are always exceptions, a picture postcard from a mountain hike during the summer received as much as 12 566 likes and the picture of Stoltenberg and Trond Giske, under the road sign that said “Giske” proved to be popular on both sites with 17 383 likes on Facebook and 437 retweets on Twitter.

In sum, what seems to engage the most on both Twitter and Facebook is, just like what gave him the social media award, when he communicates as a great leader but with a popular appeal and sense of personality. A retweet or like sends out a kind of approval
to Stoltenberg saying this was a good act or statement, in fact so good we want to share it with our own followers and friends. By doing so, we can detect a certain bragging about the Prime Minister of Norway. Look what we've got!; a Prime Minister with self-irony and a sense of humour, a Prime Minister who is updated on current events, and a Prime Minister who works and cares about the people he meet. And what more, he is on Twitter and Facebook just like us.

7.0 UP CLOSE: FINAL RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
After having gone through the most important results from the analysis of Stoltenberg’s tweets and Facebook-posts of 2012, I will in the following focus on summarising my findings and tie them back to the mentioned theories and thereby establish the final results to my research questions.

7.1 Content to promote authority and authenticity
I found that the majority of both tweets and Facebook-posts fell into one or more of the content categories I searched for and labelled as part of typical Prime Minister themes. In other words most of the content communicated through these sites are relatively safe in their topics in terms of coming from a Prime Minister. This can be linked to the theories I presented earlier about visibility and a wide spread of audience. Visibility is as Thompson noted a two edged sword and can be connected to a certain kind of fragility (Thompson 2005: 42). What a politician shares on his social media profile can quickly be turned against him by the media or other social media users. Thus, this might explain the presented high volume of professional content and tone, and what more the lack of strong and controversial opinions. Furthermore, considering he is the Prime Minister of Norway, he can imagine his audience to come from all over the country and not only be his party followers. Therefore, the communication made is more general to target the biggest audience possible and this is done with national references that most people can recognise. By communicating on behalf of the country Stoltenberg might also aim to maintain or gain authority. I mentioned Meyrowitz fear of the politicians becoming too ordinary (Chapter 3.5), and while a social media site like Facebook can certainly contribute to this, Stoltenberg tries to keep a safe distance by limiting the most personal tweets and posts to a minimum focusing on his professional tasks. However, it is simultaneously important for a politician to seem genuine and authentic. Since the audience judge his authenticness by what they know of him, Stoltenberg do need to
share certain aspects of his person and personality (Pels 2003: 48). These are what create a trust in him from the people, which is of outmost importance for a politician. Hence, he has chosen to share some of his preferences in music and TV-series as well as picture postcards from his holidays or hikes in the nature. Note, the trips and holidays are all from somewhere in Norway, so even though it is somewhat personal he still promotes what Norway, "his" country, has to offer. So to answer the first research question of what Stoltenberg communicates on Facebook and Twitter during the non-election year of 2012, we see it was mostly content in relation to his work as Prime Minister, ranging from promoting what he did, where he went, why he went and with whom. Furthermore he greeted Norwegian athletes when they did well and made sure to send out general greeting on national holidays.

7.2 A balance that tips over in favour of the professional
This leads me over to the second research question concerning the balance between the professional Prime Minister Stoltenberg versus the person Jens Stoltenberg. Here I showed how the professional Stoltenberg was more prominent than the personal, and more so on Facebook than Twitter. Placing this finding in relation to the theories about the presentation of the self it seems it is the professional self that is presented the most. This includes among other things the updates on official events he is participating in and his mentions about national concerns or festivities. Following Goffman’s ideas about the manipulated act and putting up a front (Chapter 3.4), we see how Stoltenberg seems to create a front in being a good Prime Minister for Norway. It is useful to see this front in relation to the context it appears in, meaning the front investigated in this study can be labelled Stoltenberg’s social-media-front. It might very likely separate itself from his other media fronts, for example the one he puts up during a televised debate or a radio interview. Earlier I argued that the social media fits into the middle region and consequently the middle region role. Meyrowitz defined this role as lacking “the extreme formality of the front region and also lack[ing] the extreme informality of traditional back region behaviour” (Meyrowitz 1985: 271). This description is recognisable in Stoltenberg’s tone in both the tweets and Facebook-posts. Although most of the content is from the professional part of Stoltenberg, the tone in which many of them are written lower down the formal and official feel, creating a “folkelig” Prime Minister with a popular appeal. By following Corner’s three spheres of action (Chapter 3.1.2), we can further place the social media and the social-media-front in the sphere of the public and
popular. It can be placed here as it fits well into his definition of a sphere that is highly presentational in its actions aiming to portray a person of certain qualities (Corner 2003: 75). Thus, in the presentation of his work there is also a mission to portray his best qualities as well as identity in these performances. This is done by focusing on all his good deeds and eager in his role as the Prime Minister. By highlighting the reasons for being where he is, the implications, critique or questions concerning if he should have been somewhere else is somewhat diminished. He is, as I mentioned earlier, deploying the chance to act as his own editor and skip having to go through the media to get attention (Chapter 3.2). The “editor” Stoltenberg chooses to portray updates about his official visits, the work he does there, and how great these places and people he visits are. Furthermore, he is updating about current events, trying to inform his followers about what is happening and why, while still presenting himself as a caring and “folkelig” Prime Minister of the people. Thus, the professional Stoltenberg is in focus on his Twitter and Facebook profile, but the popular appeal image is making sure the followers get a glint of the personal Jens as well.

7.3 The “folkelig” and professional Prime Minister earns likes and retweets
Lastly, I will sum up the findings about the most engaging and popular updates on Twitter and Facebook, which additionally indicate which part of Stoltenberg the followers react the most to. Part of being the professional Prime Minister is to be known by the many, and thus being a celebrity. I mentioned the similarities between a politician and a celebrity (Chapter 3.3), and these traits can also be found on Stoltenberg’s Twitter and Facebook sites. For example, the already mentioned authority creates the notion that he is someone to look up to, much like many celebrities experience as well. Among the trivial tweets he replied to, many concerned their excitement of meeting him when skiing or walking past him in the city. Thus, he is someone whose appearance is often noticed whether on official occasions or not. In relation to Krieken’s interpretation of Henry the VIII’s creation of an action-man image as more than being a king but a performance of kingship, we can say that neither for Stoltenberg is it enough to just be the Prime Minister, he also needs to perform “Prime Minister-ship” (Krieken 2012: 102). Hence, also on social media where he is, as Hogan pointed out (Chapter 3.3), always visible for those who look for him. When he is performing this “Prime Minister-ship”, his followers respond and rewards him with likes and retweets. It is the great Prime Minister with the popular appeal that creates the most engagement on the two sites. The
popular appeal is thus, and not surprisingly, popular. In terms of this case study dealing with the Prime Minister of Norway, we can see this is relation to the Norwegian culture. I mentioned Billing's theories about how politicians flag the nationalism with banal words and references to “its people” and “our country” (Billing 1995:98). While he certainly does this in his mentions on Norway’s progress and success, I see it as useful to see this in relation to the Norwegian spirit or norms of how does in high positions should act like. King Olav the 5th was knows as the “King of the people” (“Folkekongen” in Norwegian), and is particularly remembered from when he took the tram from the city up to Holmenkollen to ski in 1973. This was an act that just reinforced the impression of closeness to the people (Isaksen, 2010). “King Olav’s warm “folkelig” style, together with his dignified performance in official events made him extremely popular” (Johansen et al. 2005)[my own translation]. As even Stoltenberg himself said at the 10 year marking of his passing, “[we remember him as] exalted royalty - simply “folkelig”” (Stoltenberg, 2001) [my own translation]. Adding this to what I have found and discussed up until now, we can spot a resemblance between the appearances of Olav the 5th and the Prime Minister Stoltenberg. Even though he is not royalty, I will argue, based on my findings, that he strives to keep a somewhat similar exalted and dignified appearance when needed in official and ceremonial events, while being one with the people outside of them.

This importance of remembering to be close to the people can be linked to “Janteloven”, a way of thinking about those in power as; he can’t think he is any better than us (Store Norske Leksikon, 2005-2007). Isaksen called “Janteloven” the negative side of the Norwegian equality (Isaksen, 2010). But, even though Stoltenberg portrays a “folkelig” him that is just as much normal as the rest of the people, a Prime Minister still has to act out his role, take responsibility and behave like a Prime Minister should. Thus, the balance between the two types of personas is nothing new. What might have changed is the new ways to deal with this balance. The dignified and exalted might be replaced with a notion of being professional, and being one with the people is performed in the presentation of doing the same things as everyone else is doing. For example, simply the fact that he is active on Facebook and Twitter like many of us are is a way of showing this “normality”. Even more so, one might run into him when he goes skiing were everybody else in Oslo go skiing or run into him on the street like @ninastrand did. What King Olav did once started a trend of what was to become a sort of ideal in
Norway; to be “folkelig”, and to be visible for, and close to, the people. Therefore, those of Stoltenberg’s tweets and Facebook-posts that resemble or follow this ideal are among the most liked and retweeted updates. The performance of great “Prime Minister-ship” is popular and appreciated by his followers, as long as he leave out the specific party politics of the Norwegian Labour Party.

8.0 CLOSE: CONCLUSION

“Hello @jensstoltenberg I’m writing a master thesis about you on social media. I find you are formal but “folkelig”, professional but personal. Agree?”

Norway’s Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg has not found the time to respond to this tweet yet. So, I take that as a yes. However, in this thesis I have proven why I can make that statement in that tweet. Using an interpretive coding with a grounded approach method I investigated Stoltenberg’s communication on Twitter and Facebook during 2012. By applying theories about visibility, the presentation of the self, image creation and political communication, I aimed to understand how he deploys these social media sites. One of the most prominent findings is how the balance between the Twitter and Facebook content is relatively even, while the balance between the professional Stoltenberg and the personal Jens is uneven in favour for the first. I found he uses the two social media sites to portray his performance of “Prime Minister-ship”, being professional but with the important popular appeal of being “folkelig” that presents glints of the person Jens Stoltenberg. The little personal traits contribute to increase his authenticity while the focus on the professional maintains his authority. Moreover, results showed that he was more personal on Twitter; partly due to the way he used the reply function to interact with his Twitter followers. Since Facebook lack this feature, the communication here is more like a monolog even though it happens he encourages his followers to contribute with their stories. Furthermore, the bigger space on Facebook allows Stoltenberg to make longer and more extensive statements creating a more professional and political feel than the shorter 140 character tweets on Twitter. However, what is interesting to note is how the followers on both Twitter and Facebook engage in the same content indicating that the interaction on Twitter doesn’t necessarily create a bigger engagement from the public. With a steady flow of communication uploaded throughout the year, and a high follower base in relation to other politicians in Norway, I will argue that Stoltenberg knows how to use social media. Of course, there
can always be improvements, and both content and volume of updates can change during 2013 with the upcoming election. Maybe the political statements and his professional self will be stronger, or maybe the personal and “føkelige” part of him will become even more explicit. So far we don’t know. But, on Twitter and Facebook during 2012, Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg was indeed, up close and professional.

9.0 LIMITATIONS & FURTHER RESEARCH
Even though this research provided interesting findings, there are a few limitations I would like to note. Firstly, as this is a case study limited to one year of collected data it is not possible to draw general conclusions from these findings. However, the findings can contribute to further studies on both Stoltenberg’s other communication and other politicians’ use of social media. Due to space and time limits I was not able to compare Stoltenberg’s social media communication to other mediated communication, say televised speeches or debates, to place the findings into a broader context, but I suggest this as a topic for further research. Another limitation is the subjective quality of this research. The findings are based on my interpretations alone, and can thus not be said to be objective. Nevertheless, I have strived to be transparent about my method choices and extensive in the explanations of the analysis, so the reader would be able to follow the argumentation that thus lead to valuable findings. I am aware of the fact that I as a Norwegian might take certain things for granted or lack ability to see everything from the outside in. On the other hand, this insight might also have strengthened my analysis of the communication due to my familiarity with, and understanding of, Norwegian culture. As other suggestions to further research, it would be interesting to perform the same study on the other Scandinavian Prime Ministers and see whether they use or present themselves differently on social media. Furthermore, since this study concerns Stoltenberg’s social media communication outside of an election, it would be beneficial to compare it to this year’s (2013) communication, as this will provide answers to the questions concerning possible differences between a non-election year and an election year. Interesting questions would be if the person Stoltenberg is more visible, or if the political standpoints increase in volume or even controversy?
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## APPENDIX

### 1. CODING GUIDE TWITTER

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<th>Fill in the date of the tweet</th>
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<th>3. NUMBER OF RETWEETS</th>
<th>Fill in how many times this tweet has been retweeted</th>
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<th>4. NUMBER OF FAVOURITES</th>
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<td>2. Retweet</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Politician (Norwegian)</td>
<td>Including: AUF members/ political secretary/ political department/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 2. Politician (foreign) | |
|-------------------------| |

| 3. “Arbeiderparties” Twitter account | |
|-----------------------------| |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. “Statsministerens kontor” twitter account</th>
<th>Including; his 2 political advisors @sindre,@HansKrAumundsen/ @Regieringen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| 5. Celebrity (Norwegian) | |
|-------------------------| |

| 6. Celebrity (foreign) | |
|-----------------------| |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7. Journalist or news media (Norwegian)</th>
<th>News media include both print, online, television and radio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8. Journalist or news media (Foreign)</th>
<th>Same as above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9. Unknown</th>
<th>Could be an ordinary citizen or any of the above but unknown to the researcher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| 10. Organisation | |
|-----------------| |

| 11. Other | |
|-----------| |

| 12. Not a retweet | |
|-----------------| |
### 7. RETWEET WITH @jensstoltenberg?

**Does the tweet retweeted contain @jensstoltenberg?**

1. Yes
2. No, but the tweet contains his full name
3. No
4. Not a retweet

### 8. REPLY?

**Fill in if the tweet is a reply and to whom**

- 1. Politician (Norwegian)
- 2. Politician (foreign)
- 3. Youth politician from AUF
- 4. Celebrity (Norwegian)
- 5. Celebrity (foreign)
- 6. Journalist or news media (Norwegian)
- 7. Journalist or news media (Foreign)
- 8. Unknown
- 9. Organisation
- 10. Other
- 11. Not a reply

### 9. MENTION (@)

**Does the tweet contain a mention (@)?**

1. Yes, and not in a reply function
2. Yes, in a reply function
3. No

### 10. HASHTAG (#)

**Fill in if the tweet contains a hashtag.**

1. Yes
2. No

### 11. PICTURE

**Does the tweet contain a picture?**

1. Yes
   - Only when the picture shows up when clicking the tweet
2. No
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12. LINK</th>
<th>Does the tweet contain a link?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Yes</td>
<td>2. No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>13. POLITICAL STATEMENT OR ACHIEVEMENT</th>
<th>Does the tweet contain a political statement or achievement?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Yes</td>
<td>2. No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>14. EVENT BASED</th>
<th>Does the tweet mention or play on a specific official event Stoltenberg will or have participated in?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Yes</td>
<td>2. No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>15. ENCOURAGEMENT</th>
<th>Does the tweet contain an encouragement?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ex: Encouraging the followers to contribute with stories or advice, or encouraging other politicians to take action etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Yes</td>
<td>2. No, but indirectly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>16. CONDOLENC</th>
<th>Does the tweet contain a condolence for someone's death, loss or a tragedy/natural disaster?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Yes</td>
<td>2. No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>17. GREETING / CONGRATULATION / THANK YOU</th>
<th>Does the tweet include a greeting / congratulation or “thank you” to someone?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Yes</td>
<td>2. No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 18. WHO IS GREETED / CONGRATULATED / THANKED OR SENT CONDOLENCE TO?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If the tweet contains a greeting / congratulation / thank you or condolence, who is it directed at?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. An athlete or sport team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. A politician Including AUF members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. A political group or organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Another organisation / company / business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. A celebrity / royalty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. An &quot;unknown&quot; individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. General greeting Ex: Merry Christmas, &quot;God helg&quot;, Thank you to a larger group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Journalist / news media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Not a greeting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 19. MAIN TONE/ LANGUAGE

Fill in what you consider the overall main tone of the language used in the post

| 1. Formal Use of full sentences, titles, full name. Political expressions and speech, |
| 2. Informal / "Folkelig" Friendly, easy conversation, small-talk, uses only first name. |
| 3. Humours / Playful When trying to be witty or funny |
| 4. Not Definable When there is no explicit text |

## 20. MAIN PURPOSE

Fill in what you consider to be the main purpose of the tweet
21. FINALLY; PROFESSIONAL JENS OR PERSONAL JENS?

| The professional | Tweeting in his role as Norway’s PM on subjects that covers politics or general national concerns or national holidays. Sending condolences on behalf of the government as well as greetings to Norwegian athletes etc. Also including retweets that connects to his profession |
| The personal     | Tweeting on personal preferences not related to his work as a politician or PM. Like personal taste in music or culture, hobbies, skiing, private holidays or trips etc. Friendly replies that don’t connect to political statements or specific official events attended. Also including retweets that connects to his personal life/preferences etc. |
## 2. CODING GUIDE FACEBOOK

1. **NUMBER**
   - Give the post a number

2. **DATE**
   - Fill in the date of the post

3. **OWN POST OR SHARED POST**
   - 1. Own post
   - 2. Shared post

4. **IF SHARED, WHO'S POST ORIGINALLY?**
   - Fill in who’s post the shared tweet is created by.

5. **LIKES**
   - Fill in the amount of likes

6. **COMMENTS**
   - Fill in the amount of comments

7. **SHARES**
   - Fill in the amount of shares

8. **PICTURE**
   - Does the post include picture
     - 1. Yes
     - 2. No

9. **VIDEO**
   - Does the post include a video
     - 1. Yes
     - 2. No
**10. LINK**

Does the post include a link

1. Link to Arbeiderpartiets site
2. Link to Regeringens official site
3. Link to another Norwegian political party / department
4. Link to a Norwegian newspaper or TV-channel
5. Link to a foreign newspaper or TV-channel
6. Link to Arbeiderpartiets YouTube Channel
7. Other link
8. No link

**11. CHECKED IN SOMEWHERE**

Has he used the check-in function?

1. Yes
2. No

**12. POLITICAL STATEMENT OR ACHIEVEMENT?**

Does the post contain a political statement or achievement? (Explicit in the text)

1. Yes
2. No

**13. EVENT BASED**

Does the post play on a specific official event Stoltenberg has or will participate in? (not personal trips)

1. Yes
2. No

**14. ENCOURAGEMENT**

Does the post contain an encouragement?

Ex: Encouraging the followers to contribute with stories or advice, or encouraging other politicians to take action

1. Yes
2. No, but indirectly
3. No

**15. CONDOLENCE**

Does the post contain a condolence for someone's death, loss or a tragedy/natural disaster?

1. Yes
2. No

**16. GREETING/ CONGRATULATION / THANK YOU**

Does the post include a greeting, congratulation or Thank you to someone?

1. Yes
2. No
### 17. WHO IS GREETED/ CONGRATULATED/ THANKED OR SENT CONDOLENCES TO?

**If the post contains this, whom is it directed at?**

1. An athlete or sport team
2. A politician
3. A political group/ party or organisation
   - Including political departments like the army.
4. Another organisation/ company /business
5. A celebrity / royalty / artist/ war-hero
6. An "unknown individual"
7. A general greeting
   - Ex: Holiday greetings, "God helg", thank you to a larger group
8. A journalist /news media
9. Other
10. Not a greeting

### 18. MAIN TONE / LANGUAGE

Fill in what you consider to be the main tone/ language in the post.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TONE/ LANGUAGE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Formal</td>
<td>Use of full sentences, titles, full name. Political expressions and speech,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Informal</td>
<td>Friendly, easy conversation, small-talk, uses only first name.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Humours/ Playful</td>
<td>When he tries to be witty or funny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Not definable</td>
<td>When there's no text</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 19. MAIN PURPOSE

Fill in what is the main purpose of the post. What does he achieve with this post?

### 20. PROFESSIONAL STOLTENBERG OR PERSONAL JENS?

Based on the tone and purpose, what “part of” Stoltenberg this post represent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART OF STOLTENBERG</th>
<th>EXPLANATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The professional</td>
<td>Posting in his role as Norway’s PM on subjects that covers politics, general national concerns or holidays. Sending condolences on behalf of the country/government as well as greeting to Norwegian athletes. Including shared post that connects to his profession.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The personal</td>
<td>Posting personal preferences not related to his work as a politician or PM. Ex, personal taste in music and culture, hobbies, skiing, private holidays or trips etc. Anything not connected to his role as PM.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. RESULTS TABLES

**TABLE 5: OWNER OF RETWEETED TWEET APPEARING ON JENS STOLTENBERG’S TWITTER PROFILE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OWNER OF RETWEETED TWEET</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>PERCENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POLITICIAN</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOREIGN POLITICIAN</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“ARBEIDERPARTIET” TWITTER ACCOUNT</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“STATSMINISTERENS KONTOR” TWITTER ACCOUNT</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>9,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NORWEGIAN CELEBRITY</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOREIGN CELEBRITY</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0,7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NORWEGIAN JOURNALIST OR NEWS MEDIA</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOREIGN JOURNALIST OR NEWS MEDIA</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNKNOWN</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORGANISATION</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT A RETWEET</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>73,2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>302</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 6: WHO IS GREETED BY JENS STOLTENBERG?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO IS GREETED</th>
<th>TWITTER</th>
<th>FACEBOOK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ATHLETE / SPORT TEAM</td>
<td>5,6 %</td>
<td>12,4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLITICIAN</td>
<td>7,6 %</td>
<td>1,6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLITICAL GROUP/ PARTY / ORGANISATION</td>
<td>3,6 %</td>
<td>1,6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORGANISATION / COMPANY</td>
<td>3 %</td>
<td>1,6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CELEBRITY / ROYALTY / WAR HERO</td>
<td>4 %</td>
<td>3,9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“UNKNOWN INDIVIDUAL”</td>
<td>5,3 %</td>
<td>0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENERAL GREETING</td>
<td>7 %</td>
<td>20,2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOURNALIST / NEWS MEDIA</td>
<td>1,3 %</td>
<td>0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER</td>
<td>0 %</td>
<td>0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT A GREETING</td>
<td>62,6 %</td>
<td>58,9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 %</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(n= 302) (n= 129)*
**TABLE 7:** MAIN TONE/LANGUAGE AND ROLE ON TWITTER (n= 302)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The Professional</th>
<th>The Personal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FORMAL</strong></td>
<td>45.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INFORMAL</strong></td>
<td>23.8%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HUMOROUS</strong></td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNDEFINABLE</strong></td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 8:** MAIN TONE/LANGUAGE AND ROLE ON FACEBOOK (n=129)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The Professional</th>
<th>The Personal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FORMAL</strong></td>
<td>57.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INFORMAL</strong></td>
<td>15.5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HUMOROUS</strong></td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNDEFINABLE</strong></td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNDEFINABLE</strong></td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 9: Retweets on Tweets Appearing on Jens Stoltenberg’s Twitter Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retweets</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-12</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>38.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-50</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-100</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101-150</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>151-200</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201-500</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>501-1000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000-3529</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>302</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 10: Likes on Facebook-Post Appearing on Jens Stoltenberg’s Facebook Page

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likes</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-5000</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>74.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5001-10000</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10001-15000</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15001-20000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20001-25000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25001-30000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30001-35000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35001-40000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40001-45000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45001-50000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50001-55000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55001-60000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>129</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>