



ESTONIAN INTERNAL SECURITY SERVICE
ANNUAL REVIEW

2018

2018

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Dear reader,

Last year, we celebrated the centenary of Estonia's independence – with characteristic dignity, visibility and unpretentiousness. We Estonians set great store by northern modesty, moderation and self-confidence, but occasionally still seek something new. Our recurring search for a grand narrative is one such example. As a citizen and as head of the Internal Security Service, I have a clear and simple answer: the most important story is right there in the preamble to our Constitution – the preservation of the Estonian people, the Estonian language and the Estonian culture through the ages. Building on this, society's value system and fundamental rights and freedoms must be supported by strong security.

Efforts to ensure security often remain hidden. For more than two decades, the Internal Security Service (KAPO) has shared its work with the Estonian and international public in its annual reviews. These include the facts we have established as well as a synthesis of the threats to Estonia's national security based on our analysis of those facts. Much of our work must remain undisclosed, but I hope we have made clear throughout the years that the constitutional order must be guarded and protected. Our national security is ensured. According to various statistical indicators, Estonia is a safe place to live and visit.

Talking about threats is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, we inevitably create the feeling

that our security may be illusory, and fears grow. On the other, to dispel any illusion we should report on the real situation as openly as possible; by knowing and recognising threats, we are better placed to prevent or fight them. We believe that the information about the threats facing our country – put together using our best skills and knowledge – must be shared not only with our political leaders but also with the public. This is the best way to work together to find ways to prevent and tackle these threats. Readers can then draw their own conclusions. We must keep alert, as the old adage “the sleep of reason produces monsters” is true in more ways than one.

It is now five years since the annexation of Crimea. The Kremlin’s modus operandi is plain to anyone who wants to understand it: Russia does with its neighbours whatever it can get away with. History knows no positive examples of making concessions to dictators or autocrats. Let us recall the Munich Agreement and the secret protocol to the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact that followed in 1939, and its consequences for Estonia and its people.

We can see that the Kremlin readily exploits people’s fears and concerns to achieve its objectives, striving to divide Western societies, aggravate problems and pit the more radical or active social groups against each other. Where it fails to exploit existing divisions, it seeks to stir up artificial tensions. The incitement and exploitation of fear is also used by international terrorism – a very regrettable parallel. Fears, tensions and divisions constantly challenge the unity of the democratic world.

In response to Russia’s efforts to create tension and division in our region, NATO has established an enhanced forward presence in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. We work effectively with our allies, but within Estonia we must hold our own ground. Indeed, we can confirm that Estonia is no easy target for the Kremlin’s operations. The allied troops are not exposed to greater threats here than they are at home, but obviously we must not let our guard down.

Let us take this opportunity to remember that the Estonian state, from its first creation in 1918 and again after regaining its independence in 1991, has existed longer than the entire Soviet annexation.

Online influence activities continue to be a threat and one that we have written about before. However, the language we use and the transparency of a small society sometimes help us to detect and neutralise disruptive influence campaigns sufficiently early on. Just as when countering cyber-attacks from Russia in 2007, private companies, NGOs and the free press have been able, in cooperation with national authorities, to expose attempts made on social media to distort information and influence the public through fake NGOs, spreading lies and inciting disagreement. It is often thought that Kremlin propaganda is less of a threat in Estonia than it is elsewhere in Europe. I cannot entirely share this optimism.

In 2018, we dealt a blow to intelligence efforts targeted against Estonia, capturing people suspected of treason and cooperating with the Prosecutor's Office to bring them to justice. The traitors undoubtedly caused damage and the whole affair is unpleasant and thought-provoking. Treason undermines and threatens both the rights and freedoms guaranteed by our Constitution and, indirectly, Estonia's independence itself. Traitors are never easy to catch. They are professionals, and their activity is carefully prepared and concealed. The capture of a traitor is therefore always a victory for the side that identifies him or her and a heavy blow to the side for which they were working. Since 2008, 6 individuals have been convicted of treason by Estonian courts and another 12 of committing crimes against the state by collaborating with Russian special services. KAPO has the knowledge and experience necessary to give good advice on finding a reasonable way out of a difficult situation. Many people have come to us to talk about their contacts with Russian special services, relieving themselves of a heavy burden; others have failed to come forward and faced much more severe consequences.

While well aware of threats from Russia, Estonians tend to underestimate or misunderstand those originating from the Middle East and North Africa. Similarly, the threat posed by the Kremlin is often not acknowledged in the Mediterranean region. In reality, all regional security threats in Europe affect the entire continent. Dealing with any serious threat today requires solidarity and trust between European countries and within each of them separately; people must trust the authorities and the way society works. Unfortunately, solidarity and trust are undermined by both radical Islam-inspired terrorism and the Kremlin's influence operations. The state loses credibility if it fails to protect its citizens against terrorists or to establish and maintain values that are important to its people.

Last year brought bad examples of how greed can offer Russia opportunities for manipulation. An investigation by KAPO led to the prosecution of a board member of an Estonian state-owned company who attempted to use bribery to bring Russian railway cargo business to Estonia. The greatest threat this entails is, at best, the importation of

Russia's corrupt business culture to Estonia and, at worst, the entanglement of strategic decision-makers in Estonia in reprehensible schemes from which they ultimately see no way out, finding themselves in a position in which Russia can exploit them in its influence operations.

As in our previous annual reviews, we talk about history. This year, we publish excerpts from documents describing the activities of the Soviet occupying forces that destroyed Estonian lives. The Kremlin elite tends to embellish, revive and unfortunately also justify the Stalinist regime. Soviet special services used to spread lies about the mass deportations of "anti-Soviet" Estonians to remote parts of the USSR in 1941 and 1949, causing some people – scared and misinformed – to believe the myth that Estonians brought this misfortune upon themselves. In reality, these were carefully hidden, meticulously prepared crimes against humanity, launched and orchestrated by the Kremlin. The mass killings and deportations did not break the spirit of the Estonian people. The tenacious struggle for freedom mounted by the partisans known as the Forest Brothers frustrated the

Kremlin, and bloodshed followed. Since then, the Soviet and present-day Russian propaganda machine has been trying to create an image of Estonians as informers or collaborators working against their own. Actual historical events tell a different story. Armed resistance was crushed only after repeated bloodshed, with the heaviest casualties being suffered as late as 1953, the year of Stalin's death. This was a war after war, and the fallen deserve to be remembered and commemorated.

Finally, let us take this opportunity to remember that the Estonian state, from its first creation in 1918 and again after regaining its independence in 1991, has existed longer than the entire Soviet annexation.

I hope you enjoy reading this review.

Arnold Sinisalu



The 26th Estonian Song Celebration And 19th Dance Celebration "Touched By Time. The Time To Touch". Photograph: Sven Začek.

DEFENDING THE CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER

Estonia's constitutional order was not under threat in 2018. There were no serious direct threats from extremism, separatism or foreign aggression that might result in a violent regime change or affect Estonia's territorial integrity. In a broader sense, threats to the constitutional order may emanate from activities through which opponents of the Estonian system of government try to attack fundamental democratic values, divide our society and, for example, manipulate history or our young people. Should information of such activity be confirmed, it falls to KAPO to prevent any planned hostility against Estonia. In the event of a crime against the state, we prosecute the offenders in cooperation with the Prosecutor's Office. Experience shows that the vast majority of influence operations aimed against Estonia still originate from

the Kremlin, whose primary objective in this is to test the boundaries of international law. Unfortunately, Russia also crosses these boundaries, by planning and executing attacks against Estonia and its allies. In recent years, the Kremlin's aggressive attempts to interfere in other countries' internal affairs and influence their decisions in order to change foreign policy have been repeatedly discussed in public. Examples include interventions in elections and attempts to stoke fears related to the migration crisis. The goal is to break out of international isolation while avoiding a regime change in the Kremlin. The Kremlin's ambition to be a global player and a hub is also still very real.

Impact of sanctions and corruption on Russia's disruptive efforts

The international measures following the annexation of Crimea have an impact on Russia's divisive policy. Among other things, the Kremlin presents Western sanctions as aggravating the situation of Russian expatriate communities. Similar messages are put out by the Coordination Council of Russian Compatriots (CCRC) in Estonia, which describes itself as a representative of the local Russian-speaking population. Set up and run by the Russian Embassy, this body has no real representative function or direct ties with local minorities. In this context, the Kremlin has repeatedly used a tried and tested method through fabricated accusations of fascism and Nazism. First, it identifies an apparent problem – alleged anti-Russian sentiment in the EU – which Russia associates with the sanctions and the expulsion of its diplomats following the Skripal incident. The Kremlin then takes it upon itself to address the issue – for example, by drawing up a black list of so-called Russophobes or by promoting Russo-ophile movements in the EU.

The above scenario indicates that the Kremlin is turning to more targeted attempts to create divisions in Western societies. Against the backdrop of intervention in foreign elections, the Kremlin used its embassies to try to activate local Russian communities in connection with the Russian presidential election in 2018. Despite these efforts, the Russian electorate in Estonia was noticeably becoming more distanced from and indifferent towards the Kremlin regime. The day-to-day routine of Russia's efforts to divide is not without its challenges either. The Russian Embassy in Estonia uses the CCRC – a virtual non-entity – to follow the instructions of the Russian foreign ministry. These are a cause of constant confusion at the embassy, as the Kremlin's ideologists are often not very familiar with local circumstances. The ill-advised instructions coming down the chain of command are executed reluctantly on the ground, using the skills and capabilities available, perhaps by fabricating reports and manipulating data.

In 2018, the Kremlin sought to intensify the fight for the Russian language in general and Russian-language media in particular, which it alleges are discriminated against in the EU. Embassies received orders to develop systematic measures in three areas:

1. to prepare alternative presentations to international organisations on the discriminatory policies of the Baltic states towards their Russian minorities;
2. to step up cooperation with journalists, compatriots and experts, including by organising refresher training events, to create a positive image of Russia;
3. to launch humanitarian and social projects to engage Russian citizens, non-citizens, Russian-speaking people and young people, to support schools, and to organise Olympiads and other events.

In addition, Ambassador Aleksandr Petrov appealed to members of the CCRC to find and submit to the embassy examples of Nazism in Estonia – in fact simply concocted accusations, which have always been one of the key messages of the Kremlin's influence operations against Estonia. In reality, such appeals will only move the most loyal activists of the Kremlin's policy of division, who are mainly driven by hopes of personal gain. Plagued by internal intrigue, pro-Kremlin associations with political ambitions are trying to differentiate themselves with extremist views that have little support in Estonian society. The activists are, however, chosen by the Kremlin-controlled media to describe events in Estonia.

The willingness of Russian officials to contribute to the Kremlin's divisive policies is often related to the interests of particular groups favoured by the bureaucracy and the corruption of the state apparatus. The whole system of coordination councils acting in the guise of supporting Russian compatriots is opaque and useful only to certain trusted individuals selected according to specific criteria. Given Russia's place on the Corruption Perceptions Index,¹ it is no surprise that abuses are hardly ever heard of in the institutions that implement its divisive policy.

¹ According to Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index, Russia ranked 138th among 180 countries in 2018.



The Estonian delegation at the Russian-Estonian Youth Forum in Moscow. As the organisers wanted to show the Estonian delegation to be larger than it really was, they sought out people from Estonia studying in Russia or others with Estonian ties. Photograph: Facebook.

Few have resettled in Russia

As in other countries, the State Programme for Voluntary Resettlement in Russia has not proved popular in Estonia. The Kremlin's attempts to boost its attractiveness have failed. In 2018, the concept of humanitarian protection was brought into more active use in the light of Russia's complicated international relations. It is linked, among other things, to the protection of Russia's interpretation of history (e.g. World War II monuments) and the rights of Russian expatriate communities. Russia also approved its new migration policy doctrine, the fundamental principle of which is "to determine, for humanitarian purposes, various categories of foreign citizens and stateless persons who can become citizens of the Russian Federation in line with a simplified procedure". Among other goals, the intention is to extend the legal consequences of the Kremlin's policy of division to the inhabitants of the formerly Soviet-occupied Baltic states; for example, by granting Russian citizenship to people living in the former territories of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union and their offspring through a simplified procedure. As such efforts by the Kremlin have not met with much success over the past few decades, it is in its interest to keep using a vague concept of Russian compatriots to justify its interference in the internal affairs of other countries.

Continued attempts to exploit the young

Among notable tools for social disruption is a joint programme of the Russian Embassy in Estonia and the local Pushkin Institute. This offers young people living in Estonia the opportunity to study at Russian universities and is financed by Rossotrudnichestvo (the Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation), an agency of the Russian foreign ministry. The programme is designed specifically for Russian-speaking young people living in expatriate communities and seen by the Kremlin as future carriers and promoters of the idea of the "Russian World" in their home countries.

Attempts are also made to engage young people in Russia's policy of division through events and projects, building on already-existing contact networks. For example, in November 2018, a Russian-Estonian youth forum was held in Moscow, as a follow-up to the 2017 World Festival of Youth and Students in Sochi. To present the Estonian delegation as larger than it actually was, the organisers sought out people studying in Russia but originally from or otherwise related to Estonia (having lived or studied here at some point). The forum attempted to create a platform for joint projects between Estonian and Russian youth in the econo-

my, culture, science, education and so on. In reality, it only served the Kremlin's own influence activity goals: it was an attempt to use active youth to move EU member states towards a more Kremlin-sympathetic attitude and to break the sanctions.

Such programmes and events are also a cover for the mass collection of detailed personal information to identify talent that can be exploited in Russia's interests in the future. In Estonia, it is the task of the Russian Embassy, local disruptive activists and a few people in Estonian education to funnel talent to events in Russia. In education, youth workers and Russian-language teachers at some schools are encouraged to take part in suspicious events by presenting these as a reward for good academic achievement or extracurricular activities. In fact, however, the events help the Kremlin's influence efforts and, unfortunately, are a conduit for feeding young talent to the Russian special services for recruitment.

In 2018, the Kremlin continued its efforts to legitimise the annexation of Crimea through the creation of divisions in the West. Although there is general awareness in Estonia of the actual nature and objectives of the events organised in Crimea, there are cases where individuals from Estonia, with differing motives (such as the need for personal recognition, business ties and other contacts), participate in the Kremlin's influence activities, thereby supporting its policy of division at an international level.

Coupled with unfounded accusations of Nazism, Russia is eager to accuse Estonia of endorsing the desecration of World War II memorials. In truth, what matters to the Kremlin far more than the restoration and preservation of war memorials is amplifying the

related historical myths and tensions. In the autumn of 2018, students from Vyatka State University in Kirov arrived in Saaremaa on a Russian foreign ministry-sponsored mission to rehabilitate Soviet World War II monuments in the area. Because their work was unauthorised and they used non-compliant methods, the Estonian National Heritage Board issued an enforcement order to the contracting entity.

Some typical characteristics of participants in Russia's divisive operations are:

- the pursuit of personal gain, often the willingness to work for a small fee or free of charge in the hope of future benefit;
- a desire to catch the attention of the embassy and other Russian institutions and the hope of future financial reward;
- a desire to establish contacts, including in Russia, to enhance one's status as an actor in the politics of division, and to be recognised as a serious operator;
- a focus on narrow niche topics that attract more money but mostly do not interest the local Russian-speaking population;
- attempts to compensate for one's failure to succeed in Estonian politics by actively participating in Russia's politics of division instead;
- a need for attention (media appearances, activity on social media);
- an interest in the apparent opportunity to participate in international cooperation as a representative of the Russian community or a specific target group (e.g. schools), and in some cases the desire to travel;
- seeing the activity as a lifestyle or pastime without being interested in profiting; a desire to be of service to the Kremlin.

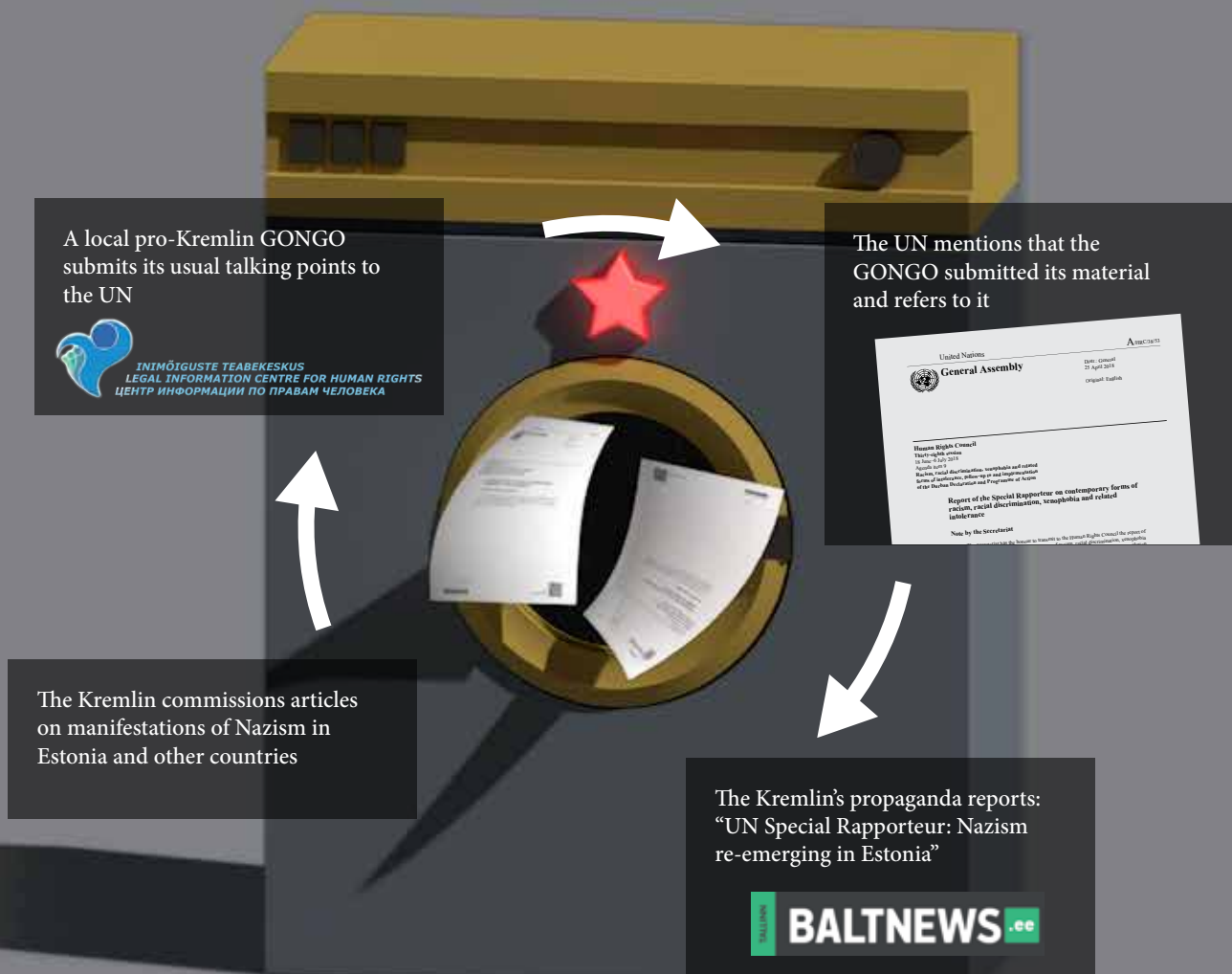


The conference "Contemporary Integration Processes in the Post-Soviet Space", held in October 2018 in Yalta, was yet another attempt to justify the annexation of Crimea using a participant from Estonia. Photograph: <https://mid-dnr.su/ru/pages/news/delegaciya-ot-mid-dnr-prinyala-uchastie-v-mezhdunarodnoj-konferencii-v-yalte-01477>



Vyatka students busy at work. Photograph: <http://kirov.bezformata.com/listnews/vyatgu-proveli-rabotupo-vosstanovleniyu/70377961>

SOURCE-LAUNDERING IN THE KREMLIN'S INFLUENCE OPERATIONS



In order to increase the credibility of messages put out by its influence operations, the Kremlin makes efforts to disseminate them through a more reliable source. Presenting a controlled media channel as independent is the simplest method, but there are also more sophisticated ones. Having a representative of a Kremlin-controlled GONGO submit material to a UN Special Rapporteur is one way to pass off the Kremlin's message as an observation by an NGO and amplify it by taking advantage of the UN's platform. Another example is the endeavours by Baltnews to attribute

Nazism to Estonia; one such attempt was made in July 2018. It is worth noting that at the time efforts were still being made to present Baltnews as a local independent media channel. After articles were published as a result of joint research by *Postimees*,² *Buzzfeed*,³ Latvian investigative journalism outlet *Re:Baltica*,⁴ Lithuanian news portal *15min.lt* and Serbian investigative journalism outlet *KRIK*, in the second half of 2018 Baltnews openly became part of the propaganda channel *Rossiya Segodnya* (Russia Today), which it had in fact been all along.

² www.postimees.ee/6143717/varjatud-rahastus-kohustuslikud-teemad-ja-igakuine-aruandlus-nii-tootas-kaasaegne-venemaa-propaganda-eestis

³ www.buzzfeednews.com/article/holgerroonemaa/russia-propaganda-baltics-baltnews

⁴ <https://en.rebaltica.lv/2018/08/moscows-mouthpieces>

Scripted propaganda

In 2018, the Kremlin sought to take advantage of media statements about Estonia and events taking place here in its influence operations. A textbook example is the activity of the television channel Petersburg–Channel 5. This began with an interview by President Toomas Hendrik Ilves for the Ukrainian publication *Evropeiska Pravda*, in which he said that a Russian military attack on Estonia (and, by the same token, NATO) would not go unanswered.

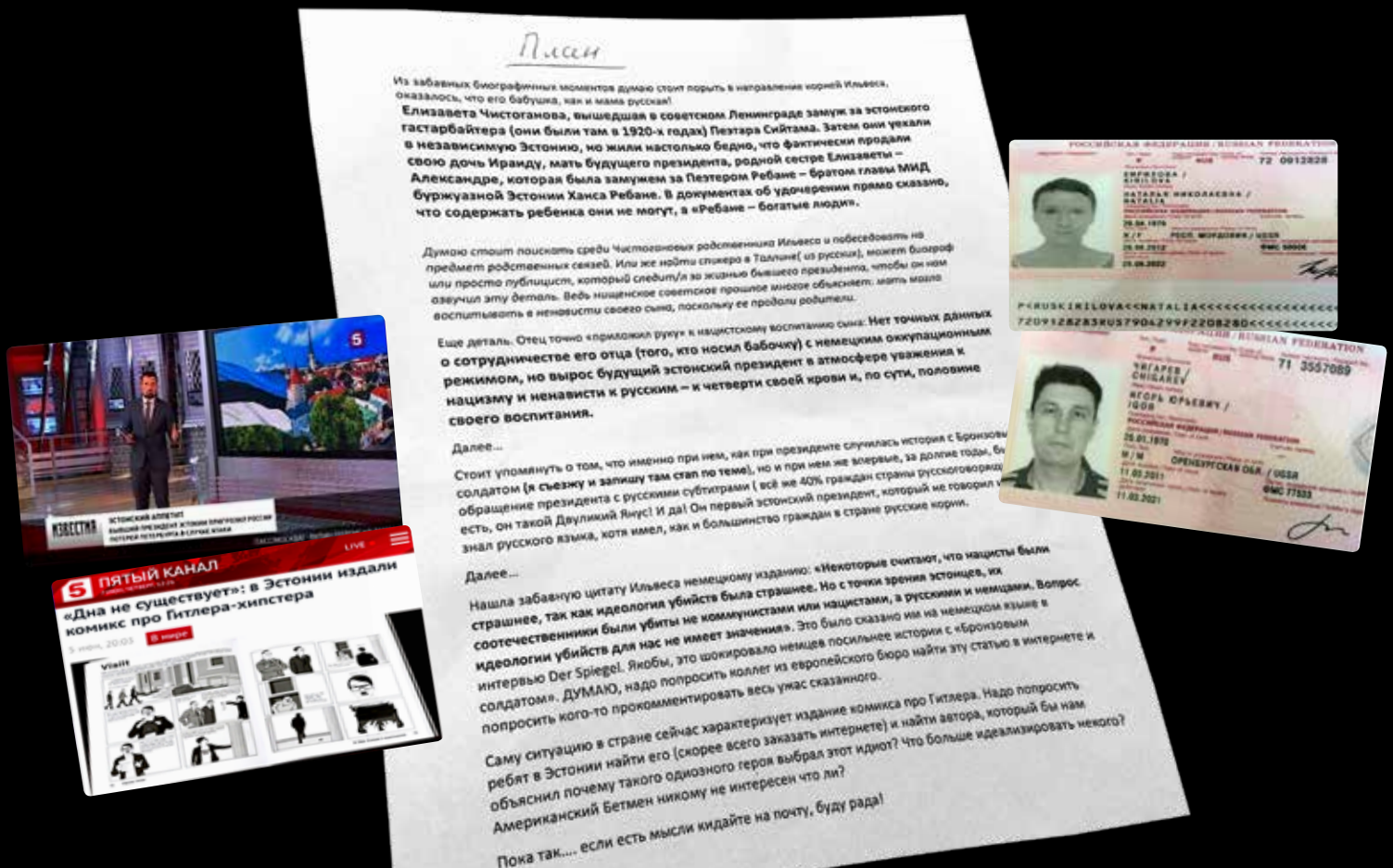
Channel 5 aired “news reports” of this on 4 and 5 June. At the same time, the channel was preparing to send a camera crew to Estonia and was looking for local spokespersons. They also wanted to do a story on the publication of the Estonian translation of a comic book titled *Hipster Hitler*. Arrangements were made with local pro-Kremlin speakers with previous broadcasting experience.

Channel 5’s Natalia Kirilova and Igor Chigarev touched down at Tallinn airport on the morning of

6 June. Without the appropriate documentation, they were banned from entry by the Police and Border Guard Board. The news report aired on the evening of 9 June. The scripted interviews were done by a local contributor for Russian television channels, Oleg Bessedin, who has previous experience of helping Russian propaganda outlets.

Among other items, the Channel 5 staff had on them work plans (Russian: *план*) or scripts.

The script called for the complex family history of Toomas Hendrik Ilves to be used to emphasise his Russian origin (his grandmother and mother were both Russian), refer to his father’s possible collaboration with the German occupying forces in Estonia, accuse him of equating communism with fascism, and so on. The script also said that people should be found in Estonia who are prepared to comment on the above in a suitable way, putting the following questions to them: Why do Estonians like Hitler so much? Do they have no other “heroes” (a reference to the *Hipster Hitler* comic)?



Channel 5 employees carrying out the plan.



Russia-1's attempt to bully Jehovah's Witnesses. Photograph: screenshot.

TV channel Russia-1 attempts to harass Jehovah's Witnesses in Estonia

Part of the Kremlin's arsenal of influence activities is the harassment of various social groups. In 2018, the targets included Jehovah's Witnesses in Estonia. As Jehovah's Witnesses have been persecuted and outlawed in Russia, many have fled to Europe. The Kremlin thinks it necessary to explain to its domestic audiences the reasons for outlawing the religious group, so its members are demonised through occasional coverage in the state-controlled media.

Jehovah's Witnesses already suffered from repression in the Soviet Union. The Kremlin is therefore continuing a well-established Soviet-era policy in which the media carries out hostile influence operations under precise instructions from the authorities, with the aim of creating divisions between different social groups and inciting conflict.

Reporters Yelena Yerofejeva and Pavel Kostrikov of Russia-1, which is part of the All-Russia State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company (VGTRK), entered the Schengen area through Finland with Ital-

ian and French visas, respectively, and took a ferry to Estonia. The purpose of the visit was to make a hostile and ridiculing news clip about Jehovah's Witnesses – essentially a piece of religious persecution – for the Russia-1 news programme “Vesti”, to be aired on 29 November 2018. Aware of the fact that their activities would run foul of good journalistic practice, the reporters concealed the real purpose of their visit and sought to avoid drawing the Estonian authorities' attention to their activities.

Once in Tallinn, they filmed the Jehovah's Witnesses building in the centre of the city and members of the congregation, using hidden cameras and not introducing themselves as journalists. Along with similar material shot in Finland, the video clip was used in a television report ridiculing Jehovah's Witnesses as a religious group and inciting hatred towards them. These activities have the characteristics of religious discrimination against persons, which in turn may develop into incitement of hatred as defined in Section 151 of the Estonian Penal Code. The Ministry of the Interior gave the reporters a five-year ban on entering the Schengen area to prevent crimes and ensure public security.

History in Russia's influence operations

In 2018, the Russian government's politics of history took a clear turn back towards a more aggressive and forceful interpretation of history. In the Kremlin's rhetoric, the fight against alleged anti-Russian falsification of history has been revived, for the first time since having seemingly exhausted itself with the dissolution in 2012 of the presidential commission set up to counter such falsification. Recently, a number of representatives of leading Russian universities and research organisations have spoken out under the banner of "countering attempts to falsify history to the detriment of Russian interests", with particular reference to the need to protect a Kremlin-endorsed account of World War II, or the Great Patriotic War as it is known in Russia. They are supported by Russian GONGOs⁵ and think-tanks engaged in historical research. An important forthcoming historical date will be 23 August 2019, the 80th anniversary of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact. Russian historiography attempts to diminish the significance of the pact and denies that this treaty between the Soviet Union and Germany paved the way for the annexation and occupation of sovereign states and essentially set the scene for World War II. As a tactical move, Russia seeks to draw public attention to the 1938 Munich Agreement, instead accusing the West of cooperating with Hitler's Germany.

⁵ Government-organised non-governmental organisations, or government-established entities that mimic NGOs.

Using the media, exhibitions, academic ties and so on, it exposes the international community to interpretations of historical events that suit Russia, seeking to gain broader acceptance of these. It is for this reason that Russia is interested in establishing working links with researchers and academics in target countries, at least to give an apparent international dimension and credibility to its theories. For the Baltic states, Russia is particularly interested in historians whose good reputation it could use to inculcate an alternative account of the 1940s. Past experience shows that the mere nominal participation of a foreign researcher at a Russian propaganda conference or roundtable is often enough to later associate them with pro-Kremlin postulates in the media.

Historical Information Warfare Conference in Kaliningrad and possible establishment of an Institute of Historical Memory in Russia

On 26–27 April 2018, the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University in Kaliningrad hosted a seminar titled "Memory wars as a tool for the re-evaluation of the modern world order: New challenges of World War II". The main organiser of the event was the Expert Institute for Social Research (EISI), established in 2017.



A conference dedicated to the falsification of history, held in Kaliningrad. At far left is Magnus Ilmjärv, opposite Giulietto Chiesa. Photograph: website of the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University, www.kantiana.ru/news/151/223169

The seminar discussed topics central to Russia's historical propaganda: the concept of fascism, conflicts between the European Union and Russia arising from the "falsification" of World War II, relations with Japan, the US and the Baltic states, and so on.

The bulk of the participants in the seminar were the staff and faculty members of Russia's own research institutions and organisations. Essentially the only foreign visitors who gave the event a desired international dimension were Magnus Ilmjärv, Senior Research Fellow in the School of Humanities at Tallinn University, and Giulietto Chiesa, a pro-Kremlin Italian journalist and apologist of the Crimean annexation. Andrey Shutov, Dean of the Faculty of Political Science at Moscow State University, who led the seminar, later emphasised in the media that the attendance of "representatives of the international academic community" was a good sign.

At the seminar, the optimistic announcement was made that in the near future a "powerful" centre for countering the falsification of history would be set up in Kaliningrad. This so-called Institute of Historical Memory is intended to provide Russian politics of history with "informational and analytical support" and "address security threats in a historical and cultural context". Above all, the institute is intended to fight the falsification of history related to the Soviet Union and Russia.

Centenary of the Republic of Estonia as seen from Moscow

On 24–25 September 2018, the Institute of World History of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the School of Humanities of Tallinn University held a joint history conference in Moscow titled "The disintegration of the Russian Empire and the creation of independent states". The conference was part of

the larger project "Russia and the Baltic region from the 18th to the 20th century: Problems of mutual relations in a changing world". This was the fourth instalment of the Joint Conference of Russian and Estonian Historians, which began in 2009 with a Russian initiative for establishing a history committee of the two countries. The previous conference was held in 2013 in Tallinn. The 2018 conference was formally dedicated to the centenary of the Republic of Estonia.

Unfortunately, standing in the way of more effective cooperation between historians from Russia and the Baltic states is the fact that the Soviet reading of history continues to be held in high regard in Russia. A case in point is an article by the President of the Russian Association for Baltic Studies (RABI)⁶ and professor at Saint Petersburg State University, Nikolai Mezhevich, on the RABI website under the title "In search of a lost past: For the 'centenary' of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian statehood". In the article, Mezhevich proclaims that the centenaries of the independence of the Baltic states are "purely domestic events", because Russia's official position is that Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have existed as independent states for only 47 years: from 1920 to 1940 and from 1991 to the present day. Russia continues to deny the legal continuity of the Baltic states and does not acknowledge the Soviet occupation. In a derisive style, the professor argues that the Baltic states are nothing but bricks in a Soviet building toy that would never have been able to exist, either economically or politically, without the Russian Empire or the Soviet Union. Mezhevich prefers to talk about Baltic regimes, political elites, ethnocracy and so on, altogether avoiding the concept of statehood. Ironically enough, it is against this scornful background that RABI is hoping to develop constructive ties with the Estonian research community.

⁶ See our 2010 and 2016 annual reviews.

Clio or Klio?

On 8 December 2018, a roundtable titled “1937–1941: Estonia on the brink of war” was held in Tallinn and attended by diplomats from the Russian Embassy. It was organised by the history club Klio. The Russian propaganda portal Sputnik for some reason dubbed the club an “Estonian historical society”, failing to explain that there was no reason to associate the name Klio with the ancient Greek muse of history, Clio or Kleio. On closer examination, Klio turns out to be the Russian acronym for “club of left-wing historians and social scientists” (Russian: Клуб левых историков и обществоведов). This is a marginal association of pro-Communist Russian historians who have set as their main objective “the fight against the defamation of our Soviet past” and chosen discussion, roundtables and conferences as their weapons. Its only link to Estonia is Oleg Kultayev, a member of Sillamäe City Council, who is the editor of the club’s website and chaired the event on 8 December.

One of the presenters at the Klio roundtable was Vladimir Ilyashevich, a former member of the KGB First Chief Directorate, who repeated the familiar tenets of Soviet history that the Estonian War of Independence was a “typical civil war” and Estonia itself was merely a pawn in big politics. Participating via video, Mezhevich also contributed to the success of the propaganda event. As expected, the roundtable came to the conclusion that there had been no Soviet occupation of Estonia.



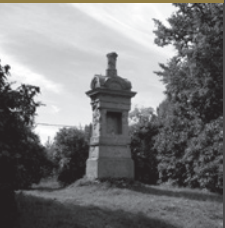
The Kremlin's influence operations on Soviet monuments located in Estonia

The rewriting of history, the destruction of enemy monuments and the erection of new monuments has always been part of wars and conquests. Several foreign powers have left their monumental mark on the Estonian landscape, but the biggest impact in the 20th century was undoubtedly made by the Soviet occupation. Lenin emphasised the exceptional importance of monumental propaganda in spreading communist ide-

ology, and this tradition was eagerly continued by Stalin's regime. From the 1940s onwards, communists destroyed almost all the monuments and memorial sites of the Republic of Estonia. These were quickly replaced by new monuments extolling Soviet rule and its heroes. The Kremlin's current influence operations continue the old custom of using monuments and memorial sites to spread propaganda messages and create tensions in society. In addition to renovating post-World War II Soviet monuments, the Kremlin wants to mark the territories conquered by its predecessors with monuments to the Russian Empire.

In 2017, Vityaz (an NGO defending the Bronze Soldier memorial in Tallinn) sought to restore a monument to Alexander III at Pullapää, in the rural municipality of Ridala. The project stalled due to a lack of funds.

PULLAPÄÄ



In late 2017, pro-Kremlin activist Oleg Bessedin used Baltnews to propose restoring a monument to the Soviet Navy's Baltic Fleet in Tahkuna on the island of Hiiumaa. No concrete action was taken following this proposal.

TAHKUNA



Pro-Kremlin activists in collaboration with the Russian fund "Successors of Victory" wish to establish a chapel at Maardu cemetery to commemorate those who fell in World War II. This would be a typical chapel design common in Russia, whose symbols (St George's ribbon and cross, and the words "Eternal glory to the defenders of the Fatherland") would serve the interests of Russia's influence operations.

MAARDU



The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs funded a trip for seven students and their supervisor from the Vyatka State University to Saaremaa from 29 September to 14 October 2018. Among other things, they "tidied up" a monument in Tagavere. As it had not authorised the work, the National Heritage Board issued an enforcement order to the contracting entity.

TAGAVERE



In 2017, people involved in the maintenance of Soviet monuments wanted to place a memorial stone in the village of Hänga to commemorate Soviet soldiers who perished in 1941. As they did not have permission from the owners of the property, the plaque was not placed.

HÄNGA



In 2015, pro-Kremlin activists sought to place a plaque bearing the names of the World War II soldiers supposedly buried in a mass grave in Vallapalu cemetery in the rural municipality of Rannu. The plan failed because the activists could not prove that the soldiers were actually buried there.

VALLAPALU



In the summer of 2017, the Russian media carried a propaganda attack about an open letter written by the Estonian residents of Jõhvi, requesting that future burials take place in different burial grounds to preserve the community's cultural traditions. Russian media channels covered this topic in a tone hostile towards Estonia.

JÕHVI



In the spring of 2017, Sarkis Tatevosyan, an activist of Russia's policy of division, removed a memorial stone dedicated to Soviet pilots from the rural municipality of Lüganduse, and relocated it to his residence in Kiviõli on 9 May, Victory Day. The case culminated in the expulsion of two Russian diplomats (see our annual review for 2017).

KIVIÕLI



On 10 May 2018, a monument to Soviet soldiers and one to the Estonian War of Independence were vandalised in Rakvere. Russian propaganda media presented this as defacing a Soviet monument (in reality flowers and candles were pushed over), including typical accusations directed at the Baltic states. What had happened to the monument to the War of Independence (marker-pen graffiti) was not mentioned.

RAKVERE



Activists wanted to add a plaque to a mass grave in Kallaste but, as in the case of Vallapalu, the individuals buried there could not be identified.

KALLASTE



Down the years, the Russian media and foreign ministry have used the gathering of veterans of the Battle of the Blue Hills to depict Estonia as a Nazi country. The fact that the Estonian Defence Forces also place a wreath at the Blue Hills memorial to Soviet soldiers who fell in that battle receives less media coverage.

SINIMÄED



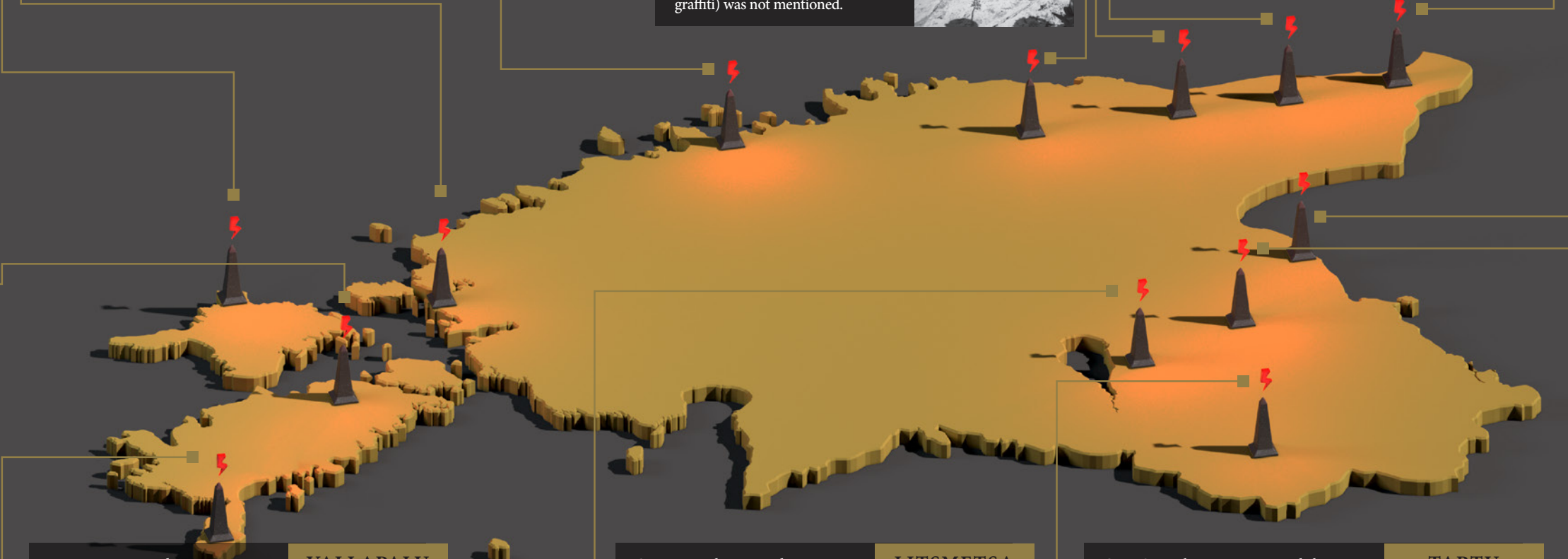
On 1 November 2018, the Russian Embassy sent a note to the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs reporting that the Soviet monument in the village of Litsmetsa in the rural municipality of Antsla had been defaced with aerosol paint.

LITSMETSA



On 16 September 2018, a memorial plaque was unveiled in Tartu, dedicated to the regimental chapel of St George the Victorious of the Russian Empire's 95th Krasnoyarsk Infantry Regiment. The plaque was consecrated by a clergyman from the Estonian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate, in the presence of representatives of the Russian Embassy and activists of Russia's policy of division.

TARTU





Convicted traitors Pjotr Volin (left) and Deniss Metsavas. Photograph: KAPO archives.

COUNTERINTELLIGENCE

From an outside perspective, the Russian special services seem to be going through a rough patch. In the past year, as reported in the international media, they have been caught out numerous times, both in Estonia and elsewhere in the world. All Russian special services have experienced failures. The biggest story was that officers of the military intelligence service (GRU)⁷ poisoned the Skripals in Salisbury. The Skripal incident was a wake-up call to many countries and their special services, in Europe and across the world. While it had been assumed since 1991 that Russian intelligence was not dangerous in the way the KGB had been or that the threat was transient and focused on areas geographically close to Russia, the Skripal incident even caused many sceptics to change their mind. The result is the strongest coordinated response from a coalition of Western countries to the illegal and barbaric activities of Russian special services in recent history.

Operational errors are certainly one reason for the failures of the Russian special services officers and their recruited agents, but they are not the only one. The special services' attitude to the collaborators they recruit also plays a role. Herman Simm, who worked for the Russian foreign intelligence service (SVR) and was convicted of treason, has reported having once asked his handler what would happen if they were caught by counterintelligence. With unusual candour, the handler had said that he would be rescued, but Simm would have no hope of assistance. Although the phrasing of such questions and answers may have changed, the idea and underlying logic have remained the same.

The Russian special services have skilled recruiters. At training school, intelligence officers are taught how to influence people's behaviour, what to promise them and how to make them believe those promises.

⁷ The Main Directorate of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, now officially known as the GU (Russian: Главное управление Генерального штаба Вооружённых Сил Российской Федерации).

Several traitors or agents caught by KAPO had been assured by their recruiting officers that intelligence work would not involve risks and, even if something did happen, the captured agents would not be forgotten and, if necessary, some way would be found to obtain their release or at least offer them assistance. Many of the recruits naively believed the promises made by the intelligence officers. But reality is different. A good example is Aleksei Vasilev, a young student who worked for the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) and was captured by KAPO in the autumn of 2017. Vasilev was sentenced to four years in prison by Harju County Court in March 2018 under Section 233 of the Penal Code for non-violent activities directed against the independence and sovereignty or territorial integrity of the Republic of Estonia and for the preparation of a computer-related crime under Section 216¹(1). In an unusually candid interview for the newspaper *Postimees*,⁸ Vasilev said that at the time of recruitment the FSB operators promised that he and his family would be taken care of financially if necessary. After his arrest, the help that he was expecting for himself and his loved ones never came. Vasilev said he felt that the FSB's interest in him disappeared immediately when he was sentenced and at the same time all the promises made by the recruiters were no longer valid. This is how he put it to the journalist: "James Bond is a romanticised movie; real life is much tougher. Prison is my everyday life. There is no happy ending here." When collaborating with the Russian special services, the old saying generally holds: the drowning man must save himself.

After becoming a suspect in November 2018, Dmitri Kozlov was sentenced on 20 March by Tartu County Court to three and a half years in prison for maintaining a relationship potentially seriously damaging to the Republic of Estonia contrary to Section 235¹ of the Penal Code. The FSB recruited Kozlov, a dual Estonian-Russian citizen, for covert collaboration to obtain intelligence regarding border guarding facilities, employees, vehicles, technology and work routines.

In 2018, court decisions were also made in the cases of GRU recruits Ilja Tihhanovski and Jevgeni Slavin. Estonian citizen Tihhanovski was detained on 10 December 2017 and was sentenced on 3 April 2018 by Tartu County Court to four years in prison for conspiracy against the Republic of Estonia contrary to Section 235¹ of the Penal Code. Tihhanovski

knowingly participated as an agent in GRU operations against the Republic of Estonia at least from 2008 until his detention in 2017, using aliases including "Noi".

Estonian citizen Jevgeni Slavin was detained on 1 July 2018 and was sentenced on 10 September by Harju County Court to 20 months of imprisonment for conspiracy against the Republic of Estonia under Section 235¹ of the Penal Code. Slavin was charged with knowingly maintaining relations with GRU operatives since 2016 with the intention of undermining Estonia's internal and external security. He gave a GRU officer his written consent to cooperate and agreed to use the alias "Tendrit". Slavin passed on information through various communications channels and at face-to-face meetings in Russia. As the damage he caused to Estonia was limited due to the brevity of his collaboration with the GRU, Slavin received a more lenient sentence than previously convicted agents. The court judgment in the Slavin case reaffirms that merely agreeing to covert cooperation against Estonia is in itself punishable and any damage caused is an aggravating circumstance.

Based on the above examples, we appeal to all residents of Estonia to disclose any cooperation or contacts they may have with foreign special services. Such cooperation often begins with an apparent coincidence, a foolish decision or pressure from intelligence officers. Often people do not know how to get out of their predicament. A court sentence and years in prison need not be the only possible outcome.



Jevgeni Slavin, who collaborated with the GRU, was convicted of a crime against the state. Photograph: KAPO archives.

⁸ www.postimees.ee/6424872/vene-spooni-sonum-viru-vanglast-mu-kodumaa-unustas-mind

Identifying traitors

In early September, KAPO detained two suspects for treason: Deniss Metsavas and his father, Pjotr Volin. As the evidence was convincing even for the accused, a settlement was reached. On 11 February 2019, Harju County Court convicted the two men of treason and communication of internal information, sentencing Metsavas to 15½ years in prison, and Volin to six years.

Metsavas' recruitment by the GRU started in 2007 while serving in the Estonian Defence Forces. In the years that followed, he aided Russian military intelligence in non-violent activities against Estonia, collecting and communicating to Russia internal information, Estonian state secrets and, to a lesser extent, classified information of other countries. For less than half that period, Pjotr Volin acted as liaison and courier. Metsavas had no single motive for his treasonable activity; his motives may be said to have changed over time. Recruitment was facilitated by his frequent visits to Russia since childhood, which allowed GRU recruiters to study him, his personality and his weaknesses, while also evaluating the prospects for a long-term, carefully hidden and exhausting engagement as an agent. Recruitment may take years. His behaviour allowed the recruiters to approach Metsavas with a specific proposal at the right moment and, by 2008, the apparently unexceptionable serviceman had been turned into a traitor. His father became an accomplice years later, after the Estonian servicemen's opportunities to visit Russia were seriously limited following the Russian aggression in Ukraine in 2014; Metsavas needed a go-between. The fact that his role was more limited in terms of both time and substance is reflected in the lighter sentence imposed on Volin.

Recruitment attempts by Chinese intelligence

Russian special services are not the only ones trying to approach naive prospective recruits in Estonia. Online recruitment attempts by Chinese intelligence targeting EU citizens are increasingly common. Public officials and professionals are approached on the Internet, seeking to attract them with lucrative job offers and paid foreign trips. Chinese companies are not really interested in paying thousands of euros just for a review of some publicly available material. KAPO has reason to believe that Chinese special services are behind most such offers, and being paid for compiling an apparently innocent summary or analysis may lead to a deeper collaborative relationship involving requests or demands to pass on state secrets or other confidential information.

Again, we would like to remind the reader that any collaboration with foreign special services against Estonia is punishable, and invite everyone to report immediately all such offers to KAPO. We wish to appeal to the conscience of all those with access to sensitive or classified information who have experienced such attempts to approach them but have so far failed to inform KAPO, and ask them to do so now.

POTENTIAL TARGETS FOR RECRUITMENT

Mainly individuals with access to information of interest, either directly or through people close to them.

TARGET SELECTION

Generally a thorough background check establishing the individual's financial position, ambitions, satisfaction at work, attitude towards their country, weaknesses and any illicit actions and habits that make it easier to end up in an undesirable situation.

ESTABLISHING CONTACT

Option 1 (audacious):
immediate trapping – a real or artificially constructed compromising situation, with a proposed solution that involves collaboration with the special services of a foreign country. Taking advantage of the element of surprise, mixed with threats and inducements, there are attempts to get the potential recruit's agreement to collaborate.

Option 2 (classic):
approaching in an apparently ordinary situation, for example at a reception or official (business) meeting, the discussion seems to take a natural course, expressing hope of or making a specific proposal for future meetings. This is followed seamlessly by mostly civil situations for getting to know the person, along with personal questions and inducements.



CULTIVATION

Apparently trifling requests to obtain inconsequential information. However, the recruiter will want information of ever better quality, for which a reward is promised, whether money, beneficial relationships/contacts, or professional success.

RECRUITMENT

Recruitment can be obvious and open, making it clear that you are now working for the special services of a foreign country; or this understanding can be created gradually. In the latter case, there is a recognisable point when the recruit does a favour in exchange for a reward for the first time. The communication becomes more aggressive and flattery is replaced by increasing tension, where the pressure for better-quality information increases and the reward decreases.

HANDLING

The recruit's everyday life is oppressed by a constant fear of being compromised. Unfortunately, this "collaboration" lasts all the way until the traitor has been exposed.

ALWAYS THE BEST WAY OUT OF THE TRAP

Come and talk to KAPO
about what has happened:
Toompuiestee 3,
Tallinn.



Some Estonian officials have access to state secrets ex officio, but they are still required to undergo vetting to gain access to NATO secrets.

PROTECTION OF STATE SECRETS

Security vetting and related myths

A key measure for the protection of state secrets is the procedure for granting access to them. To gain access to Estonian state secrets classified confidential or above or the classified information of other countries, a person must pass security vetting carried out by KAPO and the Estonian Foreign Intelligence Service.

Access to state secrets classified restricted does not require vetting. Security vetting may be carried out in case of justified suspicion, but this requires a substantiated request from the authority that granted access.

Vetting usually takes three months but can be extended if necessary. There have been instances in which security vetting has gone on for more than a year because of the colourful past of the subject; in such cases, the collection of all the necessary background data may be unusually time-consuming.

The purpose of vetting is to assess the access-seeker in terms of the circumstances specified in Section 32 of the State Secrets and Classified Information of Foreign States Act. It should be noted that security vetting is an ongoing process, which means that a security clearance holder may be vetted during the validity of their clearance and up to five years after its expiry. A subject may be vetted after the expiry of their clearance only if they have previously had access to classified information which, if disclosed, would considerably damage Estonia's national security (Section 47(3) of the Act). In certain instances, an individual's behaviour during the validity of their clearance could lead to pressure by a foreign special service. To prevent such events, we call them in for a vetting interview to get them back on the right track. Clearance holders should therefore not be shocked when invited for a repeat interview.

Commonest grounds for denial or revocation of clearance

Most cases of denial of clearance involve several grounds. For example, the applicant may submit false information on the vetting form and deliberately attempt to conceal information or present false information during the interview. In such cases, the grounds for refusal are interrelated and will be considered together. The most common reasons for refusing to grant access to state secrets (as specified in points 3, 9, 10, 15 and 16 of Section 32(2) of the State Secrets and Classified Information of Foreign States Act) are:

- *the applicant is party to criminal proceedings as a suspect or accused.*

The evidence gathered as part of the criminal proceedings will be used to assess the credibility of the person for the purposes of keeping state secrets. The person's guilt or absence thereof will not be assessed in advance of a court judgment;

- *the applicant is addicted to narcotic or psychotropic drugs, alcohol or gambling.*

Addiction is something that a person usually tries to hide due to embarrassment. Certainly, no one will be denied clearance solely on the grounds of having been to a casino once, consuming alcohol in moderate quantities on special occasions or having tried a narcotic. However, the use of drugs is prohibited by Estonian law, which is why such misconduct reflects badly on the law-abidingness of the person, and this is relevant for considering the grant of clearance;

- *the applicant has submitted false information on their application form or has intentionally concealed information during the interview, provided that the information is essential for deciding the grant of clearance.*

The vetting form must be completed as accurately as possible, because the information will be verified. Any doubts about the accuracy of the information will be addressed during the interview. Applicants occasionally forget to include relevant

facts on the form. If the applicant brings this up as soon as the interview begins, KAPO usually takes a positive view, because the person has understood the error and immediately tried to draw attention to it. There have been no cases of this type in which KAPO has denied clearance. On the other hand, if KAPO establishes that a person has intentionally failed to include information on the form and attempted to conceal that information during the interview, this may be considered a reason for refusing clearance.

- *the applicant has, through words or action, shown dishonesty, disloyalty, unreliability or indiscretion that points to their unsuitability for keeping state secrets.*

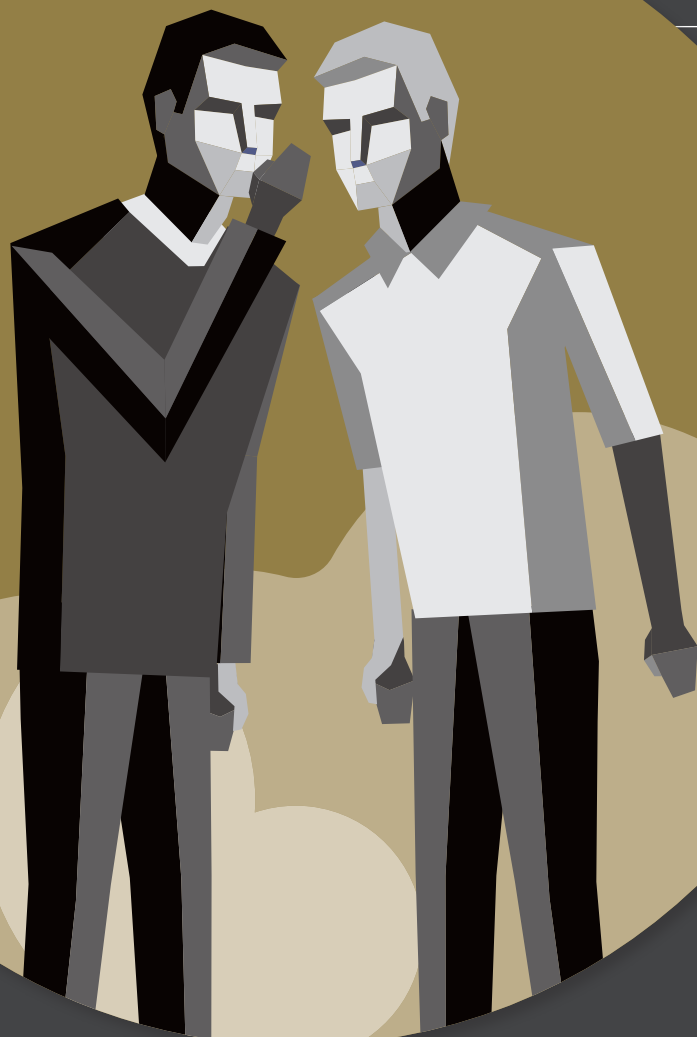
This point serves as a basis for evaluating the applicant's previous behaviour, attitude towards protecting internal information, adherence to established instructions and law-abidingness. If the applicant has disclosed to unauthorised persons internal information or third-party information of which they have become aware in the course of performing their official duties, this casts doubt on whether the applicant can be trusted with state secrets;

- *the applicant displays a developed behaviour or habit that may result in financial dependence.*

People with expensive habits (such as gambling, payday loans, computer games or motorsports) need to take care not to exceed their household budget and get into difficulty. Financial difficulty is one of the potential security risks that foreign special services can exploit to control a person.

Access to state secrets is not a fundamental right; it is a privilege of being entrusted by the state with tasks essential to national security.

Law-abiding applicants have no reason to be concerned about security vetting. However, in order to ensure their success during security vetting, we do recommend that applicants be open about any misfortunes experienced in life.



Myths

There are some misconceptions among people who have passed or are undergoing security vetting:

- the security vetting official decides who is granted clearance and who is not;
- the security vetting official pries into the personal lives of applicants, doing so without any good reason or out of personal interest;
- if the applicant signs a consent form for security vetting, their communications will be intercepted for data collection;
- if a person sees a therapist, security clearance is definitely ruled out.

We recommend that applicants be forthcoming with the vetting official and openly discuss any potential risks pertaining to their personal background during the interview. We treat all such information in strict confidence. If the applicant's behaviour might pose a security risk that could be used to compromise or otherwise influence them, the official will recommend risk-mitigation measures.

As pointed out above, security vetting is designed to identify the presence of any grounds, as specified in Section 32 of the State Secrets and Classified Information of Foreign States Act, for the refusal to grant or extend security clearance.

While KAPO is authorised to exercise discretion in deciding whether to refuse clearance on the grounds

specified in Section 32(2) of the Act, we never refuse issue or extension lightly. A decision to deny clearance or grant it for a reduced term is an administrative decision, and a negative decision can be challenged in court.

There have been cases in which an applicant has, after being granted clearance for a reduced period or being denied clearance, claimed to their employer that KAPO was simply harassing them and that they posed no security risk whatsoever. In reality, any security risks identified in connection with an applicant are always explained to them, referring to the specific grounds for refusal in Section 32 of the Act. A copy of the decision is issued to the person. If such a situation arises, we recommend that the employer ask the applicant to present the decision to them.

Reality

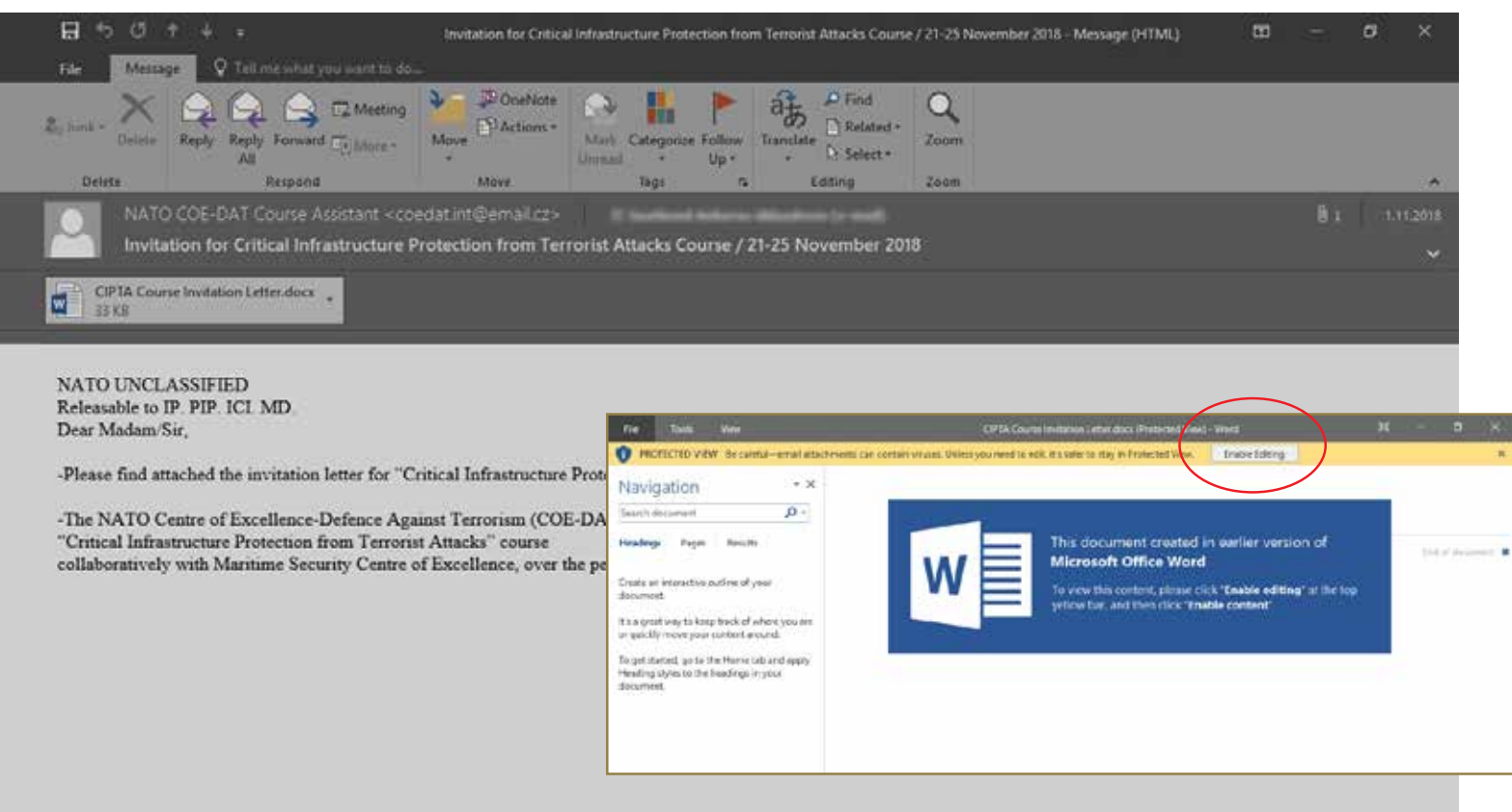
In reality, the official verifies the information provided by the applicant, interviews the applicant and then submits the materials for evaluation to a commission, which makes a proposal to the Director General of KAPO, who makes the final decision. The information gathered during security vetting is handled on a need-to-know basis, which means that very few people have access to it.

Details about the personal life of the applicant are important for assessing any security risks that he or she may pose and determining whether the person is liable to be compromised, influenced, blackmailed or recruited, which may result in the risk of unlawful disclosure of state secrets.

The Security Authorities Act prescribes specific circumstances in which a person's communications may be intercepted, their right to the confidentiality of messages restricted and so on. Security vetting is carried out in accordance with the Security Authorities Act, taking into account the exceptions prescribed in the State Secrets and Classified Information of Foreign States Act. Restricting the right to the confidentiality of messages belonging to a person being vetted requires sufficient information to indicate that the person is preparing a criminal offence or has committed one and a substantiated decision from an administrative court judge authorising the restriction.

This is not the case, as everybody may need professional help at some point in their life and turning to a therapist is completely normal. In fact, KAPO recommends consulting a therapist if necessary, as counselling will often prevent greater harm that may be caused by trying to cope alone. Clearance may be denied only if the person suffers from a psychological disorder that may limit their ability to understand or control their behaviour. If such a suspicion arises, KAPO may refer the person for psychiatric examination. A refusal to grant security clearance must be based on an expert decision, assessing all the collected information and substantiating the decision.





A document with a false warning claiming that it was created using an older version of the software. Pressing the “Enable Editing” button will trigger a chain of events that will infect the computer with spyware. Watch the video tutorial at www.youtube.com/watch?v=_6l1xfGnkyg

PROVIDING CYBERSECURITY

In the field of cybersecurity, KAPO’s tasks are directly related to ensuring national security. This means that, while the technical security of national information systems is the responsibility of the Estonian Information System Authority and financially motivated or thrill-seeking cybercriminals must be caught by the police, it is up to KAPO to detect and prevent attacks threatening national security. These attacks may be committed by other countries or by terrorists. Attacks that pose a security threat are known as advanced persistent threats, or APTs,⁹ which points to the fact that they are technically sophisticated and typically remain undetected over an extended period of time. All APT attacks uncovered to date have been committed by state organisations – in the case of Estonia, mostly by Russian special services.

Cyber operations against Estonia’s allies involving Russian special services received extensive media coverage in 2018. The charges brought by the US Department of Justice¹⁰ and the exposure of Russian cyber-intelligence operatives by the Netherlands Defence Intelligence and Security Service,¹¹ including disclosing their names and faces as well as the technical details of the attacks, take the disruption of Russian state-sponsored cyber operations to a new level. Moreover, many security companies investigating state-sponsored cyber-attacks have published numerous reports analysing the technical details of Russian cyber-intelligence. For example, Palo Alto Networks¹² and ESET¹³ made an in-depth analysis of the tools used in the Kremlin’s cyber operations.

⁹ We discussed the concept of APTs at some length in our 2014 annual review.

¹⁰ www.justice.gov/opa/pr/us-charges-russian-gru-officers-international-hacking-and-related-influence-and

¹¹ www.government.nl/latest/news/2018/10/04/netherlands-defence-intelligence-and-security-service-disrupts-russian-cyber-operation-targeting-opcw

¹² <https://unit42.paloaltonetworks.com/sofacy-creates-new-go-variant-of-zebrocy-tool>

¹³ www.welivesecurity.com/2018/04/24/sednit-update-analysis-zebrocy

Estonia was not completely spared Russia's state-sponsored cyber operations either. In 2018, several Estonian state authorities received fake emails containing malicious software. For example, one email sent by an attacker contained a fake invitation that appeared to originate from a NATO competence centre in Turkey. On this occasion the attacker did not put much effort into spoofing the sender's address, which could alert an observant recipient. Fake emails containing malware continue to be an effective tool in the arsenal of state-sponsored cyber-espionage, and one about which we must continuously remind our readers.

Caution and technical security measures help to significantly obstruct state-sponsored cyber-intelligence, too. In what follows, we wish to draw attention to the methods that have been used in state-sponsored cyber operations, the threat posed by which can be significantly reduced by technical measures. The incident in the Netherlands confirms that Russian state agencies have exploited the vulnerabilities of Wi-Fi networks, if necessary sending their operatives to another country to access a network from the immediate vicinity of the targeted building. From the point of view of a security manager, it is essential to secure and monitor internal Wi-Fi networks. Wi-Fi should not be allowed on internal networks. If this is unavoidable, additional security measures must be used and logs maintained. From a user's point of view, when handling sensitive information over a Wi-Fi network, interception and malicious injection attacks are always a possibility.

Cyber threats during foreign travel

Device theft

Although the physical theft of a device does not immediately imply a cyber threat, it should be considered that any storage medium contains information that can be abused. A lost or stolen smart phone, tablet, laptop, smart watch or similar device is to a greater or lesser extent connected to a person's identity in cyberspace. Hence the thief also steals the victim's identity and related information. When travelling to higher-risk destinations, it is therefore advisable to take new devices or remove any personal information and previously used virtual identity-related data from existing ones.

To prevent theft and resulting data loss:

- activate an authentication mechanism, such as a pattern lock, password, code or biometric detection, on your device and apply full or partial encryption of the device;
- never leave devices unattended or, if necessary, place them somewhere with restricted access, such as a safe, locked closet, theft-proof backpack, pocket or elsewhere close to the body;
- do not share your device's location, especially on social media and in real time.

Public networks

The desire for instant information forces people to be constantly logged in and available. A telecom provider's mobile data connection is always preferable to a public Wi-Fi network, especially when abroad. However, if connecting to a Wi-Fi network is unavoidable, it is reasonable to assume that an easily accessible network is just as vulnerable and easily abused. It is therefore crucial to be aware of which networks you connect to.

To prevent abuse:

- clear the list of trusted networks in your device to prevent possible leakage of the details of those networks and your identity data;
- change device settings to disallow automatic connection to trusted networks;
- note that the foregoing applies to both Wi-Fi and Bluetooth.

When forced to transmit confidential information (such as credit card details or passwords) over a public or unknown network, follow these steps:

- set up an Internet connection using a prepaid telephone card purchased in the host country and activate a Wi-Fi hotspot for yourself;
- use a known and reliable VPN (virtual private network) connection, preferably one provided by your institution;
- make sure that the page on which you enter the data uses secure hypertext transfer protocol, or HTTPS, which is indicated by a padlock sign in the web browser address bar.

Shared devices

Shared devices, such as computers at an Internet cafe or hotel, should be avoided. If this is not possible, the following steps are essential to reduce risks:

- turn on two-step verification for logging in to accounts;
- disable the "Remember me" function;
- when logging out, make sure you complete the process and remove your account;
- when finished, delete the browser history, any saved passwords, cookies, cache and downloaded files; double-check that the deletion has been successful.



London, April 19 2018. The Invisible Enemy Should Not Exist, by Michael Rakowitz, is a sculpture of the Lamassu made from empty date cans on the Fourth Plinth in Trafalgar Square, London. Photograph: Shutterstock.

PREVENTION OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

International terrorism is one of the clearest examples of the indivisibility of security: terrorist attacks in the far corners of the world affect our people's sense of security. Global developments in the activities of terrorist organisations have an impact on the terrorism risk in Estonia. As we are part of the European Union, several developments in international terrorism are even more relevant to us. The probability of a terrorist attack in Estonia continues to be small, but changes in terrorists' methods of operation and attacks in Europe give little hope of it remaining that way forever.

Daesh. There have been significant developments in the Syria-Iraq conflict zone in 2018. Daesh has experienced great losses, and the organisation has lost control over almost all areas, becoming a decentralised terrorist network. Its resources and overall appeal

to extremists have dwindled. Consequently, the number of attacks led and inspired by this organisation is decreasing. However, this does not mean that Daesh's interest in organising attacks has decreased. Indeed, this continues to be an essential part of its strategy. Successful attacks divert attention away from territorial losses, and they also have a strong psychological effect, increasing support among Islamic extremists.

In other words, Daesh's major setbacks in the conflict zone do not constitute an end to the spread of extremist ideology. Daesh is involved in a low-intensity terrorist campaign to keep its narrative and legitimacy alive. Although the volume of propaganda has decreased, reflecting the organisation's focus on survival, material is still being produced to encourage simple terrorist attacks in Western countries. Such

attacks do not require prior training, and they are carried out with whatever equipment is available, such as cut-and-thrust weapons, firearms and vehicles. These attacks target people in everyday urban spaces, as well as members of the defence forces and police officers.

Recent years have shown that Islamic extremists can adapt to their circumstances well and are quite innovative. The dynamic aspect of the extremists is mainly evident in their rapid adaptation to the opportunities in IT and social media for mobilising supporters. Islamic extremists keep finding new methods to hinder information reaching security authorities, enabling them to go unnoticed for long periods. Interest has been shown in chemical and biological weapons and drone attacks, but the capability for this is currently limited.

Europe. The conflict in Syria, Iraq and the entire Middle East continues to cast a shadow on European security. Thousands of fighters of European origin have travelled to the conflict zone. In addition to the jihadis participating in active warfare, many of their family members are also in the region. The large-scale return of foreign fighters from the conflict zone is unlikely but, due to their high level of radicalisation, military training and contacts, each person who returns poses a disproportionate danger to European security. While the main focus has previously been on young male extremists, women and children inspired by the propaganda have also taken on an important role in the division of tasks within terrorist organisations at the behest of Daesh, which needs additional resources.

Consequently, Islamic extremism and terrorism still constitute a great danger to Western democratic countries. A consistently high threat of terrorism has become the “new normal”. The reduced number of attacks in Europe is not a sign of a smaller threat from terrorism, but rather of Daesh’s situation in Syria and Iraq, as well as the successful prevention carried out by intelligence and security authorities. Various government institutions are collaborating increasingly closely and with improved operational capability. This has resulted in a large number of terrorist attacks being prevented.

In the future, prisons will be a problem area. Prisons contain a large number of foreign fighters who have returned to Europe, as well as local jihadis, who continue to radicalise, train and recruit in the isolated environment of a prison. The high concentration of radicals in prisons means that the latter are the main hotbeds of terrorism in Europe.

Curbing radicalisation in prisons and blocking the spread of extremist ideology online is a tough challenge for Western societies. To impede radicalisation and to limit the spread of Islamist terrorist propaganda, the public sector needs to collaborate with the private. The EU is currently discussing a regulation that aims to stop the spread of terrorist content online. The draft legislation stipulates that companies will be obliged to remove such content within an hour of receiving a relevant notification from a competent authority.



A soldier in Strasbourg after the terrorist attack. Photograph: Christian Hartmann, Reuters/Scanpix.

The situation in Estonia

Foreign fighters. The threat posed by foreign fighters is low in Estonia. Since 2013, we have identified several dozen individuals (including minors) with ties to Estonia who are or have been in the Syria-Iraq conflict zone and who have connections with local extremist organisations. Among these is Abdurrahman Sazanakov, a foreign fighter of Estonian origin who is currently in the conflict zone. At the moment, it is unlikely that these individuals will return to Estonia. At the same time, local radicals are still interested in travelling to the conflict zone. Estonia has been used as a transit country for people who are or may be involved with Islamic extremism and terrorist organisations.

Radicalisation. The greatest local threat arises from radicalised individuals who have fundamentalist views of Islam that oppose Western democracy and who can carry out attacks incited by terrorist organisations. Representatives of Islamic organisations occasionally visit Estonia, attempting to spread a fundamentalist interpretation of Islam, but the Estonian Islamic community has a prevalently sceptical attitude towards such missionaries. The problem of extremism is gradually becoming more serious. Radicalisation mainly occurs online.

Recent converts are the most susceptible to this, as their connection to Islam is fresh and their motivation to follow “the most correct and purest” religious interpretations is greater than for those who have been Muslim from birth.

We have identified several dozen Muslims with ties to Estonia who have expressed support for jihad and their anger towards people they consider to be infidels. However, the exact number of radicalised individuals is unknown. Extremists in Estonia become radicalised mainly as a result of propaganda spread on the Internet and have no direct contact with terrorist organisations. Radical-minded people are generally not very noticeable in public cyberspace. Manifestations of radicalism are increasingly difficult to identify, as the majority of worrying communication takes place in closed chatrooms or on encrypted communication channels. So far, we have not detected any terrorist propaganda in the Estonian language. But we cannot eliminate the possibility of a “lone wolf” carrying out an act of terror in Estonia.

There are several warning signs of radicalisation (see illustration) but, based on the experience of other countries, such people are often characterised by difficulty integrating into society, socially deviant

Radicalisation is the gradual change in a person’s behaviour and beliefs which can lead to violent extremism and terrorism. It is a growing desire to completely transform the ideological foundations of a society. While the phenomenon itself is not new, radicalising propaganda is spreading increasingly quickly due to the Internet, and the radicalisation of people takes ever less time. Radicalisation depends on many circumstances, taking place as a result of push-and-pull factors and surrounding influences.

We recommend looking out for the following general signs and dangers of radicalisation:

- ridiculing and questioning a democratic social order;
- expressing and/or spreading (through social media etc.) extremist political ideologies or religious beliefs, or being in possession of Islamist propaganda material;
- rigid behavioural norms based on extremist ideologies or religious interpretations;
- intolerance of other beliefs;
- intolerance of other behavioural norms;
- changes in behaviour, e.g. circle of friends, isolation from others;
- gender discrimination, a change in attitude towards the opposite sex;
- changes in appearance (growing long hair and a beard);
- symbols, styles and so on associated with radical ideologies.



*Adam Musiev, a Russian citizen, was expelled from Estonia for security reasons. The process to expel him lasted for years.
Photograph: Stanislav Moshkov, Õhtuleht.*

behaviour and/or mental health issues. A radicalised person sometimes attracts the attention of a security authority regrettably late. That is why we repeat our call to take notice of changes in the behaviour of the people close to us, our fellow students or colleagues, and to try to find a solution together in the event of any issues. The radicalisation of a person is generally a social problem: offering support at the right time can help the individual and avoid tragic consequences later for themselves and society at large.

KAPO is the main authority in charge of the fight against terrorism, and welcomes tip-offs related to radical online content about Estonia, as well as information about individuals or organisations who are or are suspected of being a threat to national security or constitutional order.

War refugees. The pressure caused by mass migration continues in Europe. It is clear that some of the indigenous population find it difficult to integrate new immigrants. The voluntary resettlement scheme started by the European Commission aims to resettle into the EU at least 50,000 people who need international protection by 31 October 2019.

As of late 2018, Estonia has relocated and resettled 206 war refugees from Turkey, Greece and Italy. Estonia is one of the countries that conducts interviews with refugees before they are relocated. The purpose of these interviews is to assess any threats they might pose to national security and public order, and their ability to integrate into society. Estonia has rejected refugees where there have been doubts about the truth of their statements, suspected ties with extremist organisations or hindrances regarding integration into Estonian society. As a result of these checks, a total of 421 migrants have either been refused entry into Estonia or have themselves withdrawn their application, not to mention those who have been excluded after analysis of their personal data.

So far, the refugees received in Estonia have not posed a threat to national security, but there are other problems. There are still very few examples of well-integrated war refugees. Many are studying the Estonian language, but the results among adult students are modest. Few have permanent work. Some have been found guilty of infringing public order. There have been thefts and serious physical violence. Nearly half the received refugees have left Estonia. One of

these families returned to Iraq, while the rest have moved on to other EU countries. The main reasons for departure are excessively low social benefits and the small Muslim community. This shows that many of the people who have left Estonia can be considered economic migrants rather than war refugees. The argument about the lack of a Muslim community may be based on a desire not to integrate and, rather, to continue living in their own cultural space.

The refugees who have been granted asylum in Estonia will remain tied to the country: people under international protection can travel within the EU like all other Estonian residents; but if they spend more than 90 days in another country during a 180-day period, this is considered an illegal stay. The country in question has the right to deport back here people who have received protection from Estonia. About a dozen people have so far been deported to Estonia on this basis.

Foreign students. Learning mobility must be mentioned in relation to the threats of legal migration. An increasing number of student visas have been granted over the years, amounting to nearly one-third of the total number of visas. Every year, an increasing number of foreign students from outside the EU apply to study at Estonian universities. The threat of abusing learning mobility and the real problems that have arisen are major. Most of these students use their visa for its designated purpose, but many third-country nationals use their student status mainly to enter the Schengen area, and disappear into the depths of the EU before beginning their studies. Indeed, on social media there are groups whose aim seems to be to distribute information about study opportunities in Estonia. In these groups, future students receive step-by-step instructions in their native language on how to get to Estonia and then move on to other Schengen countries.

Migrants who are leading specialists, scientists, IT experts and major investors are strategically important for Estonia. In these areas, the government has done a lot to promote immigration. At the same

time, a large number of workers and students are accepted from third countries for positions that are not included on this list. Many university graduates apply for permanent residence and begin unskilled work in Estonia, also inviting their family members to come here. There is reason to believe that numerous marriages between third-country nationals have been entered into solely for the purpose of obtaining a visa or residence permit. A considerable proportion of these people cannot generally be defined as qualified professionals, as they are workers earning little money for work that creates little added value and whose integration into society is highly unlikely.

As far as blocking extremist views is concerned, we must highlight that against the background of values based on Western universal human rights, new immigrants often stand out for their completely different value judgements. In the long run, this is a burden on society, creates tensions and poses a threat to public order and security. International experience points to the danger of creating closed communities and parallel societies which ignore the host country's customs and traditions and contradict national legislation. Self-segregation and associated social and economic vulnerability in turn set very favourable conditions for radicalisation and thereby support for terrorism. It is in the country's best interests to avoid such developments. Universities must understand their role in selecting students from other countries and allowing them to come to Estonia, and consider the risks of abusing student status, among other things.

Returns. KAPO's experience with and observations on revoking the visas or residence permits of individuals who are a threat to national security and their consequent deportation indicate that this is a highly complex and bureaucratic process which can drag on for years. Given the dynamic current security environment in Europe, steps must be taken to make the process for deporting migrants who pose a threat to public order and national security more efficient and less burdensome for the state.



*Ammunition seized in a criminal case. The illegal handling of explosives and deactivated weapons is dangerous.
Photograph: KAPO archives.*

Managing risks related to the threat of terrorism

Blocking illegal trade in explosives and strategic goods

Obtaining explosives and explosive devices has become increasingly difficult over the years. Nevertheless, a considerable quantity of explosives was removed from circulation in 2018.

As a result of proceedings in 2018, 6.27 kg of explosives, 3 industrially manufactured explosives (grenades/mines), 13 firearms, 2 silencers and 2,721 cartridges of various calibres were seized. Unfortunately, reactivated firearms have been used by terrorists in Europe. KAPO emphasises the need to fight the business of reactivating deactivated weapons. On 9 May, Tartu County Court convicted a group of people charged with the unlawful possession, storage and transfer of firearms, ammunition, explosives and explosive devices. During the investigation in 2017, a total of more than 19,000 cartridges of various calibres, 73 firearms, 42 barrels, 1,056 fixed ammunition projectiles, gunpowder and 12 electric detonators were confiscated from the unlawful possession of Igor Krikuhhin from Tartu (a key person in this case) and 15 others.

There were no crime-related explosions within KAPO's investigative jurisdiction in 2018. As a result of the work carried out by KAPO and other law-enforcement authorities over the course of many years, the overall number of explosions has been consistently low. In the past five years, KAPO has investigated fewer than four explosions a year.



*Fixed ammunition projectiles seized in a criminal case.
Photograph: KAPO archives.*

In the fight against terrorism, attention must still be paid to the prevention and blocking of illegal distribution of and trade in strategic goods. The goal is to identify those involved in illegal activities. It is also important to ascertain which strategic goods are moved through Estonia and what methods may be used for crossing the Estonian border.

In recent years, there has been an increase in the transit through Estonia of strategic goods and components thereof. These activities are generally carried out for commercial rather than terrorism-related purposes. One reason for this is international sanctions, which are making people seek opportunities to flout the restrictions they impose. A variety of companies and supply chains are used to move such goods, in order to hide the actual end-user.

Crisis management and securing national defence assets

In the fight against terrorism, prevention plays a key role, including by organising and participating in exercises and training events. In May 2018, KAPO participated in SIIL 2018, the largest crisis management exercise since the restoration of Estonian independence, in order to practice its role in extensive national defence during escalating security threats, and to evaluate related security issues. As for higher-risk visits, KAPO focused on ensuring the security of the visit by Pope Francis, which took place without any major incidents.

To increase awareness, KAPO carried out many training events and information days for state authorities and national defence assets. Consultations about the protection of national defence assets have continued. Unfortunately, the use of drones to attack objects and interfere with operations is becoming increasingly common. Drones are getting more affordable, and their maximum flying distance and versatility make them more difficult to spot. It is also possible to attach various components to them to carry out different types of attack. In order to regulate the use and monitoring of unmanned aircraft, there is ongoing collaboration with the Ministry of the Interior, the Estonian Civil Aviation Administration and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications.

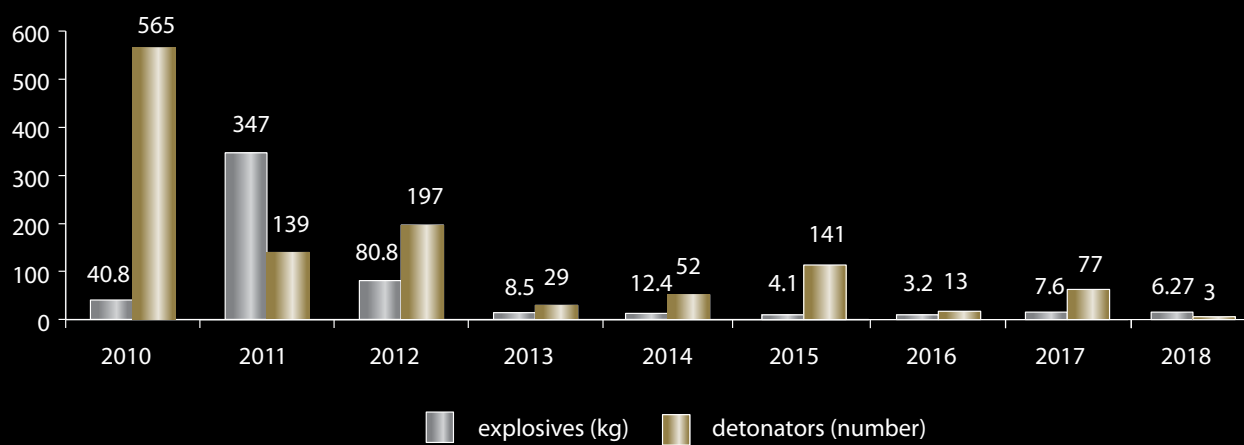
Managing risks related to the defence industry

With the amendments to the Weapons Act, companies operating in Estonia now have a legal basis for handling military weapons and associated ammunition and explosives. Companies previously had the right to handle firearms and ammunition permitted only for restricted civilian use, but the updated act gives entrepreneurs the right to handle – including manufacture, keep, store, service and demilitarise by commission, destroy and transport – military weapons, ammunition and other explosives, combat vehicles and other military goods within the scope of verified economic activity. Estonian companies now have an opportunity to participate in public procurement tenders held by the Estonian Defence Forces, the Estonian Defence League and the armed forces of other EU member states, in which the company can offer its own products or offer to service or repair military equipment.

This increases the competitive advantage of Estonian companies, and in the long term the development of this field will improve Estonia's defence capability, as the entrepreneurs' target groups include the Estonian Defence Forces and the Estonian Defence League. Specific requirements and control mechanisms have been implemented for entrepreneurs wishing to become active in the defence industry, according to which all companies, owners, board members and employees undergo comprehensive background checks and evaluations of their suitability to operate in this field. Strict requirements have also been implemented for the handling premises. The emergence of this new field puts additional strain on the Estonian authorities, including KAPO, responsible for processing permits for and subsequent supervision of this field.

Handling military weapons, ammunition and explosives poses certain security threats. Effective surveillance is essential to manage and minimise risk, for example by excluding the possibility of dangerous items ending up in unlawful civilian possession where they could be used to commit crimes and even terrorist offences. Russia's special services are sure to watch developments and the complex technology in this field.

Explosives and detonators withdrawn from circulation by the Internal Security Service





The arrest of Sergei Balybin. Photograph: KAPO archives.

THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

KAPO is responsible for preventing and combating corruption that threatens national security, and for obtaining and processing the necessary information as part of this. We help reduce the risk of senior officials committing corruption-related crimes and investigate any crimes detected. Shaping attitudes against corruption is one of the goals of our anti-corruption strategy. KAPO works to do this among senior officials through training in anti-corruption measures, security activities and criminal proceedings. We are glad to note that corruption is decreasing in Estonia and that attitudes and mentalities are changing for the better. Recognition is due to those in the judicial and law-enforcement systems, in government bodies and in the private sector who consistently and on a daily basis ensure that anti-corruption measures are applied. Systemic corruption has indeed reduced in Estonia. Corruption is a hidden form of crime, a tumour threatening the democratic order, which cannot be treated arbitrarily but has to be addressed systematically in all countries. Every investigation or piece of media coverage of a case of corruption is a reminder

of the need to make consistent efforts. After all, the damage caused by corruption affects us all through lower living standards and poorer social services.

KAPO's activities are not limited to addressing domestic cases of corruption. We also focus on cross-border corruption, where the corrupt behaviour of Estonian senior officials involves or extends to other countries. It is important to note that the Estonian Penal Code also applies to corruption-related offences committed by Estonian citizens outside the country's territory and involving foreign officials. This principle, which arises from international conventions, is very important in the fight against cross-border corruption, as different countries have different definitions of corruption and varying degrees of readiness to investigate cases, and are sometimes motivated to protect their own officials. In Russia, corruption is unfortunately part of the normal operation of the state, and we have to take this into account in the prevention and control of corruption in our country.

Economic security and violation of international sanctions

The economic sectors exposed to the greatest security risks continue to be energy, transport (including transit) and IT, which are the focus of our work. Estonia and our Baltic neighbours have tried to improve energy independence for many years. One of the goals is to disconnect our power grid from BRELL¹⁴ and synchronise it with the Central European grid frequency. However, scientific and economic views so far published in Estonia do not consider this the best solution, and suggest remaining connected to BRELL. These opinion pieces rarely mention the fact that Russia has been developing the capability to disconnect the Baltic grids from BRELL if necessary and could do so if it wanted. Desynchronisation may come at a high price, but technical and economic issues are not the only criteria for assessing security of supply, as national security aspects must also be considered. In ensuring energy security, KAPO looks at the decision-making and operational processes of the entire energy sector and cooperates with many agencies to that end.

The fight against cross-border and security-threatening corruption is supported by international sanctions, which in fact serve many purposes, protecting security, international law and peace. A detailed overview of international sanctions is available on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.¹⁵ The ministry coordinates the national application of international sanctions, and KAPO investigates breaches of them. As with other types of crime, prevention requires effective implementation and relevant information about sanctions.

In 2014, the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 68/262 on the territorial integrity of Ukraine. The same year, the European Union adopted sanctions in response to the situation in Ukraine and Russia's

destabilising activities, and has subsequently added to these regulations. Extremely wide international sanctions were imposed to ensure the integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine, and to respond to the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol and Russia's destabilising activities. The sanctions cover economic resources, finance, and the import and export of weapons.

As the subjects of the sanctions are geographically close to Estonia, there is a high probability of violation. An example is the potential violation of the sanctions against Crimean tourism, concerning which we initiated criminal proceedings. The EU has banned any support for tourism activities in annexed Crimea. The sanctions do not prohibit EU citizens from travelling to Crimea, but EU businesses are not allowed to offer tourism services related to it. The purpose of the sanctions is more likely to be achieved if the government agency responsible for their application explains their nature and scope to the relevant businesses.

Railway transit and corruption

Transit from Russia through Estonia has long been in decline, for many reasons. The main problem is Russia's isolationist, protectionist activities against the free market economy. The case of Fedorenko, Krasnochech and Balybin described below – bribery to increase trade flows and transit from Russia – shows that corruption does not pay. We should not hope that the solution lies in yielding to Russia's many demands for increased transit. Russia's inappropriate attempts – through bribery or influence – to increase transit flows through Estonia pose a threat to our national security. KAPO continues to identify and prevent such threats. On the international level, Estonia's security is threatened by each attempt to reduce support for the sanctions imposed on Russia in order to increase transit, or to make other such trade-offs.

¹⁴ BRELL is a large synchronised system consisting of the electricity grids of Belarus, Kaliningrad (Russia), Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, which are connected by AC power lines.

¹⁵ <https://vm.ee/en/activities-objectives/international-sanctions>



The arrest of Sergei Fedorenko and Sergei Balybin. Both were convicted of corruption. Photograph: KAPO archives.

Major case study: attempted export of Russian corrupt business practices to Estonia

We present a case that provides food for thought about the corrupt business culture exported by Russia, and more broadly about preventing risks and threats in the private sector. Corruption-related risks are especially dangerous when they originate from a neighbouring country with imperialist ambitions where the economy is subordinated to the political and private interests of the governing administration. The threat is even greater if corruption from Russia targets the operation of critical infrastructure in Estonia.

In 2018, a court judgment was delivered on a transit sector case. On 15 December 2017, KAPO arrested Sergei Fedorenko, a board member and traffic director of AS Eesti Raudtee (Estonian Railways), suspected of accepting a bribe from Sergei Balybin, a board member of AS E.R.S., a subsidiary of AS Vopak E.O.S. Fedorenko also brokered a bribe to Anatoli Krasnochek, a Russian Railways (RZD) official.

E.R.S. offers rail transport and logistics services within Estonia and transports cargo in cooperation with Vopak E.O.S. To be able to transport the requested quantity of cargo related to Vopak E.O.S. from Russia to Estonia, E.R.S. had to submit monthly requests to RZD stating the type and amount of goods it wanted to carry and the stations of origin and destination. RZD then sent an enquiry to Estonian Railways asking what quantity of goods it was ready to transport within Estonian territory. Fedorenko assured RZD that goods could be transported through Estonia, and set a schedule for the journey. For this, Balybin paid Fedorenko a bribe totalling 171,902 euros.

Thanks to his position, Fedorenko had good contacts with Anatoli Krasnochek, deputy director of RZD for management and business coordination. He was in charge of the department in RZD that organised international cargo transport, issued relevant approvals and communicated with foreign railway companies. At Balybin's request, Fedorenko visited Krasnochek in Russia and proposed paying a fee to

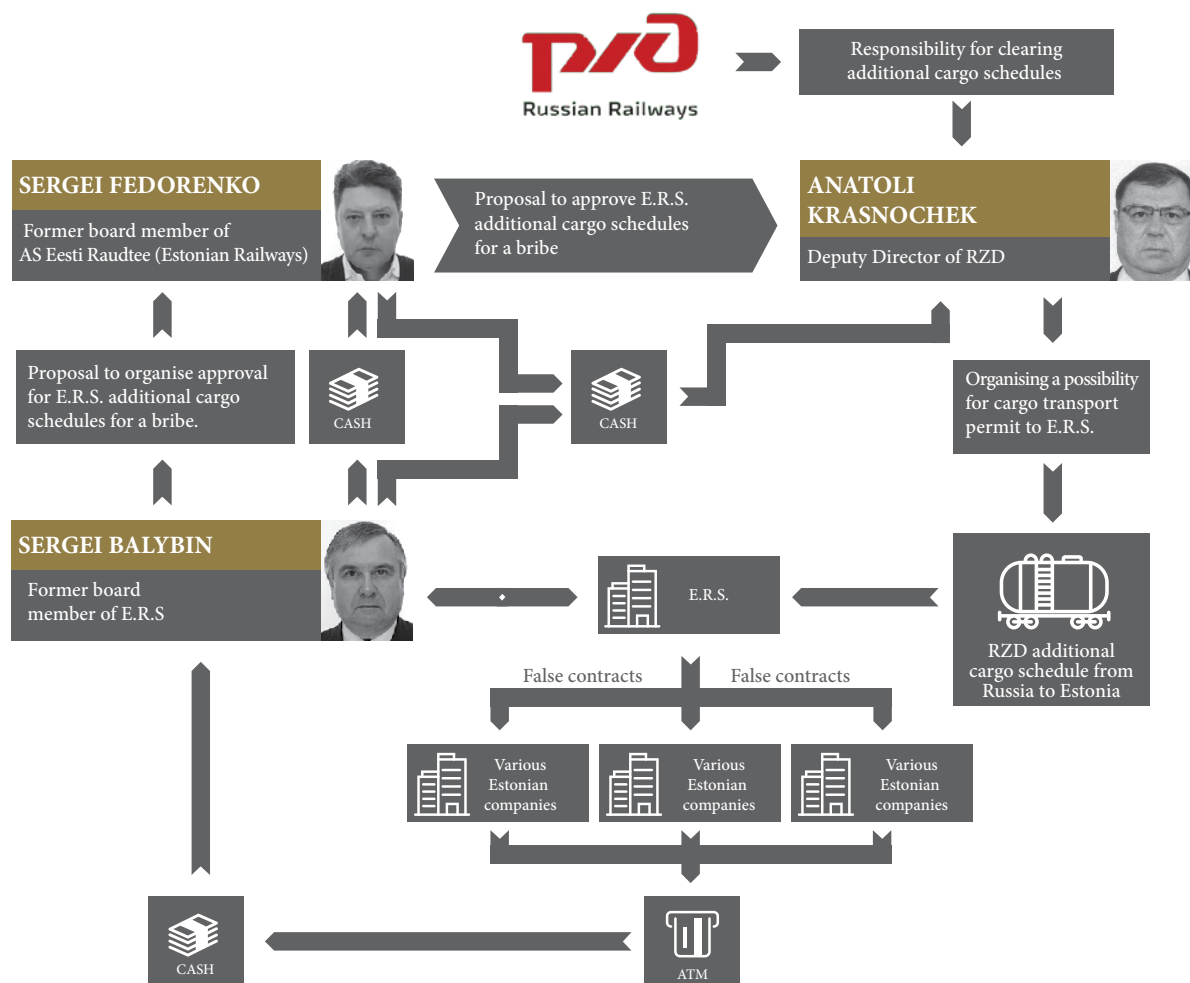
E.R.S. for approving additional schedules, agreeing the details of the payment with Krasnochek. A few days later, Balybin's middleman in Moscow handed over a bribe of 72,500 euros to Krasnochek. As described in the criminal case, Sergei Fedorenko was in an official position to perform public duties in a company partly owned by the state.

On 28 March 2018, he was convicted by Harju County Court in a settlement procedure of accepting and brokering a bribe. He received a conditional sentence of 18 months and was ordered to pay 117,000 euros towards state revenues.

On 5 June 2018, Sergei Balybin was convicted of the same offences by Harju County Court in a settlement procedure. He was handed down a conditional sentence of two years and ordered to pay 113,000 euros toward state revenues.

Corruption can be reduced by a change in mentality

Corrupt practices by company managers are always major setbacks, as a person in a managerial position is expected to follow good governance practice, ethical principles and an impeccable business culture. Such individuals can be found in organisations other than Estonian Railways, and a fly in the ointment may ruin the image of the whole company. The duplicity of a senior official often comes as an unpleasant surprise to others. The official may be a keen fighter against corruption but still go against ethical principles in important decisions or actions if motivated by personal interests. As a manager, Sergei Fedorenko was not at the forefront of the fight against corruption, but he had high-level authority in conducting and managing business, and the criminal charges against him came as a surprise to many people.





Indrek Süld at the Koidula railway station on the Russian border, at the opening of the train monitoring and safety system in 2011. Süld was a senior executive who held several top positions, abusing public office for personal gain. Photograph: Väinu Rozental, Äripäev.

Bribery occurs between two parties, and in order to avoid such occurrences in the future criminal proceedings must establish the reason for the bribery scheme and the moment from which the illegal arrangement began to develop between the parties. An official is, of course, the person whose request or agreement is a prerequisite for corruption of public authority. A crime is often initiated by the offer of a bribe from a businessman. The offer is repeated, and the scheme is arranged and concealed at the initiative of the businessman. The private sector anti-corruption capability plays a crucial role here. The latest studies and trends show that some attention has been paid to this aspect in Estonia, but there is a long way to go. Another crucial aspect is the business sector's view of how and to what extent acts of corruption are condemned and whether any conclusions are drawn. To achieve systemic changes, business owners must jointly denounce any corrupt acts by their colleagues.

The business sector's attitude towards bribery has so far been lukewarm, and this may be a reason why the spread of corruption is not decreasing at the desired pace. Fedorenko and Balybin both held responsible positions at the time of their offences, one in the public sector and the other in the private. They deserve equal disapproval, as both were actively involved in an act of corruption and reached an understanding very quickly. Fedorenko was interested in corrupt income and Balybin saw an opportunity in Fedorenko's position and connections to increase transit flows by corrupt means. We must stress once again in the context of acts of corruption committed by board members that if senior officials set a negative example by their ethical values and actions, these spread throughout the organisation or sector.

Somewhat unusual in this case is the official's dual role in the corrupt scheme as both recipient and intermediary of the bribe. The main reason for this is that rail transit depends on the rigour of railway administrations' bureaucracy and the divide between the functioning of the market economy in Estonia and Russia. Estonia has no artificial barriers to rail transport and Balybin bribed Fedorenko mainly to initiate transport from Russia, using his contacts in RZD. To get the transit going, it was in turn necessary to reach a corrupt agreement with Krasnochech, in which Fedorenko and Balybin both offered bribes.

In 2018, the Harju County Court heard another criminal case concerning corruption in Estonian Railways that was investigated by KAPO. On 1 March 2016, KAPO arrested Indrek Süld, manager of the communications and protection unit in the infrastructure division of Estonian Railways, who was suspected of knowingly violating, on a particularly large scale, the procedural restrictions set out in the Anti-Corruption Act and requirements for public procurement. Süld also abetted companies competing for public contracts in entering into illegal agreements between competitors, forging documents and using those documents in public procurement conducted by him.

One of Süld's duties was to procure automation equipment relating to the operation of railway infrastructure, and the maintenance and repair of the equipment. At the same time, he was receiving periodic income (totalling 276,312 euros between 2009 and 2016) from another company in the same line of business, Autsec OÜ. Süld had not notified Estonian Railways of his involvement in this company, which constituted a conflict of interest. Preliminary investigation of the criminal case identified that from February 2014 to March 2016 Süld was responsible for nine public procurements for Estonian Railways infrastructure in which Autsec participated as a bidder. These procurements totalled over 2.2 million euros. As a person connected to a bidder, Süld should have withdrawn from organising the public procurement, but instead he secured various advantages for Autsec in the deals, thus violating the requirements for public procurement in addition to procedural restrictions.

Furthermore, Süld abetted the participants in the public procurements in committing various other offences. To ensure apparent competition for Autsec, Süld abetted Raivo Lill, an Autsec board member, and Tõnu Plink, a representative of SBA Service OÜ, in entering into an agreement prejudicing free competition. At Süld's suggestion, SBA Service submitted bids that were actually prepared by Lill. Lill and Plink also agreed on the pricing of their bids, of which Süld was aware. Plink arranged for SBA Service's bids to be signed by a member of the company's board, who acted in good faith. As SBA Service did not have the technical or professional competence to qualify for the public contract, Süld abetted Plink in forging relevant documents and used these in the procurement in order to ensure SBA Service qualified.

The Süld case is an excellent example of how a link between an official in an agency performing public duties and a company participating in a procurement handled by the same officer presents a great risk of corruption and may lead to various offences. On 14 February 2019, Harju County Court convicted Indrek Süld, Raivo Lill and Autsec OÜ of each of the charges brought by the Office of the Prosecutor General. The conviction has not yet entered into force, as the judgment can be appealed in a higher court.

Anti-corruption measures are improving

After the publication of the criminal proceedings over the corruption offences of former bosses of the Port of Tallinn, government-partnered companies have drawn their own conclusions and paid more attention to improving their anti-corruption measures. They have been helped in this by the government agencies (ministries) controlling their investments in these companies, law-enforcement authorities, and third-sector institutions, such as the non-profit association Korruptsioonivaba Eesti (Corruption-free Estonia). Estonian Railways has been and still is very active in preventing and reducing corruption in its operations, and we wish them luck in doing so. The Fedorenko bribery case may be considered an exception in the context of Estonian Railways, as it does not constitute systemic corruption arising from or facilitating shortcomings in the company. It was a conspiratorial and skilled act of corruption, in which a board member acting in his official capacity made preferential decisions in a company's interests. Such abuse of office is not easy to detect through the usual internal or external audits of a company. Control measures can always be strengthened, and it seems Estonian Railways must continue to do so. KAPO's long-term practice in investigating and preventing corruption shows that corruption threatening national security can bypass an agency or company's anti-corruption measures, and that offences can be prevented or detected primarily by security or law-enforcement agencies. We would like to remind heads of agencies and the public authorities supervising them that, whenever risks of corruption are detected, law-enforcement agencies should be informed without delay, as together we can control and reduce risks and prevent crime.

Corruption and IT procurement

IT procurement-related corruption offences handled by KAPO indicate that corruption risks can arise in connection with officials' secondary activities. In general, the Anti-Corruption Act allows officials to engage in any activity outside their official duties if such activity is not expressly prohibited by law and if procedural restrictions are followed. According to the Civil Service Act, an official may act as an entrepreneur or work under an employment or service contract but must inform their managers of such activities. For example, an IT specialist in a ministry may provide IT services through their own company outside their official duties. Problems arise if the official duties and secondary activities are related and could influence each other. The purpose of procedural restrictions is to prevent officials who hold several positions at the same time from pursuing their private interests at the expense of the public interest. Section 19 of the Anti-Corruption Act states that a violation of procedural restrictions is a misdemeanour; however, the same type of violation on a large scale (40,000 euros) qualifies as a criminal offence under Section 300¹ of the Penal Code. Matters can get worse if an official uses an apparently regular secondary activity to receive assets or other benefits in return for using their official position. This constitutes the crime of bribery. In 2018, one criminal matter related to IT procurement were investigated in which the secondary activities of officials were found to involve bribery.

In this case, the chief specialist at a ministry was in charge of procuring developments for the information systems in the area of the ministry's administration. When conducting procurement, the official decided that he could perform the developments outside his principal job. Instead of presenting the idea to his superiors and carrying out these duties as part

of his job, he decided to channel the procurement to a company to which he was connected and receive remuneration for the work this way. Understanding that none of the companies connected to him or individuals close to him could participate in the procurement, he approached an acquaintance who owned an IT company. They agreed that this company would submit a bid, the official would ensure it won and help the company do the work, and would receive 75% of the fee paid for the work. In 2017, the official awarded three contracts to the company, helped to do the work and accepted the work in his official capacity; in return, he agreed to receive from the company assets worth over 40,000 euros, of which he had received nearly half by the time of his arrest. The official effectively held several positions, conducting public procurement in his official capacity while carrying out work for a company, supervising the work himself, and finally accepting his own work in his official capacity. The behaviour of the company and its owner are also at fault. Unlike other bidders, a company that "employed" the person organising the procurement had access to inside information and an opportunity to direct the procurement process for its own benefit. This case shows that bribery need not consist in the delivery of assets, but also in carrying out work and facilitating payment for it. This is not merely a case of brokering remuneration; it is corrupt activity prejudicing free competition. It is the purpose of the activity that is critical here – for the person receiving the bribe, the purpose was to secretly receive additional income for abusing his official position, while for the briber the purpose was to cause the official to act in their interest by virtue of benefits granted to the official. Especially cynical in this case is the fact that the company owner was an official in another ministry, and owning an IT company was a secondary activity for him. Even though he did not act in his official capacity in this case, he violated the code of ethics for officials: an honest and reliable official

must also observe the law in his secondary activities and outside work. KAPO charged the official with suspected requesting and acceptance of a bribe, plus violation of public procurement requirements and bribing the company owner. The Office of the Prosecutor General has brought charges against the individuals concerned, but no final court judgment has been made in the matter.

The lesson from this case is that IT development cooperation between the private and public sectors, which is generally perceived as a positive thing, can involve the risk of corruption. There are many activities in IT development and there is a constant shortage of time and resources. The heads of agencies play a crucial role in ensuring that any secondary activities of officials are monitored to an extent that precludes the violation of procedural restrictions and the receipt of additional benefits for activities that are part of the official's duties. Notification and monitoring of secondary activities should not be one-off actions, and KAPO recommends that they be carried out consistently.

Fraudster claims civil servants and the governing party are corrupt

In 2018, Harju County Court handed down a conviction in a case involving an attempt to create the false impression that senior officials of the Ministry of the Environment and the minister's political party were corrupt. In 2015 and 2016, Udo Bachmann offered his services to a representative of the owner of a registered estate in Võru County who wanted to sell the estate as a gravel deposit. Bachmann told the representative that he was ready, for a fee, to obtain an extraction permit and the necessary approvals from senior officials at the ministry. Among other things he claimed that, in order to obtain an extraction permit, the representative must donate 50,000 euros to the minister's polit-

ical party through him. As established in the criminal proceedings, Bachmann met several officials from the ministry to discuss the extraction permit, but did not offer them any money or other benefits and no influence-peddling occurred.

Having assessed Bachmann's actions, Harju County Court ruled that his meetings with the ministry officials were not necessary for obtaining the extraction permit, but rather were for Bachmann's own information. The situation was similar to that of a musician who asks a fee for composing a work but is unable to write music, then learns how to do so, and eventually seeks remuneration for his studies from the person who commissioned the work.

Tallinn Circuit Court convicted Udo Bachmann of attempted fraud and attempted brokering of a bribe and handed down a sentence of two years with two years' probation.

Cases of corruption in major local governments

KAPO is investigating cases of corruption related to the leaders of six large local governments. The main goal is to help reduce corruption risks and prevent corruption. Anti-corruption measures in larger local governments should help keep criminal corruption as low as possible and not let it endanger national security. Criminal investigations were carried out last year in Tartu, Tallinn and Kohtla-Järve. Two investigations were concluded in Tallinn without a court assessment under the Penal Code.

Corruption in Tallinn City Government

On 22 September 2015, KAPO arrested Edgar Savisaar, the Mayor of Tallinn, who was charged following a preliminary investigation with suspected money laundering, accepting prohibited donations on a large scale, embezzling city funds, and repeated acceptance of bribes in the form of assets and benefits for himself and third parties. The first court session was held on 12 June 2017, but questions over Savisaar's health had already been raised at the time of prosecution. An expert health assessment by the Estonian Forensic Science Institute concluded that Savisaar could be prosecuted.

On 5 June 2018, Harju County Court ruled that criminal proceedings against Savisaar should be terminated on the basis of Sections 199(1)(6) and 274(1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure. On 14 August 2018, Tallinn Circuit Court annulled the County Court's ruling and referred the criminal case back to the County Court to continue proceedings against the accused. With a ruling on 21 December 2018, the Supreme Court annulled Tallinn Circuit Court's ruling of 14 August 2018 and enforced Harju County Court's ruling of 5 June 2018, due to the accused's incurable illness, as he was unable to participate in the trial or serve a sentence if convicted.

In summary, the Criminal Chamber of the Supreme Court concluded that, although Savisaar could participate in a court session if certain conditions were met, there was a high risk of serious damage to his health or death if he took part in an ongoing trial. The court could not check whether the conditions set out in the expert assessment had been met, and it was impossible to state on the basis of evidence that the accused had intentionally disregarded treatment and doctors' recommendations in order to escape judicial proceedings. The County Court cannot be blamed for failing to collect additional evidence on these issues.

As the accused was seriously ill and not getting better, and as the course of judicial proceedings so far suggested that the hearing of the criminal case would continue to be prevented by problems arising from the accused's health – while following the routine required for his treatment and following doctors' advice would be even more difficult under the circumstances of a lengthy trial – the decision of the County Court to terminate the criminal proceedings against Savisaar took account of the actual situation. Judicial proceedings in the criminal case continued in respect of individuals charged with various offences.

On 19 October 2017, Harju County Court convicted Villu Reiljan through a settlement procedure of brokering bribery in the same criminal case. The trial established that on 15 December 2014 at a meeting in Savisaar's office at the Tallinn City Government, Reiljan presented to Savisaar the request of a representative of his employer, AS Silikaat Grupp, that Savisaar – as the leader of the Tallinn City Government – arrange a permit by officials in the city planning department for the continuation of construction work on a residential building at Sihi 108, Tallinn, despite violating the conditions of the building permit. Reiljan also presented the offer of Silikaat Grupp representative to support the Estonian Centre Party with 20,000 euros in return for Savisaar using his official position.

Corruption in Tallinn waste management

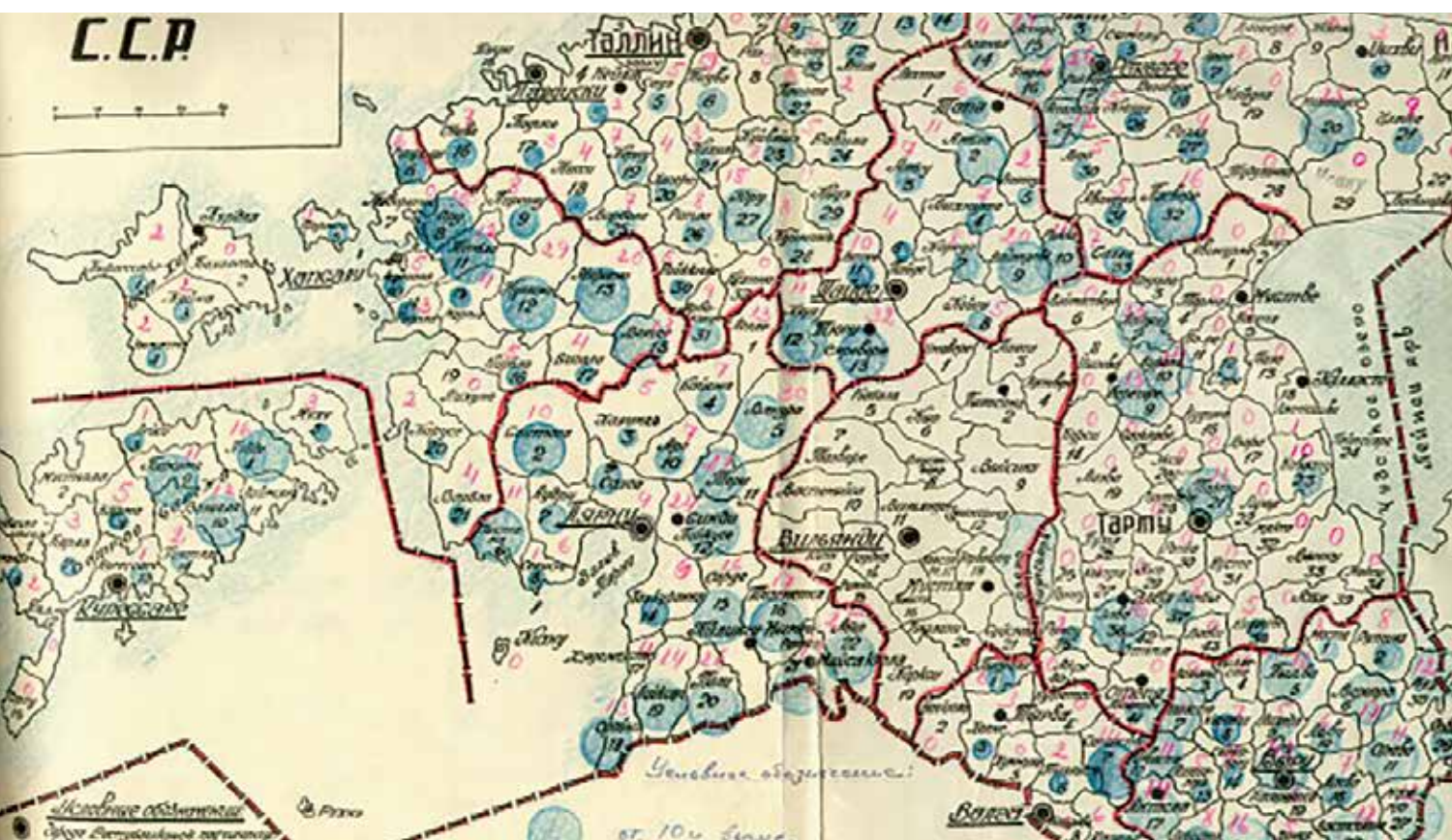
On 25 May 2017, KAPO arrested Arvo Sarapuu, Deputy Mayor of Tallinn since April 2011, on suspicion of knowingly violating on a large scale the procedural restrictions set out in the Anti-Corruption Act, contrary to Section 300¹ of the Penal Code. As part of his work at the Tallinn City Government, Sarapuu coordinated the activities of the Tallinn Environment Department during his time as deputy mayor and handled matters in the department's competence, including the organisation of waste management.

The company Baltic Waste Management OÜ (BWM) was established in October 2014. According to the information gathered during the pre-trial procedure, the company was funded and supplied by companies and persons related to Atko Grupp AS. Sarapuu was a member of the supervisory board of Atko Grupp. In the public procurements organised by the Tallinn environment department from June to October 2016, the joint bidders BWM and Tapa Autobussipark OÜ were declared successful and contracts valid to 2020, 2021 or 2022 in respect of four districts were signed for a total value of 1.86 million euros. The signature of contracts for two other districts was pending. BWM began to carry out the contracts but failed to comply with their requirements. Sarapuu participated in settling disputes over contract performance. On 21 December 2018, the Office of the Prosecutor General ruled under Section 202 of the Code of Criminal Procedure to partly terminate the criminal case against Sarapuu, as his guilt was negligible, he had no previous criminal record, and the public interest in the proceedings had changed over time due to his behaviour and health, meaning that he could be influenced by means other than punishment. He was ordered to pay 12,000 euros into state revenues by 21 May 2019 plus costs of 813 euros for the expert assessment. Judicial proceedings will continue in the criminal case with respect to two individuals charged with various offences.

Kohtla-Järve City Council members embezzle money from a cultural centre

In October 2014, KAPO arrested two members of the Kohtla-Järve City Council: Yuri Saltykov, director of the local youth centre, and his son, Yevgeni Saltykov, who worked at the centre as a project manager. Both were taken into custody for six months. The Saltykovs had arranged for the fictitious employment at the youth centre of several people who never actually worked there, and drew the salaries paid to these people.

Yuri and Yevgeni Saltykov received their sentences in 2018. Viru County Court convicted Yuri Saltykov of fraud and forgery, handing him a conditional sentence of 30 months, with three years' probation. The court convicted Yevgeni Saltykov of fraud and forgery, giving him a two-year conditional sentence with a probation period of three years. The court partly granted the civil action brought by the city of Kohtla-Järve as the injured party and ruled the Saltykovs jointly and severally liable to pay 40,237 euros to the city.



A chekist map showing the locations of Forest Brothers groups in 1946. Photograph: National Archive.

THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

DOCUMENTS ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SOVIET OCCUPATION REGIME IN DESTROYING FOREST BROTHERS PARTISANS IN THE 1950s

9 May 1945 did not mark the start of peacetime for the Soviet Union. In western Ukraine, eastern Byelorussia and the Baltic states, which were annexed under the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact in 1939–40, the fight continued in the form of extensive armed resistance – the Forest Brothers movement. Alongside those actively resisting the occupying regime, thousands of men and women hid in the forests in fear of renewed Soviet repression; their only desire was to survive and avoid the Siberian prison camps. The Forest Brothers were the biggest domestic and foreign-policy problem for the Soviet regime during the years that followed, which it repeatedly failed to resolve. In the eyes of the world, this continued resistance damaged the image of the Soviet Union as a “brotherly family of nations”; domestically, it hindered the Sovietisation of the occupied territories. To fulfil Stalin’s orders and break resistance once and for all, the Kremlin used the tried-and-tested methods of violence and mass repression.

It was useful for the Soviet regime to present any resistance and disobedience towards the occupation regime as common crime, or what it called “banditry”. In secret official business, criminal and political banditry were strictly differentiated, with the latter regarded as an anti-Soviet activity. From 1944 to 1947, the fight against the Forest Brothers in Estonia was led by the Anti-Banditry Department of the People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs of the Estonian SSR; the department was subordinated to its counterpart in Moscow. The department was renamed the Anti-Banditry Chief Directorate in late 1944.

In early 1947, the chief directorate and “destruction battalions” were transferred from the Ministry of Internal Affairs to the Ministry of State Security of the Estonian SSR. Similar reorganisations were carried out in Latvia, Lithuania and Ukraine. It was a precedent, as the Soviet Ministry of Internal Affairs remained in charge of anti-banditry measures until

1950, when its Anti-Banditry Chief Directorate was transferred to the Ministry of State Security. This put an end to the distribution of tasks based on propagandist and ideological considerations, in which the main player in suppressing resistance was the Ministry of Internal Affairs, whose primary function was to fight crime. The decision once again confirmed that European territory annexed before the outbreak of World War II was seen by the Kremlin as a separate zone, in which political banditry, or armed resistance, predominated. Of all the criminal groups registered in the Soviet Union, only a marginal number were active in the Baltic states: 5.6% in 1946.

In 1947–53 the fight against the Forest Brothers was led in Estonia by Department 2-N of the ESSR Ministry of State Security. According to the terminology of Soviet security agencies, the department's task was the “liquidation of banditry”, or the elimination of bandits. In reports to Moscow, the most important indicator was the number of bandits eliminated; the breakdown into killed or imprisoned was only statistically relevant. The people in hiding were thus outlawed and deprived of the most elementary human rights. Moscow called for increasingly harsh measures for the quick and definitive suppression of resistance. It was decided to repress whole families in order to cut links between those in hiding and their supporters. In March 1949, a mass deportation took place in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania of the family members of the Forest Brothers not yet caught as well as of those already murdered; most of the deported were the elderly, women and children. Contrary to Moscow's expectations, the mass repressions resulted in a new wave of hiding in the forests, and resistance continued.

Below we publish two directives from 1952 and 1953 issued by Semyon Ignatyev (1904–83), the State Security Minister of the Soviet Union, which guided the activities of the ESSR Ministry of State Security in one of the major attacks in eliminating armed resistance. The relevant minister in Estonia at the time was Valentin Moskalenko (1908–84), who repeatedly participated in the torture and beating of arrestees. The Soviet chekists failed to invent anything entirely new: as in previous years, the emphasis was on military operations, torture and violence. One result of the operations that started in 1953 was the elimination of the Forest Brothers units led by Richard and Rafael Vahi and the murder of members of the units in Võrumaa. A detailed account of the discovery of their secret mass grave and the identification of the victims was published in our annual review for 2012.

For a better understanding of the documents below, an explanation is needed about the Soviet security agencies' idea of the nature and structure of the resistance movement in Estonia. It is now well known that Estonian Forest Brothers usually acted in separate small units that had rare or no contact with other countries. Their main aim was to hide, and they were ready to use armed defence in the event that they were found. Isolation from the outside world and lack of contacts often led to a feeling of despair, but it also helped maintain the conspiracy and avoid detection. For the Soviet security agencies involved in both intelligence and counterintelligence, groups or gangs of Forest Brothers were on the lowest level in the hierarchy of anti-Soviet elements. In theory, the formation and activity of gangs in Estonia was led by the anti-Soviet underground (as well as anti-Soviet organisations) that included hostile intellectuals, former servicemen and politicians. Tracking them down was mainly the task of the 5th Department of the Ministry of State Security; operations targeting them were largely the task of the ministry's 1st Department. It was believed that members of the leading underground groups received orders from their fellow countrymen who had fled to the West before and during the war, i.e. Estonian emigrants. Of course, the Kremlin believed the expatriate Estonian communities could not be acting independently; the Soviet security agencies saw them as extensions and tools of Western intelligence services. The lasting resistance to the Soviet occupying regime was blamed on Western propaganda and enemy agents.

This ideologically charged chain is evident from the directives of the USSR Ministry of State Security published below, and the shortcomings and demands for improvement in work highlighted in these documents are based on it. Many Forest Brothers were indeed caught by agents, but usually the people scared into cooperating came from the partisans' own close circle of acquaintances or relatives. Even more striking is the requirement to launch separate operations against each person in hiding and to appoint a supervising operative for each of them. Besides the operative personnel from the security agencies, the manhunt involved destruction battalions, militsiya, internal forces and railway and border guard units. The only motivation to catch a person alive was the possibility of using them against their fellows. The attack coordinated from Moscow in 1953 resulted in a large number of victims: in February and March alone, chekists killed 43 people in Estonia and imprisoned 165.



Monument commemorating the battle in Puutlipalu. Photograph: Estonian Internal Security Service photoarchive.

Directive by the Minister of State Security of the Soviet Union

Subject: serious mistakes and shortcomings in the work of operatives and agents and the investigation work of the Ministry of State Security of the Estonian SSR

No 00630 of 19 August 1952, Moscow

Inspection of the work of the ESSR Ministry of State Security and discussion of the issue at the session of the board¹⁶ of the USSR Ministry of State Security showed that the State Security Minister of the Republic Comrade Moskalenko and his deputies Comrades Chernov¹⁷ and Svinelupov¹⁸ have failed to take measures to reorganise and improve the work of operatives and agents and investigation work, and have guided this work without due consideration to the operational situation in the Republic, while forgetting that:

- bourgeois Estonia¹⁹ was a base for foreign intelligence services for conducting anti-Soviet activities for a long time;
- upon the establishment of Soviet power and liberation of the Republic from German fascist invaders, a considerable part of the hostile elements, especially bourgeois nationalists, fled abroad and formed the Estonian emigrant community with organised nationalist centres, which are supported by and serve the American and British intelligence services and lead an active fight against the Soviet Union;
- still active on the territory of the Republic is the at-large part of the armed nationalist underground guided by the American and British intelligence services and the remains of the terrorist organisations supported by them, namely ROVS,²⁰ NTS,²¹ the bourgeois and fascist organisations Estonian Socialist Workers' Party, National Centre Party, Vaps Movement, Patriotic League, Defence League, etc.

The incorrect evaluation of these operative particularities in the Republic has led to a weakening of chekist work and falling standards in the most important lines of this work.

The intelligence work of the ESSR Ministry of State Security is effectively unorganised. To this day, nothing has been done to cut through the illegal entry channels of agents of American, British, Swedish, Finnish and other capitalist countries' intelligence services; necessary measures have not been taken to recruit agents from among active members of the foreign anti-Soviet nationalist organisations and to introduce our controlled agents in these.

The agents on ships travelling abroad are largely idle; they do not make any significant foreign contacts or yield any positive results. No use has been made of the possibilities to restore connections with the agents recruited in 1940-1941 who have emigrated to other countries.

As a result, the ESSR Ministry of State Security works in the dark, having no material whatsoever about the hostile intentions of the American and British intelligence and the anti-Soviet nationalist centres abroad acting against us mainly on the territories of Sweden and West Germany.

The counterintelligence work of the ESSR ministry is also unsatisfactory. Instead of focusing on the main task, i.e. the exposure of active foreign (especially American and British) agents, the management and operative personnel mainly target former henchmen, traitors, German servicemen and political formations.

¹⁶ The board of the Ministry of State Security of the Soviet Union was set up on 31 December 1950 by a decision of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CC CPSU (B)) and the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union. The board consisted of 19 people, including the Minister of State Security, his deputies and the heads of the core functions of the ministry.

¹⁷ Aleksandr Chernov (1911-78), Deputy Minister of State Security of the Estonian SSR in 1951-3, who led the fight against the Forest Brothers and coordinated the activities of the ministry's operative groups in Võrumaa in 1952-3. He participated personally in the beating and torture of those arrested.

¹⁸ Mikhail Svinelupov (1903-79), Deputy Minister of State Security of the Estonian SSR in 1951-3.

¹⁹ "Bourgeois Estonia" was a Sovietism for the interwar Republic of Estonia.

²⁰ Russian All-Military Union (Русский общевоинский союз, РОБС). A Russian White Army organisation founded in 1924 by the expatriate general Pyotr Wrangel.

²¹ The National Alliance of Russian Solidarists (Народно-трудовой союз российских солидаристов, НТС). A Russian anti-communist organisation founded in 1930 by the expatriate community.

No carefully planned and purposeful work is carried out to identify the current hostile activities and criminal connections of the most important identified former agents and official collaborators of British, Swedish, Japanese and other intelligence agencies.

Individuals who have formerly lived in America, Britain or France for a long time, those who have worked for foreign embassies, active members of the White Army emigrant terrorist organisations ROVS and NTS, and suspected spies are not targeted.

Chekist measures are used superficially in these matters and, in most cases, work is limited to collecting evidence about the previous activities and anti-Soviet statements of the targeted persons.

The work of operatives and agents to uncover the undermining activities carried out by nationalist elements is also managed poorly. Many files of considerable interest concerning active nationalists lie untouched.

Signals of hostile acts by nationalists, especially among intellectuals and student youth, have not been verified on time, and no measures have been taken in most cases to identify their organised anti-Soviet activities.

The agencies of the Ministry of State Security of the Estonian SSR have not complied with the repeated demands of the CC CPSU (B) and Ministry of State Security of the Soviet Union to liquidate the nationalist underground and its armed gangs.

The gangs of Richard Vähi,²² Johannes Heeska²³ and Enn Luhtmaa²⁴ are acting with impunity in Märjamaa, Vändra and other regions, organising acts of terrorism and robbing kolkhozes²⁵ and state property.

Despite this, no well-prepared measures are taken to place our agents in the gangs to detect and liquidate the members; the "nationalist" groups with legends²⁶ are not made use of and have not yielded the necessary operative results.

Comrades Moskalenko, Chernov and Head of Department 2-N Gavrilov are incorrectly organising the liquidation of the bandit underground by artificially separating this task from the fight against bourgeois nationalist elements that support bandit groups.

Despite the links with the bandit underground, major dealings with bourgeois nationalists are transferred from Department 2-N to the 5th Department, while the role of Department 2-N and the peripheral agencies²⁷ is limited to surveillance of gangs and individual bandits and their liquidation by military operations.

The existing agency and investigation materials concerning the bourgeois and fascist political parties formerly present in the Republic (Socialist Workers' Party, National Centre Party, Vaps Movement, Patriotic League, etc.) are not consolidated or used operatively.

Not enough attention is paid to dealing with the former leaders and active members of the Trotskyist movement, Socialist Revolutionaries [and] bourgeois political parties and organisations, and their hostile activities are therefore not exposed.

Surveillance work is managed primitively and mainly in matters of little importance. No serious operative agency measures are taken with respect to the identified emissaries and agents of foreign intelligence services who were placed or left in Estonia at various times to organise undermining activities. Having information about the presence of such people on the territory of the Republic, the ESSR Ministry of State Security agencies failed to have agents monitor the relatives and other connections of these persons.

²² Richard Vähi (1918–53) went into hiding in March 1949 to avoid deportation. He was injured in the battle for the Saika bunker in 1951 and was thereafter the most wanted Forest Brother in southern Estonia. Vähi, his wife Elsa and six other companions fell in the battle for the Puutlipalu bunker on 29 March 1953.

²³ Johannes Heeska (1910–91) was wanted especially in connection with a train robbery near Sõmerpalu station in Võrumaa on 1 December 1948. Arrested in 1953 and sentenced to 25 years in a prison camp, he was released in 1971.

²⁴ Enn Luhtmaa (1905–54) was a Forest Brother in Võrumaa. He was poisoned and murdered by an agent of the Ministry of State Security in Mõniste on 14 July 1954.

²⁵ A Soviet collective farm.

²⁶ Fake nationalist groups were set up by the security agencies. Consisting of agents and chekists, their task was to make contact with the people in hiding and eliminate them. These tactics were used more actively in the Ukrainian and Lithuanian SSRs. Groups with legends were seldom formed in the Estonian SSR. These groups mainly consisted of murder agents whose duty was to physically eliminate the more active Forest Brothers. The ESSR Ministry of State Security had 23 murder agents on its books in 1952.

²⁷ Regional departments and, before 1950, county departments in the Ministry of State Security of the Estonian SSR were called peripheral agencies.

Even after the decision of the CC CPSU (B), some operative workers and investigators have continued to violate socialist legislation in their investigation work, falsified agency and investigation materials, interrogated agents as witnesses and arrested citizens for no reason.

Comrade Nizhnikov,²⁸ head of a unit of the 5th Department, who was sent to follow the distributors of anti-Soviet fliers in the Kilingi-Nõmme region in 1951, instead of applying the planned measures, unlawfully detained a group of pupils (Västriku, Karu, etc.) and used threats to force them to make fabricated statements, on which grounds they were arrested.

Even though the arrestees were obviously innocent and the actual authors of the fliers were identified, the pupils were unlawfully detained for three to five months.

The reduction of the network of agents in the ESSR Ministry of State Security is carried out as a mere formality.

At first stalling the process and then rushing it to meet the deadline set by the government, the ministry's leadership and heads of local agencies indiscriminately removed a number of agents from the list; after a time realising that they had gone too far with this, they started to recover the files of previously burnt agents from the archives.

Many operatives, especially those in the peripheral agencies of the ministry, work the remaining agents poorly, failing to prepare for meetings or give well-defined and meaningful tasks to agents, so that many of them are producing material of no operational interest.

This extremely unsatisfactory situation in the Ministry of State Security of the Estonian SSR is primarily due to the following:

Minister of State Security Comrade Moskalenko has not drawn the necessary conclusions from the CC CPSU (B) Regulation of 11 July 1951 "On the unsatisfactory situation in the Ministry of State Security of the USSR", has treated the requirements of the CC CPSU (B) and the Government of the USSR calling for the reorganisation of chekist work as a mere formality, and has failed to mobilise the chekists of the Republic to fulfil the tasks given to the agencies of the ministry; he has distanced himself from the management of the operations departments, shifting this work onto his deputy, Comrade Svinelupov;

Deputy Minister Comrade Chernov [and] the ministry department heads Comrades Ruban,²⁹ Ziterov³⁰ and Gavrilov³¹ have organised work poorly and failed to ensure the complete liquidation of gangs of bandits and the dismantling of the nationalist underground;

the ministry's leadership and heads of peripheral agencies do a poor job of selecting and training personnel, especially by failing to promote Estonians to positions of leadership;³² they fail to show decisive leadership in fighting the increasing violations of service discipline and immoral behaviour, and do not pay enough attention to the political education of the chekists.

Judging this situation in the chekist work of the Ministry of State Security of the Estonian SSR to be unacceptable,

I HEREBY ORDER:

1. Minister of State Security of the Estonian SSR Polkovnik³³ V. I. Moskalenko to introduce urgent measures to correct errors, failures and deficiencies in the work of agents and operatives and

²⁸ Aleksandr Nizhnikov (b. 1906-?), an employee of the 5th Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Estonian SSR. During the deportation of March 1949, Nizhnikov was the deputy head of the Tartu dispatch point. In March 1952, the Special Inspectorate of the ESSR Ministry of State Security investigated his activities in Kilingi-Nõmme. The primary party organisation of the ESSR Ministry of State Security punished him with a recorded reprimand for the unjustified imprisonment of minors.

²⁹ Aleksandr Ruban (b. 1913-?), Head of the 5th Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Estonian SSR.

³⁰ Ilya Ziterov (1908-88), Deputy Head of the 4th Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Estonian SSR in 1947-9 and Head in 1949-53.

³¹ Aleksei Gavrilov (b. 1912-?). Deputy Head of Department 2-N of the Ministry of State Security of the Estonian SSR in 1947-51 and Head in 1951-3. Discharged from the Estonian KGB in 1954 for bigamy and theft.

³² In the early 1950s, the leadership of the Ministry of State Security of the Estonian SSR mainly consisted of non-Estonians. The promotion of ethnic Estonians and Estonian-speakers was seen as a way of enhancing the effectiveness and flexibility of the security agencies. In the historical literature, Lavrenti Beria's policy of promoting ethnic personnel has received the most attention.

³³ Equivalent to colonel (OF-5).

investigation work, and caution him that he will lose his position and be discharged from the ministry agencies if he fails to reorganise the work and establish the required order in them.

Deputy Ministers of State Security of the ESSR Major General M. G. Svinelupov, Podpolkovnik³⁴ Chernov and Polkovnik Trapeznikov³⁵ to be made aware that they have failed to demonstrate the necessary consistency in reorganising the work of the state security agencies in compliance with the orders of the CC CPSU (B) and the government, and to call for an immediate improvement of the management of the chekist work of the departments and peripheral agencies entrusted to them.

2. Comrades Moskalenko, Chernov, Svinelupov [and] heads of oblast governments and operational departments to order their operational personnel to focus attention on improving the quality of chekists to detect and deter subversive activities by US, British and Swedish intelligence agencies and uncover the links of the nationalist underground with these agencies.

The following measures to be prepared and implemented to cut off the illegal channels used by foreign intelligence agencies:

a) Carefully study the available materials on active nationalists who have emigrated and take measures to recruit agents from among them to work nationalist cells and anti-Soviet organisations in other countries.

b) With the approval of the USSR Ministry of State Security, infiltrate these organisations with our vetted agents who have close ties with foreign citizens and church authorities.

c) Take measures to actively pursue and detain identified emissaries and agents of foreign intelligence services, using all the operational capabilities of the ministry departments, the Road Control Administration of the Ministry of State Security, the counter-intelligence agencies and the border guard forces of the ministry.

d) Review operational reports on individuals with suspicious ties to foreign citizens, and subject to active recruitment measures those who collaborated with intelligence agencies or worked in the embassies or consulates of the USA, Britain, France, Sweden and other capitalist countries during the Estonian bourgeois regime.

e) Find the more important files on suspects in espionage or terrorist activities, Jewish nationalists, Trotskyists, rightists, and members of the ROVS, NTS and other anti-Soviet organisations, and plan operational measures to uncover their hostile activity and ties with anti-Soviet organisations in foreign countries.

The implementation of these plans must be subject to strict control, ensuring the personal involvement of heads of operational departments and divisions.

3. The complete liquidation in the near future of terrorist bandit formations operating in the Republic must be considered the most important task of the chekists of the Estonian Ministry of State Security.

Comrade Moskalenko to be personally responsible for organising the liquidation of bandits in the second half of 1952, using the ministry's best operatives.

All cases of nationalists with links to the bandit underground to be handed over to Department 2-N and assigned to experienced operatives.

4. Existing material on former bourgeois or fascist parties and organisations in the Republic to be systematised. The leaders and active members of such parties and organisations are to be targeted by qualified agents, focusing on identifying the hostile activities and organisational ties of the individuals.

5. In August and September of this year, seminars for all operatives to be held in Tallinn, Pärnu and Tartu, for the purpose of carefully studying the main directives and orders of the USSR Ministry of State Security to ensure that all the chekists who work agents know and understand their tasks relating to the reorganisation and improvement of the operative work of the ministry's agencies.

The heads of oblast governments and city and district departments are required to assume more responsibility for chekist work in their subordinate agencies, to improve the management and control of these

³⁴ Equivalent to lieutenant colonel (OF-4).

³⁵ Aleksandr Trapeznikov (b. 1908-?), Deputy Minister of State Security of the Estonian SSR responsible for personnel in 1951-3.

agencies, and to implement the practice of sending experienced operatives to local agencies to provide assistance in organising qualified chekist work.

6. Comrade Moskalenko, administration heads of the Ministry of State Security and Head of the Investigation Department Comrade Pupyshev³⁶ to establish personal control over the work of the investigative departments of the ministry and the oblast governments, and to ensure the high quality of investigations as well as the complete exposure of the hostile activity and criminal ties of arrested individuals. They are to put a decisive end to ongoing violations of socialist legislation, and not to allow unjustified arrests and distorted investigation methods. Personnel who violate Soviet laws must be rigorously prosecuted.
7. Comrades Moskalenko and Trapeznikov to improve their work in selecting and deploying chekist personnel, paying particular attention to educating and preparing Estonian-born leaders; to increase demands to subordinates, developing a healthy discipline and sense of responsibility by mobilising them to perform the tasks assigned to the agencies of the Ministry of State Security by the CC CPSU (B) and the Soviet Government.

The measures taken to remedy the above deficiencies shall be reported to the USSR Ministry of State Security by 1 February 1953.

The Inspectorate of the USSR Ministry of State Security shall verify the implementation of this directive by the agencies of the ESSR Ministry of State Security in January 1953.

**Minister of State Security
of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
S. Ignatyev**

Directive by the Minister of State Security of the Soviet Union

Subject: Measures for the liquidation of the nationalist underground and its armed bandits in the western oblasts of the Ukrainian and Byelorussian SSRs, and in the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian SSRs

No 0062 of 24 January 1953, Moscow

Central Committee of the CPSU Regulation of 30 December 1952 orders the agencies of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR to carry out the final liquidation of the nationalist underground and armed bandits in the western oblasts of the Ukrainian and Byelorussian SSRs, and in the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian SSRs.

For the implementation of the CC CPSU Regulation,

I HEREBY ORDER:

1. Minister of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR Comrade Ivashutin,³⁷ Minister of State Security of the Lithuanian SSR Comrade Kondakov,³⁸ Minister of State Security of the Byelorussian SSR Comrade Baskakov,³⁹ Minister of State Security of the Latvian SSR Comrade Noviks⁴⁰ and Minister of State Security of the Estonian SSR Comrade Moskalenko to mobilise the entire chekist apparatus and the internal guard personnel of the ministry to liquidate armed bandits and nationalist organisations in the shortest possible time. A final strike to be carried out against the nationalist underground in February, March and April 1953.

³⁶ Donat Pupyshev (1917–75), Head of the Investigation Department of the Ministry of State Security of the Estonian SSR in 1950–3. Led the investigations department of the Estonian KGB until 1957.

³⁷ Pyotr Ivashutin (1909–2002), Minister of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR in 1952–3 and head of the GRU in 1963–87.

³⁸ Pyotr Kondakov (1902–70), Minister of State Security of the Lithuanian SSR in 1952–3.

³⁹ Mikhail Baskakov (1905–68), Minister of State Security of the Byelorussian SSR in 1952–3.

⁴⁰ Alfons Noviks (1908–96), Minister of State Security of the Latvian SSR in 1944–53. Convicted of genocide in Latvia in 1995 and died in prison.

2. Experienced operatives of the Ministry of State Security at the Republic level and oblast government level to be assigned to assist the ministry's local departments in the liquidation of the nationalist underground in the raions⁴¹ most affected by bandits.
The existing operational groups to be strengthened with the aim of organising chekist work not only against bandits in general but also against each bandit individually.
At the same time, operatives to be assigned to each fugitive bandit individually.
Operatives responsible for the pursuit and liquidation of bandits to be aware that this work is their most important obligation as communists and chekists.
3. The most experienced operatives to be allocated and the existing agents and captured members of the underground actively used for the pursuit and liquidation of the nationalist underground commanders in the western oblasts of the Ukrainian SSR and in the Lithuanian SSR and the bandit leaders in the Byelorussian, Latvian and Estonian SSRs.
Nationalist groups and organisations with legends to be used to convene "meetings" of the leaders of the underground and bandits with a view to capturing or liquidating them.
4. Measures to be developed to exploit every agent to liquidate the nationalist underground. Sophisticated agent work to be implemented boldly, focusing particular attention on infiltrating gangs of bandits with qualified agents.
5. All available measures to be reviewed for the use of nationalist organisations and groups with legends. Prospective measures to be brought under control, and their implementation ensured. Legends that have been deciphered by the underground members and have failed to achieve objectives, as well as those contributing to the activation of the nationalist element, to be terminated.
6. Active methods to identify agents of foreign intelligence services to be employed in using agents against members of nationalist organisations and groups living in towns and rural settlements.
Recruitment of agents to be stepped up among the clergy of the Uniad⁴² and Roman Catholic Church, nationalist intelligentsia and students who have links with the nationalist underground.
Carefully prepared arrest of active members of nationalist organisations and groups, and collaborators colluding with bandits, to be carried out in February and March 1953.
7. The investigation of arrested members of nationalist organisations and groups as well as collaborators colluding with bandits to be conducted with a view to obtaining information about the safe houses of other members of the underground or bandits in the fastest way possible through active interrogation and carefully considered in-cell treatment. Any such information is immediately to be operationally realised. The ministers of state security of the Republics and heads of oblast governments of the Ministry of State Security are to organise effective control over the conduct of the investigations.
8. The operations by chekists and the military to capture and liquidate nationalist bandits to be carried out on the basis of verified information from agents and other sources. The operations are to be carefully prepared, ruling out the possibility of failure.
Operations involving agents, chekists or the military to be implemented using measures to capture bandits alive, if possible, with a view to utilising them to pursue other bandits.
The heads of oblast governments of the Ministry of State Security to deploy operatives from one raion to the next and redeploy the internal guard units of the ministry according to operational expediency at their own discretion.
9. The militsiya units, people's defence groups, destruction battalions and community law-enforcement groups to be included in the liquidation of bandits and the pursuit of illegals.

⁴¹ A raion was an administrative entity in the Soviet Union, usually a subdivision two steps below the state level, but used as the primary level of administrative division in the Estonia SSR and other smaller Soviet republics.

⁴² A term for the Greek Catholic Church used in the Russian Empire and later in the Soviet propaganda.

- The militsiya units in towns and rural settlements to strengthen the measures to enforce the passport regime and identify members of the nationalist underground who remain in hiding.
10. Commander of the District Border Guard Force Administration of Ukraine Comrade Gorbatyuk, Commander of the District Border Guard Force Administration of Byelorussia Comrade Malyshev, Commander of the District Border Guard Force Administration of Lithuania Comrade Bytshkovski and Commander of the District Border Guard Force Administration of Leningrad Comrade Grebennik⁴³ to prepare and implement measures for the liquidation of bandits in border regions.
 11. The commanders of the Railway Guard Administrations of the Ministry of State Security in Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Lvov, Kovel, Vinnytsia, the South-west District and Minsk to take active measures to identify and prevent the hostile activities of members of the nationalist underground in rail transport.
Plans for operational measures and use of agents to fight the nationalist underground to be approved by the Ministries of State Security and oblast governments thereof, ensuring the verification of implementation on a daily basis.
 12. The Commanders of the Counterintelligence Administrations of the Carpathian, Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Baltic and Leningrad Districts to step up chekist work to identify the nationalist element that has infiltrated the Soviet Armed Forces, and to uncover and prevent their hostile activities. Keeping in contact with the relevant territorial agencies of the Ministry of State Security, measures to be taken for the pursuit and liquidation of the members of the nationalist underground in the areas of deployment of Soviet Armed Forces.
 13. The heads of the agencies of the Ministry of State Security to take the necessary measures to prevent attempts by the nationalist underground to interfere with the normal conduct of election campaigns for local councillors.
 14. Staff members of the agencies of the Ministry of State Security, internal guard servicemen and officers, and agents who have successfully participated in the liquidation of armed bandits to be rewarded financially and with valuable gifts; operatives, servicemen and officers who distinguish themselves exceptionally to be submitted to the Ministry of State Security of the USSR to be decorated.
 15. The administration heads of the Ministry of State Security in the western oblasts of the Ukrainian and Byelorussian SSRs and the Ministers of State Security of the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian SSRs to be made aware that they bear personal responsibility for the final liquidation of the nationalist underground and armed bandits, must consider this their primary obligation and ensure the unconditional implementation of the CC CPSU Regulation in the shortest possible time.
 16. To monitor the organisation of the liquidation of the nationalist underground and its armed bandits by the agencies of the Ministry of State Security and to provide on-the-spot assistance, the following officials to be dispatched and accompanied by groups of operatives: to the Ukrainian SSR – Deputy Minister of State Security of the USSR Comrade N. P. Stakhanov; to the Lithuanian SSR – Deputy Minister of State Security of the USSR Comrade V. S. Ryasnoi; to the Latvian and Estonian SSRs – Deputy Minister of State Security of the USSR Comrade B. P. Obruchnikov⁴⁴.

**Minister of State Security of the
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
S. Ignatyev**

⁴³ Kuzma Grebennik (1900–74), Commander of the District Border Guard Force Administration of the Ministry of State Security of the Soviet Union in Leningrad in 1951–3. Between 1949 and 1953, the border guards of the Estonian SSR were subordinated to the Leningrad district administration.

⁴⁴ Boris Obruchnikov (1905–88), Deputy Minister of State Security of the Soviet Union in 1952–3.



IN MEMORIAM
JÜRI PIHL

17.03.1954 – 03.02.2019

Jüri Pihl, the first Director General of the newly established Estonian Internal Security Service, died on 3 February 2019.

Before it became an independent agency, Pihl led the service as a subunit of the Police Board from 1991 to 1993, continuing as Director General from 1993 to 2003.

As its first head after the Soviet occupation, he shaped the organisation and undoubtedly made a lasting contribution to its development into a modern security agency.

The President of the Republic of Estonia awarded Pihl the Order of the White Star 4th Class in 1998 and the Order of the Cross of the Eagle 3rd Class in 2003.

After the Internal Security Service, Pihl went on to serve as Estonia's Prosecutor General, Secretary General of the Ministry of Justice, Minister of the Interior and Deputy Mayor of Tallinn.

In his final years, Jüri Pihl was dedicated to his family including three grandchildren.

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