

ENERGY AND ECONOMIC SECURITY

Third Countries' Energy Projects Contravening Lithuanian Interests

Despite the incidents held in 2016, a construction of *Ostrovets* Nuclear Power Plant (NPP) conducted by Belarus in line with the corporation *Rosatom* has been underway by forced regime, not complying with international security requirements and ignoring Lithuania's rebukes concerning unguaranteed NPP security. As a result of construction impediments the project implementation schedule was changed (a launch of the first bloc was postponed to 2019) and international community's stance towards NPP has become slightly stricter. All the incidents that happened in NPP Belarus acknowledged only after information appeared in public and/or by the grip of Lithuania. Meanwhile, Belarus' institutions along with *Rosatom* actively made attempts to strengthen lobbying activity in EU countries and institutions.

In 2016, *Rosatom* communication regarding the projects conducted in the neighbourhood of Lithuania was obviously intensifying. Seeking to improve the NPP project public communication, an image formation of NPP project was also included into the agenda of Russian and Belarusian experts club, which was established in Minsk in March 2016 and the participants of which are well-known Russian propagandists. In September 2016, Moscow hosted the club's discussion "Belarus' NPP is the Union State's Development Project", where NPP project was presented as an outstanding example of Belarus and Russia integration. Hence, this proves a dominating political aspect of NPP project.

Although Kaliningrad Oblast based Baltic NPP

construction has been still put on hold, *Rosatom* has intensified its activity through which attempts were made to revive the project: to justify an allegedly stated Baltic NPP benefit, thus ensuring a support from EU states and electricity export markets. A special attention was given to lobbying activity within EU institutions. There were organized different meetings with diplomats, various *think tanks* as well as expert meetings, and it was tried to make contacts with officials

Rosatom has been intensifying its lobbying within EU regarding the nuclear power plants' projects in Kaliningrad Oblast and Belarus.

from European Commission, but so far the results have not been as good as it was expected. *Rosatom* managed to arrange in Brussels several presentations of its projects, including Baltic NPP; however, they failed to attract as much and such high ranking EU officials and representatives of member states as it was expected.

The attempts of Belarus institutions to restrict a spread of negative information about the *Ostrovets* NPP shows that in the short term perspective Belarus will maintain a stance not to disseminate all information, especially negative, about the progress of project implementation. Besides, ever increasing activity of corporation's *Rosatom* "image builders" (lobbyists, diplomats,



polittechnologists, journalists) indicates about an exceptional Russia's attention to energy projects developed in Lithuania's neighbourhood. It is likely that in the short-term this attention will grow: it will be further sought to inveigle the officials of European Commission, make impact through press, and exploit Russian and Belarusian polittechnologists.

Gazprom seeks to preserve its positions in the Baltic States, notwithstanding the evident changes in Lithuania's energy resources market.

Russia seeks to retain influence in European gas markets. The Nord Stream-2 pipeline that is being planned to be laid from Russia to Germany across the Baltic Sea would slow down European energy union establishment processes and would reduce its effectiveness. Gazprom also expects to gain a part of market in the Baltic Sea region, simultaneously implementing liquefied natural gas projects in Kaliningrad and Leningrad Oblast.

Despite the evident changes in Lithuania's energy resources market, in 2016 Russian company *Gazprom* tried to preserve its part in Lithuanian gas market, yet liquefied natural gas supplier *Statoil* having offered a lower price than *Gazprom* and having signed agreements with the companies *Lithuanian gas supply* and *Achema* regarding liquefied natural gas supply in the second and third quarter of 2016, Russian company lost the largest clients in the region. Such loss of positions in Lithuania was determined by the *Gazprom's* ambition to supply gas in higher price than the market value. In the second half of 2016, despite *Gazprom* leaders' public declarations that the major part of gas in the Baltic States will be sold in auctions, the company's authorities refused the plans to organize gas auctions for the next year and started negotiations with the largest natural gas consumers in Lithuania for signing

contracts of supply from 2017.

As Lithuania's natural gas market is gradually contracting and consumption of energy resources from Russia is diminishing, it is likely that a competition among energy resources suppliers will grow further. On the other hand, it is forecasted that Gazprom will seek to retain positions in the region by also trying to manipulate in price of the supplied gas: for instance, acting through particularly loyal trade mediators create for them more favorable purchasing conditions than for the other buyers.

Russian Transport Policy

Russia continues protectionist policy directed against the Baltic Sea ports and thus enhances their rivalry. Russia's decision to reduce crude oil supply to Belarusian oil refineries and redirect

Russia's strategy to divert local cargo to home seaports, which was inciting a competition between the Baltic States' transport companies, could give background for splitting the Baltic States' stances regarding the most important region's economic security issues.

cargo to Russian ports made a negative impact on Lithuanian transport sector. Russia has begun to press Belarus to shift the oil product export to Russian seaports in return for railway tariffs. Until the end of 2016 Russia and Belarus could not manage to fully agree on oil supply in previous volumes. If Belarus yielded to pressure redirect oil product export to Russian ports, negative



outcomes would also be felt in Lithuanian shipping companies.

In 2016, the extent of Russian companies' production transported through Latvian seaports was considerably less. The oil products and coal transit comprising more than a half of Riga and Ventspils seaports' shipping circulation has mostly decreased. The transportation of oil products was gradually being redirected from Latvian seaports to Russia's Ust Luga, Sant Petersburg, and Primorsk seaports.

Russia's strategy to divert local cargo to home seaports, which was inciting a competition between the Baltic States' road carriers, could give background for splitting the Baltic States' stances regarding the most important region's economic security issues.

The main Russia's goal was to block cargo transit conducted by Lithuanian companies in order to eventually take over the whole transportation of non-Lithuanian origin cargo. In 2016, Lithuanian motor transport transit companies were forced to continue competing with Russian companies on unequal terms. Russia not only exerted pressure on Belarus customs control officers to periodically impede cargo transportations on Lithuania-Belarus border control posts, but also started to apply more administrative requirements on Lithuanian road carriers and state institutions. In addition, motorway tolls had increased. By all this, Russian representatives allegedly were aiming to eliminate gaps enabling the EU states' commodities that are banned to be delivered to Russia.



INFORMATION SECURITY

Russia's Information Policy Changes and Projects against Lithuania

In 2016, after 16 years break Russia had renewed its Information Security Doctrine, in which the measures of informational war against the West are defined. Russia exploits information in public space about the reportedly conducted Western informational war to disseminate propaganda on international level and to strengthen its intelligence services' activity in information sector.

Russia exploits NATO activities (NATO Enhanced Forward Presence, exercises, and national forces development) in the Baltic region in its communication, seeking to degrade the Alliance and justify the actions of Kremlin. Russia sees the increased NATO capabilities in the eastern flank as obstacles that impede reaching for a dialogue on improvement of international security. In 2017, Russian information attacks towards the West will likely intensify for the approaching Zapad 2017 military exercise and during the time of the exercise.

Russia strives to entrench a favourable narrative through the means of public information, i. e. television, press, Internet, and social networks. For instance, in 2016 All-Russia State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company has prepared 1,500 hours of video recordings for foreign audience, which was translated into 10 foreign languages: English, French, Spanish, Portuguese,



Chinese, Arabic, etc. For the first time in the television history such a large extent of video recordings - more than 2,500 documentaries, various types of programmes, cartoons - were translated at one time.

In 2016, the positions of Rossiya segodnya agency, which spreads the Kremlin propaganda in Lithuania and is headed by Dmitriy Kiseliov, who was included into a list of persona non grata in EU, were strengthened. As the Rossiya segodnya continues to develop the media outlet Sputnik intended to disseminate propaganda abroad, in December 2016 agency launched a website

Russia seeks to degrade NATO forces in Lithuania and boost the society's opposition towards deployment of troops in applying information and cyber attacks in order to spread untruthful and provocative information. It is likely that in 2017 Russian information operations towards the West will become ever more active, especially for the approaching Zapad 2017 military exercise and during the time of it.

sputniknews.lt both, in Lithuanian and in Russian languages. Apparently, Russian agency could not find other ways how to anchor in Lithuania as to start the website's activity. Despite a lack of personnel in Lithuania who would agree to work for propaganda media outlet, the website will try to work orienting to Lithuanian-speaking audience. In order to successfully launch Sputnik project in Lithuania Russia asked representatives from Belarus Sputnik branch for assistance. Accordingly, the website sputniknews.lt will likely

be relevant not only to Kremlin's regime allegiant audience, but will also seek to influence a neutral part of the society. Currently, only a small number of people have been reading the articles publicised in this website, and their Facebook account is in fact unpopular.

In 2016, another Rossiya segodnya associated and Russia's financed propaganda media outlet baltnews.lt has continued its intensive activity in Lithuania. The website conducted information attacks against Lithuania exploiting society-sensitive topics: holocaust, refugees, terrorism, fuelled ethnic confrontation. Additionally, this website was seeking to attract not only Russian-speaking audience, but also was implementing a special project in Lithuanian language and presently has been planning a column about the news of the Seimas of Lithuania. The head of the website Russian citizen Anatoliy Ivanov had financed and actively coordinated the issues related to baltnews.lt activity with Moscow, where he pays regular visits.

Anatoliy Ivanov seeks to rally a team of young journalists, who support Kremlin policies: in 2016 he actively recruited employees for propagandistic journalism, among those students as well.

Russia's financed news website baltnews.lt in Lithuania's information space fills only a marginal niche. As the project leader, Ivanov has difficulties in rallying a team of professional journalists, therefore the website only partially implements Russia's raised propagandistic goals. As a new media outlet sputniknews.lt was launched in December 2016, a new task may also be formulated, i. e. to pursue more aggressive information politics towards Lithuania. It is likely, however, that in the context of an increasing society's awareness this project in Lithuania, similarly to other Russian propaganda based outlets, will not become popular.

As a result of Ivanov's mediation, some of his sponsored young journalists have already gone to study to Russian and Belarusian high schools. The journalists working at the website baltnews.lt were also sent to propaganda based foreign events, were encouraged to strengthen their ties with Russian mass media.

In an attempt to strengthen Russia's cultural influence and thus consolidate compatriots, in 2016 The Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation Rossotrudnichestvo conducted the project "Russian humanitarian expedition". Educational and cultural events were organized in Vilnius, Kaunas, and Visaginas. They were arranged by visiting representatives of Russian high schools in mediation with compatriots living and acting in Lithuania. Although such events usually do not tend to attract great society's attention, a threat is posed by the fact that Russia's intelligence services usually seek to exploit such projects for their own goals, namely for identifying loyal compatriots or collecting information about persons of interest.



Information Campaigns against Lithuania in Third Countries

In 2016, *Komsomolskaya Pravda* journalist Galina Sapozhnikova (*persona non grata* in Lithuania until 2020) headed international mass media club *Format A-3*, which is directly financed by Russia and conducts activities directed against Lithuania. There were held 11 events in Lithuania, whose most important aim was to make major Russian propagandist subjects more attractive to Lithuanian audience and spread them in Russian and Lithuanian media.

Galina Sapozhnikova has been assessed as one of the most active organizer and performer of international information attacks directed against Lithuania. She had presented a book in Italy (Rome and Milan) which was published in Italian under the title "Lithuanian Conspiracy. How the Soviet Union Collapsed and what Happened to Those who Tried to Protect it". The journalist was assisted by the former member of European Parliament Italian journalist Giulietto Chiesa, known for his views supporting Kremlin. This book in Russian language was presented in Moscow, Kaliningrad, and Minsk. Presenting this book, Galina Sapozhnikova had several supporters, among those Mikhail Golovатов, the former KGB officer, the head of the group "Alfa" and the suspect perpetrator of January 13th events; also Vladimir Zhirinosvki, a leader of Russia's Liberal Democrats Party, and others. While conducting this information campaign it was sought to downgrade Lithuania's sovereignty, spread disinformation that on 11 March 1990 people were allegedly forced to run from Lithuania as a result of political persecutions, which still continue. The other deceitful narratives have been constantly repeated during presentations of the book. For example, it was told that Ribbentrop-Molotov pact was in fact useful to Lithuania and there were no massive deportations of Lithuanians in the Soviet Union, also that the Baltic States are occupied by NATO, etc.



Об авторе:

Родилась в Ижевске. Окончила факультет журналистики Санкт-Петербургского университета (1988 г.), после чего была направлена на работу в газету «Молодежь Эстонии». Через год была принята в штат «Комсомольской правды» собственным корреспондентом по Эстонии, Финляндии и Швеции. Вся дальнейшая журналистская карьера связана с ЗАО «Издательский дом "Комсомольская правда"».

В качестве специального корреспондента побывала почти в 50 странах мира. Является одним из учредителей Международного медиа клуба «Импрессум» в Таллине и руководителем международного клуба журналистов «Формат А-3».

Получила известность как мастер журналистских расследований – распутывала тайны гибели парома «Эстония», изучала проблемы ксенофобии в России, помогла «найти» людям, потерявшим память. Автор серии психологических очерков о русской диаспоре – «Осколки Империи». Лауреат и дипломант многих профессиональных наград – премии Союза журналистов России (2004), премий Артема Боровика за лучшие журналистские расследования (2005, 2007), премии А. Сахарова «За журналистику как поступок» (2006), премии МедиаСоюза «Искра» (2007), премии Юлиана Семенова в области экстремальной геополитической журналистики (2015), литературно-медийной премии имени Олеса Бузины (2016). Награждена почетным знаком Союза журналистов России «За заслуги перед профессиональным сообществом» (2014). В 2009 г. ее книга «Арнольд Мери: Последний эстонский герой» стала победителем конкурса Роспечати на лучшую книгу журналиста.

В 2014 г. за заслуги в развитии отечественной культуры и искусства, телевидения, печати, связи, а также активную общественную деятельность награждена медалью ордена «За заслуги перед Отечеством II степени».

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КОМСОМОЛЬСКАЯ
ПРАВДА

КТО КОГО ПРЕДАЛ

Галина Сапожникова

Галина Сапожникова

КТО
КОГО
ПРЕДАЛ

Как убивали Советский Союз
и что стало с теми,
кто пытался его спасти

CYBER SECURITY

The majority of attacks identified in cyber space of the Republic of Lithuania throughout 2016 (cyber attacks, espionage) were related to Russian intelligence and security services, their supported groups and individual hackers. Russia's financing and exploitation of private hacker groups acting in favour to Russian interests is the trend which will keep growing in the future. In order to designate such state supported capabilities a term *Advanced Persistent Threat* (APT) is used. The APT term defines technologically advanced cyber capabilities, i. e. a group of hackers and/or their cyber espionage tool, which systematically seek to penetrate into particular state's or organization's IT systems. The aim of APT, is not to cause damage to systems, networks or data inside them, but rather to collect necessary information available inside networks, i. e. to spy.

Cyber Espionage

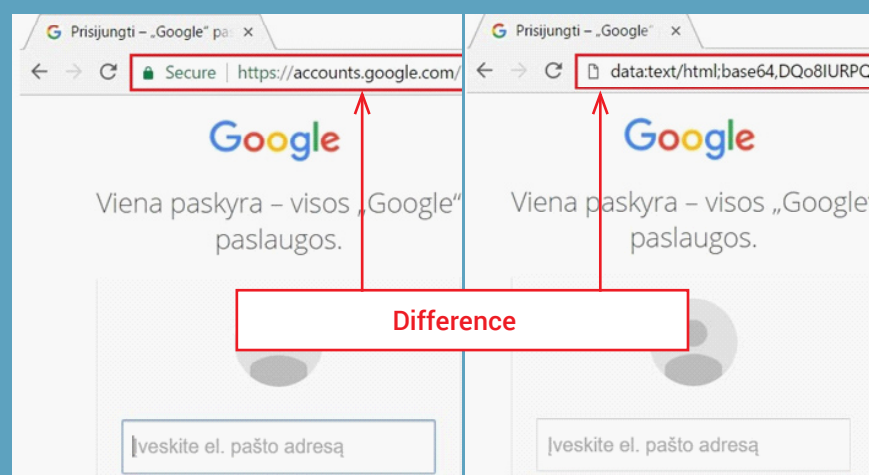
Cyber espionage against Lithuania's state institutions, critical infrastructure objects, politicians, private sector remains a threat to national security. Cyber espionage programs identified in Lithuanian institutions' automated data processing (ADP) systems and networks have been constantly improved and updated. One of the most prevailing, Russian cyber capabilities associated APT type of malware *Snake/Agent.btz* is able to collect computer based data, remotely control an infected computer, identify accounts and passwords, also record image and sound with the help of computer integrated video and audio recording devices. Hardly detected by ordinary computer user, the malware spreads via USB keys or illegal software.

In 2016, the activity of cyber espionage group

APT28/Sofacy associated with Russia's military intelligence has increased significantly. It operates against purposefully in advance chosen targets by

Social engineering is one of the ways to manipulate a user of the computer, force him voluntarily perform actions which help to intrude into computer networks, reveal confidential information (e. g. login information) and infect the computer with malicious code.

remotely infecting their computers. Accordingly, seeking to gain access to user information, APT28/Sofacy group usually employs two methods of social engineering : *spear phishing* and *watering hole*. Using the first method, in advance selected targets receive e-mails with



An example of original (left) and fake (right) website to which the user is directed seeking to obtain his login information (spear phishing method). The main noticeable difference to the user is the address in the website's address square.

links to mailboxes or other Internet websites where login information is needed to be filled in. Having clicked on the link in the e-mail the user is being directed to fake earlier created and hackers' controlled website, which is almost the same as the original (e.g. *www.gmail.com*). After the user fills the necessary information, this information becomes available to hackers and thus access is gained to user account. Seeking to penetrate into the user's computer there are also sent e-mails with the attached malware infected document. Having opened it, a malware code is being at once installed in the user's computer. By exploiting available computer system vulnerabilities, the malware code enables the hackers to gain access to certain user information, also is able to identify information that is typed on the keyboard (e.g. logins, passwords, messages, etc.) and thus creates circumstances for further penetration into user's computer, i. e. the total control of the computer.

The *watering hole* method is applied to particular target user group. In the beginning, the chosen group's interests are identified on the Internet and, considering them, particular websites visited by the target group representatives are being infected (e. g. inserting JavaScript or HTML malware code). When one of the target group representatives visits such website, only that particular user is being directed to another malware website. Hence, the user's computer is infected and by this the hackers gain access to

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⊕ Form item: "bgresponse" = "js_disabled"
⊕ Form item: "pstMsg" = "1"
⊕ Form item: "dnConn" = ""
⊕ Form item: "checkConnection" = ""
⊕ Form item: "checkedDomains" = "youtube"
⊕ Form item: "Email" = "randomemail"
⊕ Form item: "Passwd" = "falsepassword"
⊕ Form item: "signIn" = "sign in"
⊕ Form item: "PersistentCookie" = "yes"
⊕ Form item: "rmShown" = "1"

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User login information available to hackers (Spear-phishing method)
(source: *www.mcafee.com*)

user's computer data.

Lack of proper and necessary capabilities which would enable to control threats arising to cyber security in state and private sector as well as wide IT infrastructure possibilities in Lithuania create favourable conditions to conduct cyber espionage and exploit Lithuania's cyber infrastructure (servers, IP addresses) for adversarial activity in other states. These possibilities include the spread of the Internet and broadband speed, possibilities of technical data centres, most of the public services' transfer to IT space (E-government), and a possibility to make anonymous e-payments for IT infrastructure lease services. The use of digital currency is especially attractive to cyber hackers, who without revealing their identity can easily take IT servers on lease in Lithuania and exploit them for conducting APT type of attacks. The employment of IT infrastructure in different foreign states is an ordinary activity method of APT groups seeking to stay anonymous.

In 2016, the growing trend was observed that cyber espionage more often is being directed towards the western states' politicians. By using APT28/Sofacy group Russian military intelligence in 2016 penetrated into the US Democratic Party's National Committee computers and publicized the collected sensitive information related to elections in the USA. The APT28/Sofacy had also tried to penetrate into computers of the EU Parliament, German politicians, Poland's Foreign Affairs Ministry's employees. A group associated with Russia in 2016 had chosen part of the members from the Seimas of Lithuania as cyber espionage target objects. Through employing spear phishing method the hackers were seeking to infect the computers used by the members of Seimas with malware and obtain information stored in them. The attack was prevented, but it cannot be ruled out that yet more Lithuanian politicians or state officials could have been chosen as targets.

Considering Russia's activity in cyber space directed against the West, it is assumed that in targeting the Western states' politicians, Russia seeks to influence political processes within NATO states. One of the goals of Russia is through using sensitive or personal information obtained by cyber means take on the active measures and thus discredit Western politicians disadvantageous to Russia.

Cyber Attacks

On 9-21 April 2016, Lithuania encountered with large scale cyber attacks directed mostly against the state sector. DDoS attacks were oriented towards the websites of the Seimas, the President Office, MoD, State Security Department, Special Investigation Services, Financial Crime Investigation Service under the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Lithuania, Foreign Affairs Ministry, and other state institutions, also Vilnius Airport, media (*Delfi*, *Alfa media*) websites, and other important Lithuanian cyber infrastructure. By these attacks it was sought to restrict Lithuania's information space, detach and isolate the state from information availability and communication with the outside world within the global information space (Internet). Russia had applied this strategy during the conflicts in Georgia (2008) and Ukraine (2014), when cyber capabilities were used in order to restrict the states' Internet connection. Hence, through cyber attacks carried out in April 2016 it was sought to test Lithuania's responsible institutions ability to react to such kind of incidents and assess Lithuania's IT system vulnerability.

The trend in the world has been observed that the targets of cyber attacks more and more often become the states' objects of critical infrastructure. For instance, two cyber attacks were carried out against Ukraine's Ivan-Frankovsk (2015) and Kiev (2016) electric power plants, which affected electricity supply for the part of Ukrainian habitants. These attacks once again

revealed a possibility to sabotage by cyber means the activity of the state critical infrastructure and make a negative impact on society's security, economics and welfare. Evidently, an increase of such incidents signifies that the critical infrastructure, especially the one associated with SCADA systems, has still been insufficiently secured.

The popularity of Internet of Things (IoT) technologies in Lithuania – smart devices capable to connect Internet and exchange information – is rapidly growing. Smartphones, TV sets, watches, printers, smart home appliances, real-time traffic and road information systems not only lead to new possibilities, but also create conditions for cyber threats to emerge. It goes without saying that most of IoT devices can be infected with malicious software and exploited for conducting DDoS type of cyber attacks. A threat may also be posed to device stored data that is usually comprised of information about the user's everyday habits and activity.

Besides cyber espionage the greatest threat for private business is criminal hackers' used Ransomware type of malicious software. By exploiting the security gaps the Internet spread malware encrypt the access to user's data and seeks financial benefit for giving access. There were such cases observed in Lithuania in 2016.



In the framework of state sector Russia remains the greatest threat in cyber space. Considering the developing Russian cyber capabilities and successful operations in cyber space, it is assessed that Russia's activity in cyber space will grow. Lithuanian state sector's IT systems will persist to be a priority cyber espionage target; however, the private critical infrastructure will likely be also targeted: telecommunications companies, SCADA systems installed in industrial objects, and other private objects of national importance. In order to discredit the state, cyber attacks are possible after every Lithuania's

political decision or open political declaration unfavourable to Russia or during any important international event held in Lithuania. It should be noted that a threat of cyber espionage is going to increase for state politicians and representatives of large business. Through exploiting cyber space, Russia's intelligence services will further pursue cyber espionage and information operations against Lithuanian politicians, state officials and private persons, thus seeking to influence Lithuania's internal and foreign policy.



The active measures imply Russian intelligence and security services' and other state subjects' organized activity through which it is sought to influence the other state's foreign policy and internal political processes in a way advantageous to Russia.

DDoS attack (distributed denial of services) is a process of sending superfluous requests from one, several or multiple different Internet points to information sources (websites, registers, command and control networks). In case of overwhelming traffic of requests, the service (website) becomes unstable or completely unavailable.

SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) is a control system architecture that uses computers, network data communication, and programming for industrial processes.

PROTECTION OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER

Russia's Compatriot Policy

Seeking to increase influence in the post-Soviet space Russia implements the so-called compatriot policy. Russia's compatriot policy differs from ordinary democratic power's attitude to national diaspora residing abroad. The compatriot status implies not the ethnic dependence on Russian nation, but first of all allegiance to interests of present Kremlin regime. Russia considers that its compatriots in the Baltic States are not only Russians, but also the loyal Russian-speaking Belarusians, Poles, Tatars, Ukrainians, Jews and representatives of other ethnic minorities.

During recent years Russia sought to increase her influence on Lithuanian Tatar community.

Russia is extremely interested that foreign Tatar communities would be represented by persons who positively assess Russia's implemented Crimea annexation. At present the initiatives to weaken some current Lithuanian Tatar leaders' influence and establish new alternative local Tatar organizations are being developed. Part of Lithuanian Tatars has long before been actively participating in Russia's compatriot activity.

It is not accidental that high ranking Russian Foreign Affairs Ministry's officials tend to publicly highlight that in Lithuania not only the rights of Russian, but also Polish community are being violated. In fact, the aim of Russia is to integrate into compatriots' political schedule constantly set requirements to grant the Polish community of Vilnius region exclusive rights. Granting of exclusive rights to the Polish community gives background for Russia and its groups of influence to demand for the same rights and eventually a special status to Russian community in all the Baltic States. These Russia's attempts have also been illustrated by Vilnius based Russian embassy's coordinated compatriots' political cooperation with persons representing Polish community of Vilnius region. One of the ways to escalate ethnic tensions in the Baltic States is constantly and unfairly blame them for violating the rights of ethnic communities.

Compatriot policy goals and measures

Russia's compatriot policy goal in the Baltic States is to create a favorable environment for spreading Russian influence and thus diminish social integrity of these states by inciting ethnic conflicts. It is easier to conduct such activity in a closed ethnic community, therefore Russia and its groups of influence in the Baltic States seek to discredit any attempts to implement reforms on ethnic communities' education (e. g. enhanced learning of national language) that promote integration. Such kind of reforms are being downgraded referring them to attempts to assimilate ethnic communities. This deliberate replacement of a positive concept of integration into a negative concept of assimilation is a typical example of Russia's employed methods of propaganda.

The compatriot status implies not the ethnic dependence on Russian nation, but first of all allegiance to interests of present Kremlin regime.

Russia's financed defenders of compatriot rights operating in Lithuania tend to take part in various international organizations' (UN, ESCO) human rights forums and along with Russian diplomats blame Lithuania for violating the rights of ethnic communities.

The project Moscow House in Vilnius remains particularly important to Russia. The prospects of this project have relatively large symbolic and practical meaning to Russia as a potential tool of its influence, compatriot policy, and public diplomacy. Until recently, Russia could not manage to establish in Lithuania any similar status holding institution (e. g. Russian Foreign Affairs Ministry subordinated federal agency's Rossotrudnichestvo Russia's science and cultural center); therefore, Russia's Foreign Affairs Ministry and Russian Embassy in Vilnius have been actively taking care of progress on Moscow House project.

In December 2016, Vilnius City District Court annulled Moscow House construction permit and determined a three years term for legalizing the construction. In 2017, Russia will likely assume various means of propaganda and unofficial pressure in order to force Lithuania to give guarantees that this extremely important project for Russia would be allowed to be implemented.

Russian Spiritual Movements' Activity

There are several active movements in Lithuania which advocate "Russia's moral values" (e. g. ancient Slavs) and therefore are attributed to New Age spiritual movement trend. These movements look forward to the New Age, i. e.

Russian spiritual movements' ideas correspond to current Kremlin regime's ideology, through which it is sought to present Russia as an alternative to the West and hence re-establish influence in the post-Soviet space

Nikolay Starikov's books published by "White Swans"

In 2013, the "White Swans" published N. Starikov's book in Lithuanian language titled *Krizė. Kaip tai daroma?* (en. Crisis. How is it made?), and in 2016 - a book praising Stalin and downgrading his misdeeds titled *"Prisimenė kartu"* (en. Remembering together). After a fuss in Lithuania's media, selling of this book was ceased; however, on Christmas occasion the publishing house "White Swans" suggested to give the books praising Stalin and other books published in this publishing house as presents to Lithuania's public libraries. In 2017, the "White Swans" is planning to present yet another Starikov's book translated into Lithuanian language.

the renaissance and prosperity of a new spiritual Russia. It is frequently associated with the end of Western civilization and liberal democracy era. Moreover, the spread of such ideas correspond to current Kremlin regime's ideology, through which it is sought to present Russia as an alternative to the West and hence re-establish influence in the post-Soviet space.

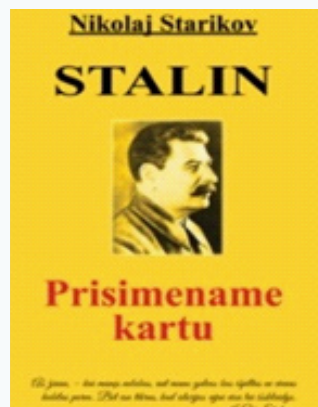
Several years ago appeared a new movement Valeriy Sinelnikov's friends club "White Swans" and a publishing house under the same name. This publishing house has been spreading not only teaching of Russian spiritual movements (e.g. Sinelnikov, Vladimir Megre, Sergei Lazarev and others), but also ideas of a notorious Russian radical Nikolaj Starikov. Conspirologist Starikov, who is known to be admiring the Soviet dictator Stalin, fights against the "Anglo-Saxon conspiracy" and various manifestations of Western influence in Russia. Starikov once had paid a visit to Vilnius to meet his readers and gave an interview to Lithuania's Russian speaking media.

Russia's soft power instruments that are assessed by most of Russian New Age spiritual

movements' representatives in Lithuania to be making small influence on Lithuania's internal processes are restricted to merely spreading Russian religious values. The publishing of Russian propagandist's Starikov books demonstrates that representatives of "White Swans" have begun to act not only as Russia's soft power instrument, but also to implement subversive Russian ideological politics by which it is sought to degrade Lithuania's nationhood. Accordingly, one of the ways of degrading Lithuania's nationhood is forming a positive role of the Soviets (Stalin as well) in Lithuania's development process as well as negation of the Soviet occupation and their crimes.



On the left: N. Starikov and his books published in Lithuanian language



Russia-friendly Social Movements and Political Parties

There are several active Russia-friendly social organizations and political parties which tend to reiterate Russian propaganda clichés. They promote anti-Western ideas, protest against NATO forces deployment and military exercises, diminish Russia's threat, and blame Lithuania for Russophobe attitudes. Some representatives of these organizations stand for neutrality strategy in Lithuanian security and foreign policy that is favourable to Russian interests, and urge to stay aside from the conflict between the West and Russia or even exit from NATO claiming that this is the only way to avoid Russian threat for Lithuanian sovereignty. If Lithuania followed the so-called neutrality policy in the context of present security environment, strengthening of Russian military power and its employment in reestablishment of influence in the post-Soviet space, eventually it would have the same outcomes as Belarus and finally would appear in Russia's influence zone again.

Seeking to promote their ideas, Russia-friendly social movements and political parties organize various protest campaigns. The latest example of such kind of events was a campaign "For peace and justice" held near the Seimas in Vilnius on 16 January 2017, where speeches were made by

Russia-friendly Lithuania's social organizations and political parties promote the so-called neutrality strategy in Lithuanian security and foreign policy that is favourable to Russian interests, and urge to stay aside from the conflict between the West and Russia and leave NATO as this would be the only way to avoid Russian threat for Lithuanian sovereignty.



representatives of Socialist People's Front and Fighters for Lithuanian Union. The date of this event was purposefully matched to the day when a riot was held near the Seimas eight years ago. The participants of this campaign announced a petition demanding that Lithuanian authorities would start the NATO leaving process.

So far, the ideas promoted by these organizations have not become popular in Lithuania's society. This was clearly demonstrated by the Seimas elections 2016, where Russia-friendly parties and individual persons have failed. Although Russia-friendly organizations and political parties are not influential, their representatives are still effectively exploited by Kremlin's controlled propagandist media in forming an image that Russian foreign policy supporting public society representatives and politicians are still active in Lithuania.

Radical Ideologies and Political Extremism in Lithuania

Differently to some other European States the extreme right-wing ideologies upholding organizations and groups in Lithuania could not manage to increase popularity of their political attitudes in society. Such situation was determined by the absence of topics suitable for escalation, such as strong ethnic tension or large-scale external immigration as well as fragmentation and internal conflicts of radicals themselves.

In 2016, an autonomous nationalism ideology supporting group was established in Kaunas. In Lithuania it is a new phenomenon, whereas in Europe similar movements have already been active since 2003. In their rhetoric the autonomous nationalists combine the extreme nationalism and xenophobia with anti-capitalist views. The supporters of this ideology oriented towards rebellious youth took over from their political opponents left-wing radicals the major

part of activity and methods of spreading propaganda, also the particular symbolism and outfit elements. It has to be noted that the persons associated with autonomous nationalist group acting in Lithuania during the observed period communicated with "National Action" right-wing radicals' organization in United Kingdom which in December 2016 was banned on the grounds of legal acts on terrorism prevention.

In 2016, there were no extremist groups supporting Russian military aggression and conducting anti-constitutional activity identified in Lithuania; however, there are certain indications that such kind of groups may appear in the future. The conflict in Ukraine and the subsequent scandal in Lithuania's media and society forced a stronger consolidation of persons backing the Kremlin's regime military activity in Lithuania. This was especially noticed in social networks, where a number of campaigns supporting Russia and statements from persons openly admiring Russia's imperial messiahism has increased significantly. It was found that part of these persons were former Soviet soldiers and militia employees, whereas the others currently belong to martial arts, shooting and military sports game clubs. Obviously, such their ideological views and type of activity serve as a precondition for small pro-Kremlin extreme groups to emerge. The members of the groups who are capable to use violence in order to achieve political goals would become the potential players in Russian hybrid aggression directed against Lithuania.



A procession of autonomous nationalist group in Lithuania

CRISIS REGIONS AND TERRORISM

Middle East and North Africa

In 2016, the conflict in Syria has been continuing in favour to ruling regime. Pro-governmental forces backed by Iran and Russia achieved the greatest victory since the beginning of the conflict, as they expelled the insurgent groups from the strategically important city of Aleppo. After this defeat the larger part of military opposition remains entrenched in the western province of Idlib, which has become their main stronghold. This province is dominated by Islamist groups, including the jihadists. This is particularly beneficial to Syrian regime and Russia, which attempt to convince the international community, and especially the Western states, that they fight not against the insurgents but the terrorists. The military opposition remains fragmented. The infighting among separate groups for power and resources become more and more frequent, which in turn impede an effective resistance to regime forces. Nevertheless, the insurgents have enough of ideological motivation to continue the fighting. Moreover, none of the conflicting sides

is willing to fully commit to peace negotiations. Consequently, a possibility to end the conflict in 2017 is low.

Russia has continued military operation in Syria and its strategy has not changed: Russian forces provided support for regime in suppressing the rebellion while Kremlin officially claimed to be fighting terrorists. ISIL fighters were targeted only sporadically; meanwhile, in public sphere Russian officials and pro-Kremlin media constantly emphasized that the fight with ISIL is the main goal of Russia. During the first year of the operation in Syria Russia achieved the following objectives: ensured the survival of Syrian regime, improved its own standing in the region, and demonstrated military capabilities and new armament. Despite all this, the Kremlin has not achieved one of the most important goals – it could not convince the Western states to directly cooperate in Syria on terms set by Russia. Presently, Syrian regime and its foreign backers have control over the course of the conflict. Therefore Moscow has no need to increase involvement in the conflict.



In 2016, international coalition and local partners in Syria and Iraq have continued a successful fight against ISIL. Over the last year, the group has lost some 23 % of territory, including important cities of Ramadi and Fallujah. After having started intervention in Syria in August Turkey managed to expel ISIL fighters from Syrian-Turkey border and thus isolate ISIL pseudostate (caliphate) from the outside world. Iraqi security forces have liberated half of Mosul, whilst Syrian Kurds and their allies started an offensive to retake Raqqa, the capital of ISIL caliphate. The group appears to be on

the verge of collapse as it is being attacked on several different fronts simultaneously. ISIL does not have sufficient capabilities and resources to defend effectively for prolonged period of time. Notwithstanding the huge pressure and constant defeats in Syria and Iraq, ISIL pays great attention to terrorist campaign in the Middle East region. The group organizes and conducts the attacks and urges its supporters to act independently. This ensures the group's visibility in public sphere. It also helps to mitigate the negative impact of defeats on its image and the fighters' motivation.

In 2016, security situation in Libya remained extremely complicated. The Government of National Accord that was established through the efforts of United Nations was unable to unite different political camps and found itself on the verge of collapse. Libya's de facto split into the west and east parts has been further entrenched, and the main power has remained in the hands of various militias. Gen. Khalifa Haftar having the strongest forces in the eastern part seeks to impose military control, with the support of Russia among other forces. After an intensive military operation, ISIL offshoot in Libya has lost the controlled territories in the city of Sirte. However, the internal fights and lack of effective political and security institutions create favourable conditions for various radical armed groups to arise and expand posing security threat to the region. The ongoing conflict in Libya enables the crimes, smuggling, and irregular migration networks from Africa through Libya to Europe to thrive.

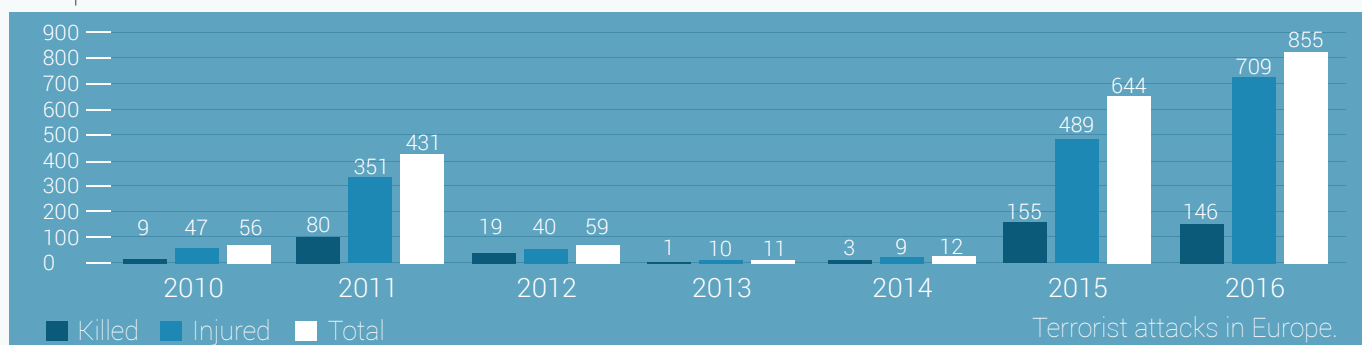
International Terrorism

In 2016, a terrorism threat in Europe remained high: ISIL members conducted large-scale and individual attacks against civilians and law enforcement officers in Belgium, France, and Germany (see Chart)

In 2016, a number of antiterrorist operations, detained extremists who planned the terror attacks and provided logistic support for them in Europe has increased. Despite the losses in Syria and Iraq, ISIL has intentions and capabilities to plan and implement large-scale terror attacks in Europe. Accordingly, its priority targets in Europe are the most active members of international antiterrorist coalition, namely France, United Kingdom, Belgium, and Germany.



ISIL recommended terrorist tactics



How ISIL propaganda works?

Aiming to recruit new members, ISIL has been releasing propaganda magazines (Dabiq, Rumiya, Dar Al Islam, etc.) as well as other sound records and video, short messages, and creating songs inspiring for war ("nasheeds"). ISIL propaganda has been disseminated via the most popular social networks, like Facebook, Twitter and others, extremists' forums and blogs in order it would reach as wider audience as possible. ISIL member having made a contact with radicalized person, she/he is directed to closed communication platforms (e.g. "Telegram"), where a person is being encouraged to carry out a terrorist attack, also giving advices for choosing a target, purchasing weapons, organizing logistics and tactics.

ISIL members who seek to return to Europe after gaining combat experience in the conflict regions of Syria and Iraq pose a direct terrorism threat. Out of 5,000 European extremists more than 1,700 persons have already returned to Europe. Part of more than 2,000 European members of ISIL that remained in the conflict regions may attempt to return to Europe in the collapse of "caliphate" declared by ISIL in Syria and Iraq and its province in Libya. Some of ISIS members may try to pretend refugees, use the migrants' smuggling routes and counterfeit documents.

A departure of extremists from Europe to ISIL "caliphate", planning and supporting of terror attacks indicate radicalization of part of Muslims residing in different European countries. This radicalization for a long time was incited by some Islamist organizations', movements' and individual imams' propagated antagonism towards the West, the spread of radical interpretations of Islam, and eventually, it was all strengthened by a long lasting conflict in Syria and Iraq as well as ISIL propaganda.

The terrorist organization Al Qaeda (AQ) has remained a threat for security in Europe although

in 2016 AQ had not organized any terror attacks in Europe. In its propaganda AQ urged to conduct individual attacks in Europe, and AQ affiliates carried out attacks against interests of European countries in Africa.

Terrorism Threats to Lithuania and its Citizens

Being a member state of EU and NATO Lithuania is a potential but not a priority target for Islamist terrorists. In 2016, in Lithuania there were no activities of radical Islamist terrorist organizations identified, no threats to carry out a terror attack issued, and no information about departure of our citizens from Lithuania to Syrian and Iraq conflicts was received.

The level of Lithuanian Muslim community's radicalization has remained low. In 2016, there were observed unsuccessful attempts of foreign Muslims to make influence on Lithuanian Muslim community and change Islam traditions of Tartars residing in Lithuania. The Tartars' domination in Lithuanian Muslim community and guidance of its religious life have restricted possibilities of spreading radicalization in Lithuania.

In 2016, a terrorism threat in Egypt and Turkey – mostly loved tourism destinations of Lithuanians - has continued to grow. In January 2016, two radicalized individuals attacked with knife European tourists in Hurghada holiday resort hotel of Egypt, where Lithuanians were staying as well. The attacks against the authorities in Egypt were conducted by a terrorist group declaring itself as ISIL Sinai Province. Their goal is to cause damage to tourism sector that is so important to Egypt economy and European states' objects in the country.

In 2016, a terrorism threat has extremely increased to Turkey which is involved in military campaign against ISIL in Syria. ISIL terrorist attacks in Turkey have intensified; their

geographical coverage (attacks in Istanbul, Ankara, tourist locations, territories settled by Kurds, regions bordering Syria) and targets (tourists, transport sector) have expanded. After ceasefire failure in 2015 attacks against Turkish government and security forces have been constantly conducted by terrorist separatist Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) and its units which warned tourists not to go to Turkey.

Irregular Migration

After EU agreement with Turkey for readmission of immigrants and closing the Western Balkan route in 2016 irregular migration flows to Europe have decreased. Throughout 2016 some 364,000 of irregular migrants came to Europe which is almost by two thirds less than in 2015 when more than 1 million was recorded. In 2016, there were two dominant migration routes to Europe: Central Mediterranean (Libya-Italy) and Eastern Mediterranean (Turkey-Greece).

Such a high number of immigrants who moved to EU states in 2016 caused problems to security of European states. The part of ISIL members and their ideology supporters, who carried out terror attacks in Paris, Brussels and Berlin had used the poorly controlled flows of migrants and failures of personal identification in 2015-2016. Making use of migrant flows is not permanent and mass, yet likely there are more ISIL members who came to EU under the disguise of refugee. There is to add that propaganda of radical groups can

also affect part of immigrants disappointed for unfulfilled expectations and reluctant to integrate into local societies.

As a result of massive flows of irregular migration to Europe, in 2016 the activity of European far-right and far-left organizations seeking to exploit this crisis for spreading their ideology has intensified (protests, demonstrations, vandalism). The migration topic has also been actively used in propaganda of Russia, which is determined to split EU, reduce its attention to Ukrainian and other Eastern partnership issues.

Resettlement of Asylum Seekers to Lithuania

So far, EU countries have not implemented the quotas of resettlement scheme for asylum seekers from Greece and Italy (relocation of about 10,000 migrants from more than 160,000 have been already completed). Until the end of 2016, relocations of 210 asylum seekers from Greece and Italy to Lithuania had been already completed. After checking procedures, some persons, whose intentions for entering Lithuania were not related to real need of protection or their relocation to Lithuania would have posed threat to national security, were recommended not to be granted with permission to enter Lithuania.



Throughout 2016 some 364,000 of irregular migrants came to Europe which is almost by two thirds less than in 2015 when more than 1 million was recorded.

CONCLUSIONS & FORECASTS

The main Kremlin's goal for 2017 is to ensure the stability of the regime and to make favourable conditions for Putin's re-election for the next term in president office. Stricter control over internal processes increases a possibility that Russia will continue its aggressive foreign policy which helps effectively compensate potential discontent in the society about social and economic situation. International trends favourable to Russia allow Kremlin to interfere in internal policy of foreign countries and destroy unity of the West. Since Putin is concentrating more and more power in his hands, a risk of unpredictable actions is also mounting. Therefore, in order to strengthen its global power status or enhance support for the regime Russia may undertake new risky steps in foreign policy.

In the short-term (up to 2 years), Lukashenka's regime will likely continue its multi-vector foreign policy. Through cultivation of relations with the West, Minsk will demonstrate that Russia is the main ally of Belarus but not the only partner. In order to retain visibility of Eurasian Economic Union effectiveness, Russia will be interested in providing direct and indirect support for Belarus but only when it holds a real control of processes taking place in Belarus. In this way, Russia will seek not to repeat the strategy pursued in Ukraine which was ineffective and caused Ukraine to turn its back on Russia. In the short and medium terms (from 2 to 5 years), Russia will likely exert stronger influence over Belarus and will assume stricter posture towards Belarus. Due to well-developed influence leverages of Russia in Belarus, provocations and deliberate incidents are likely to take place at the border of Lithuania and Poland during the coming *Zapad 2017* exercise.

Threats and challenges posed to Lithuanian national security by Russian and Belarusian intelligence and security services will be growing in intensity. In the short, medium and long terms (from 5 to 10 years), the greatest intelligence threat to Lithuania will be posed by activities and cyber espionage of Russian intelligence and security services carried out from the territory of Russia. In 2017, Belarusian intelligence services will continue to recruit officers from Lithuanian law enforcement institutions and national defence system, search for individuals who could be of service to Belarus and will closely cooperate with Russian intelligence services.

Russia's efforts (in Ostrovets NPP case – in joint efforts with Belarus) to implement projects in the Baltic region and attempts to secure positions of weakening Gazprom in Lithuania show determination of Russia to retain its influence in the Baltic States. In the short-term, Russian transit policy will remain unfavourable to Lithuanian transport sector as Russia will be further seeking to reduce cargo flows across the Baltic States and simultaneously increase mutual competition and encourage possible disagreements.

In the short-term, Russia will not reduce information attacks against Lithuania in intensity due to tensed geopolitical situation. The main targets of Russian propagandist projects and mass-media means will remain the issues of Lithuanian defence, NATO forces deployment, Lithuanian history and energy policy. Russia will highly likely put great focus on projects in Lithuanian language and will carry out activity in higher intensity in social media (portals, social networks). Russia will make attempts to affect Lithuanian society and decision-makers in information sphere so that Lithuanian pursued internal and foreign policy would meet the interests of Russia.

Lithuanian state sector's IT system will remain a priority target of Russian cyber espionage but private critical infrastructure will also be of high importance. Cyber attacks will likely be carried out after every Lithuanian political resolution unfavourable to Russia or during major international events in Lithuania.

Negative impact of Russian propaganda on Lithuanian ethnic communities will help to retain Russia's sphere of influence upon Lithuanian social processes. Taking advantage of the situation, Russia will be further reducing social integrity of Lithuania. Russia-friendly political forces will make attempts to unite on the basis of anti-Western values, but it is hardly likely that they will gain considerably greater influence on Lithuanian political processes in 2017. The extreme ideologies supporting groups will remain small and confined mostly to organizing propaganda campaigns in 2017.

In the short-term, a threat of terror attacks planned by ISIL and held by its ideology affected individuals in Europe will remain high. Facing a defeat of ISIL in Syria and Iraq, some ISIL members may make attempts to return to Europe by using the routes of irregular migrants. AQ may also be planning terrorist attacks in Europe. In the short and medium term, a possibility of terrorist attacks will remain high in Egypt and Turkey, the countries favoured by Lithuanian tourists.

The threat of terrorism in Lithuania will remain low in the short and medium term. However, Lithuania as a country of Schengen area may likely become one of the terrorists' transit states. Radicalization level of Lithuanian Muslims will remain low in the medium term but attempts of foreign Muslims to make influence upon religious life of local Muslims may negatively affect the stability of Lithuanian Muslims community.