

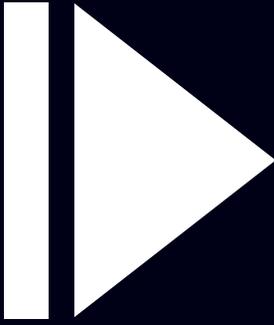
ESTONIAN  
INTERNAL  
SECURITY  
SERVICE

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ANNUAL REVIEW

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## Dear reader,

A year has passed since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic. I would have wanted to start this year's overview on some other topic, but it is not possible for multiple reasons. 2020 and 2021 will be marked by the acronym Covid-19 for a long time. From our point of view, the pandemic has not significantly changed national security, but it can give opportunists the hope of fishing more easily in muddied water.

The Kremlin, led by the Muscovites, has tried to exploit these turbulent times by using propaganda to improve its reputation and break the unity of the European Union and the West.

The West has remained true to its values and used international sanctions, the effectiveness of which we can only assess from a distance, at some point in the future. Sanctions imposed for attacks on Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as for blatant violations of the human rights of individuals and the use of chemical weapons, will certainly have some effect on the Kremlin's compliance with international law. But it will clearly not change the Muscovites' goals and patterns of behaviour.

At the height of the pandemic, the Kremlin's influence and intelligence activities against Estonia did not decrease. Closed borders and restrictions on public gatherings led local leaders of the Kremlin's policies of division to go online. At the same time, the Kremlin's permanent problem has not been

resolved – talented young people are not interested in its policies. There is reason to write about matters relating to generational change in this year's Annual Review, and probably in future editions as well.

Espionage by the Russian Federation against Estonia is a continuous and permanent threat. In the crisis caused by the virus, the physical movement and activities of foreign spies were significantly limited, but more effort was put into espionage in cyberspace. In this year's Annual Review, in addition to our usual coverage of the Kremlin's intelligence activities, we must discuss in more detail than ever the work of the special services of the communist People's Republic of China towards the Republic of Estonia. For some time now, Beijing's actions have caused concerns for counterintelligence. The danger is no longer theoretical; it has been confirmed by the first court decision. Chinese intelligence recruited an Estonian citizen.

A new generation of extremists is emerging. Regardless of their right-wing or left-wing views, the Internal Security Service (KAPO) is interested in instigators of violence in whose case there is reason to believe crimes of physical violence may be committed. The far-right has not been addressed much in recent Annual Reviews. Who do we mean? In general, these are angry young men – often little more than boys – who get themselves worked up in the echo chambers of social networks and vow to change the world through violence. Some radicals believe that societal order is falling apart and will be followed by a race war. For their part, they will do their best to help shape such a future. Threats of

violence are punishable in Estonia and in an ideal world must be stopped before people turn words into deeds. It does not always work out this way, in which case it is the courts that give their assessment of the punishability of a particular act.

As of today, there are no terrorist groups operating in Estonia. At the same time, the Estonian state and its inhabitants are still a target for jihadist extremists. In Europe, large-scale and high-casualty attacks have become more difficult to carry out due to large-scale countermeasures by security and law-enforcement agencies. One way each of us can contribute to this fight is by reporting illegal explosives and firearms. Last year, we confiscated less than two kilograms of explosives, but even that amount is enough for terrorists to carry out an attack with serious consequences. International terrorism is looking for new ways to raise money from supporters, and European countries need to find new ways of preventing this. One example is the attempt to investigate the financing of terrorism through cryptocurrencies among people from high-risk countries.

In addition to violent extremism and terrorism, it must be said that in the digital world, countries that at first glance have no direct connection to us, such as North Korea, are also interested in Estonia. The explanation is probably simple: as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, Estonian officials have been the target of cyberattacks by this Stalinist dictatorship.

Alongside external threats, we need to take note of the threat to national security that corruption

can pose. Corruption is not widespread in Estonia, but national security is also threatened by citizens being given the false impression that it is a major problem. People get discouraged, frustrated and bitter as a result. Our experience has shown that top politicians, officials, businessmen and local officials with more limited reach can all be corrupted. Selfish acts of corruption undermine the trust of the Estonian people in the state.

The somewhat tired adage that everything new is well-forgotten old also applies to the security field. History has taught us to notice these historical patterns. This year, we bring you historical documents that tellingly describe propaganda processes used by the Soviet Union to try to incriminate countries and nations by labelling them as Nazis. We see the Kremlin's re-enactments, both in creating new "enemies" and in reinforcing old images.

It is good to note that cooperation is not an issue, either within the country or with our NATO and EU allies. Many cross-border security problems are equally dangerous for both large and small countries, and here the distinction is theoretical. One thing is certain: it is very difficult – and often impossible – to ensure security and safety without good partners and colleagues. Thank you all for your cooperation!

I wish you persistence and happy reading.

**Arnold Sinisalu**

# DEFENDING THE CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER

Last year, we celebrated the 100th anniversary of the Constitution. The first Constitution of the Republic of Estonia was passed on 15 June 1920 and entered into force on 21 December the same year. The centenary year came with surprises such as unexpected interpretations of the Constitution and restrictions on public meetings. In March last year, the government imposed a state of emergency due to the spread of the coronavirus, followed in the autumn by various restrictions for both companies and individuals.

It was an entirely new situation for the country, raising the issue of guaranteeing people's fundamental rights and freedoms. The protracted crisis required all Estonians to change their habits. Face-to-face meetings were replaced by frequent stays in the virtual world. This was a favourable breeding ground for a number of interest groups that try to influence the public, such as pro-Kremlin, far-right, anti-mask and Covid-19 conspiracy theorists, and anti-5G activists.

The period of the pandemic is likely to provide food for thought for lawyers and sociologists, among others, to assess both the interpretation of the law and the impact of long-term restrictions on human behaviour. Despite everything, the constitutional order of the Republic was not in danger.

## Kremlin influence operations in Estonia

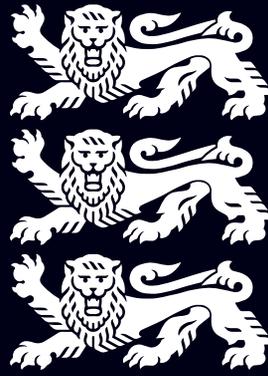
Local followers of Kremlin policies saw the difficult situation caused by the coronavirus as an opportunity to spread their messages as they intensified their influence activities on social media. Following the example of the Russian ruling elite, they first tried to turn the issue of the virus into a matter of belief. However, the spring showed that in a crisis our Russian-speaking population turns to information channels whose reliability they can be sure of. The audience for Estonian official information channels and the Russian-language channels of Estonian Public Broadcasting grew by leaps and bounds.

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**In 2019, the news portal [rus.err.ee](http://rus.err.ee) had an average of 83,000 visits every week. Last year, it rose to an average of 149,000 visits a week, according to a Gemius Prism survey. According to Kantar Emor, 29.1% of people of other ethnic backgrounds watched the Russian-language TV channel ETV+ in 2019. The proportion rose to 31.9% in 2020.**

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As arguments about the coronavirus did not bear fruit, the Kremlin's influence activities turned to traditional subjects placed in the context of the pandemic. Criticism was aimed at NATO (national defence spending versus healthcare spending) and the lack of rights and information for the Russian-speaking population during the restrictions on movement. Instead of contributing to resolving



the health crisis, concerns were voiced about the events of 9 May. During the emergency, the Russian Embassy continued, together with activists, to make preparations for World War II Soviet memorials and graves.

Despite the efforts of Kremlin activists, the 9 May gatherings were held in moderation, as appropriate for commemorative events. Participation in the virtual events organised instead of large-scale outdoor events was modest in Estonia.

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**According to a market survey by Turu-uuringute AS, at the height of the crisis at the beginning of April, 99% of Estonian residents were (rather) up-to-date with Covid-19 issues. The figure among the Russian-speaking population was 97%. ([www.riigikantselei.ee/uuringud](http://www.riigikantselei.ee/uuringud))**

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The cancellation of events planned to mark the Great Patriotic War (World War II) caused dissatisfaction among those activists who are economically dependent on the Kremlin. Despite their efforts, they were not able to boost their influence and messages among the public. The Kremlin's politics of division is essentially corrupt: in order to secure income local activists have designed fake projects. An example is the initiative of the virtual international club Moscow and Compatriots, which essentially was only a chatroom for a narrow circle, but still allowed to "write off" influence operations funds.

The independent Orthodox Church of Ukraine was established in 2018, and its independence was recognised by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. In recent years, however, this has weakened

the position of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC), which is a tool of the Kremlin's influence operations. In order to increase the influence of the Moscow Patriarchate, the Kremlin has scaled up the activities of the church in its neighbouring countries, as was evident in Estonia last year, when one of the local leaders of the Moscow church spoke in Tallinn on the favourite subject of Kremlin propaganda. The church leader argued at a public event that any approach to World War II differing from the Kremlin's narrative was a criminal rewriting of history. The local representatives of the ROC organised a history conference last year to present Estonia as an ancient Russian Orthodox territory. Anyone who opposes such an approach is described by the ROC as a divider of the Orthodox world.

Both local Russian activists and the Russian Embassy repeatedly wanted to take advantage of the coronavirus situation in the interests of the Kremlin during



Last year even Kremlin influence operations had no other option than to try to reorganise through online conference calls. <http://ruskoeppole.de/ru/news-18/6016-onlajn-forum-sovfeda-rf-s-sootечestvennikami-po-popravkam-v-konstitutsiyu-krug-voprosov-i-mnenija-uchastnikov.html>



Reciting poems and songs is part of learning any language. Wearing Red Army uniforms and having Soviet propaganda in the back while doing it – clearly shows these pupils have been taken advantage of by the Kremlin.

the crisis. Among the former were individuals who, in order to raise their status in the community, were looking for ways to vaccinate members of the Estonian Russian-speaking community in Russia. However, interest in getting a vaccine injection across the border remained modest. The efforts of the embassy in Tallinn to develop so-called humanitarian cooperation with Estonian institutions (e.g. in procuring protective equipment) were also primarily driven by propagandistic motives.

### **Ostensible youth work**

The Kremlin's activists in Estonia talk a lot about the importance of involving young people, but they are not actually interested in involving the young generation. Young activists would jeopardise their incomes, their apparent position in the community and their working relationship with the Russian Embassy. However, the involvement of people close to the activists in events related to the Russian Federation is encouraged. Generational renewal is encouraged only within the family: the children of former Night Watch activists are now taking over their parents' role. Work with young people has two main purposes.

1. It is a priority of the Kremlin's policy of division, which Russian embassies are required to follow.
2. Due to the importance of the topic, youth projects are funded as a matter of priority, which often means a small but stable income for the organisers.

The state language skills of schoolchildren of various ethnic backgrounds and the quality of their education are directly related to the security situation. This is confirmed by the experience of other Western countries in the field of integration. Although the local Russian youth has little interest in the Kremlin's politics of division, their motivation and success at school are influenced by their everyday social circle. The support of the family and teachers is important here, as well as the interest and will of local governments to direct children to an Estonian-speaking environment as early as in kindergarten.

The Kremlin's desire to maintain segregated bilingual education in Estonia in order to divide society has not disappeared. To this end, the activities of NGOs are supported internationally and young people are encouraged to participate in divisive-policy projects. For example, pupils from different schools are involved in the production



Both the Russian Embassy and local divisive-policy activists will continue to involve young people in events related to the Kremlin's memory policy, thereby affecting their chances of success in Estonia in the future.

and dissemination of propaganda on World War II, with the support and knowledge of school heads and teachers. The most prominent example of influence activities related to 9 May was the video "Pobeda 75" made with the participation of pupils at the Tallinn Linnamäe Russian Lyceum, in which students in Soviet uniforms perform thematic poems and songs against the background of old documentaries.

The Kremlin wanted to engage more Russian young people outside Russia through virtual channels while participating in distance learning due to the coronavirus but, at least in Estonia, no noticeable results were achieved. Unlike in previous years, local young people could not be sent to divisive-policy events and virtual events attracted little interest. The influence project "I Know Russia", which was established in Russia in 2016, was brought to Estonia to

**The development of a comprehensive system supporting integration and a smart and balanced integration policy must take account of the needs of society as a whole in addition to the labour market, and also understand its security dimension. Modernising services, shaping social attitudes and reducing cultural and social tensions are keywords that permeate policy-making in the field of integration at both state and local level.**

**Effective implementation of integration policy requires common understandings of its objectives and how it can be implemented. Unfortunately, we must recognise in our work that the international situation and differing sources of media and information can hinder integration in many ways. It is good to sense – and have it corroborated by research data – that, in the long run, opponents of integration have not succeeded, and that integration in Estonian society is working despite clearly perceived systemic opposition occurring from time to time.**

**Anne-Ly Reimaa**  
**Head of International Relations on Integration Issues**  
**Ministry of Culture**

this end. Among other things, the project includes a competition involving assembling map puzzles of Russia and its regions. The project is supported by the Russian Civic Chamber, the National Anti-terrorism Committee, the Russian Orthodox Church, Rosmolodyozh and others.

The Russian Embassy in Estonia was interested in the project, wanting to paint a positive picture of Russia for local pupils. The target group is primarily Russian-language schools that maintain contacts with the embassy, but also educational institutions that use Estonian as the language of instruction. We recommend that Estonian local governments and schools consider the appropriateness of such proposals made on “humanitarian considerations”. In addition to the questionable educational value, there is a danger of supporting the goals of the Kremlin’s influence activities. As an example, the map puzzle depicts Crimea as part of the Russian Federation.

The politics of division is, in practice, largely like the Soviet Union’s planned economy, which had no regard for people. This was illustrated by the situation in 2020, when Estonian students studying at Russian universities under a quota system administered by Rossotrudnichestvo were not allowed into Russia due to the coronavirus restrictions. The students’ requests to various representative offices and institutions for help remained unanswered and unresolved. The main goal of the project was to fill the enrolment quota, and the embassy formally achieved this. Russian officials were no longer interested in whether these young people would actually be able to study or what their fate would be. It is thought-provoking that 90% of the young people going to Russian universities graduated from a school with Russian as the language of instruction.

The bilingual education system mentioned above favours a situation in which studying in Russia may be a forced choice for many of our young people.

## An attempt to rethink soft power

The global standstill caused by the coronavirus has given ideologists of the politics of division an opportunity to address the dissatisfaction of their foreign activists and followers. The criticism of the latter was met with promises of improved cooperation, supported by a number of legislative changes (discussed below) and changes in the leadership of key institutions – Rossotrudnichestvo and the Fund for the Legal Protection and Support of Russian Federation Compatriots Living Abroad. In recent years, the Kremlin has been replacing the term “soft power” with “humanitarian action”, which allegedly is better understood internationally and reduces the perceived threat to the West.

Yevgeny Primakov, who was appointed the new head of Rossotrudnichestvo in 2020, described the positive involvement of the Baltic states in humanitarian cooperation (e.g. in the non-profit and education fields) as a long-term goal, which essentially means maintaining a Russian-speaking community politically loyal to Russia. Such communities are expected to influence decisions on defence policy in the countries of the former Soviet Union. Despite the new vocabulary and seemingly new methods, the Kremlin is still pursuing the traditional goals of its politics of division: to interfere in the domestic policy of foreign countries and to disrupt the EU’s common foreign and sanctions policy.

The institutions leading the influence operations coordinated by the Russian Ministry of Foreign



Estonian partners of Russkiy Mir and Rossotrudnichestvo – the institutions leading the influence operations coordinated by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Inga Mangus and Aleksei Semjonov are an important link in these operations. <https://beta.baltija.eu/news/print/47177>

**Citizen A is an example of how the Kremlin tries to take advantage of young people. Even the Russian Embassy in Tallinn had their hopes for A – a young woman in her 20s. As our annual reviews have shown before, trying to involve yourself in these influence operations is a dead end. We advise young people not to take part in these seemingly harmless events. Russia gathers personal information on these young people and this information will reach the intelligence agencies.**

**1. September 2017, Sochi**

At the XIX International Youth and Student Festival A meets the leaders of the Russian youth organisation Volunteers of Victory.

**2. May 2018, Ikla**

A takes part in an “Eternal Flame” event of Kremlin policies’ followers in the Baltic states.

**3. March 2019, Liverpool**

A meets representatives of the St Petersburg department of the Young Guard of Putin’s political Party, United Russia.

**4. April 2019, St Petersburg**

A meets a leader of the Young Guard St Petersburg department – they agree on collaboration.

**5. May 2019, Moscow and Tula**

Organisers of the Immortal Regiment march receive a training by the Volunteers of Victory. Part of the training event is participating in a march of 160,000 people in the city of Tula. This is A’s first training in getting volunteers on board and organising big events.

**6. August 2019, Orenburg**

At the youth forum Eurasia Global, A is trained in recruiting volunteers to organise an Immortal Regiment march.

**7. September 2019, Tallinn**

Meeting at the Russian Embassy in Tallinn to prepare for the 75th anniversary of the victory in the Great Patriotic War. The embassy expects A to recruit young people for the celebratory events.

**8. October 2019, Moscow**

Young Guard protest in front of the Estonian Embassy in Moscow – members of their organisation have been banned from entering Estonia (and other Schengen states). The collaboration between A and the Young Guard ends even before it started. Activists being banned from Schengen is painful news in Moscow.

**9. November 2019, Moscow**

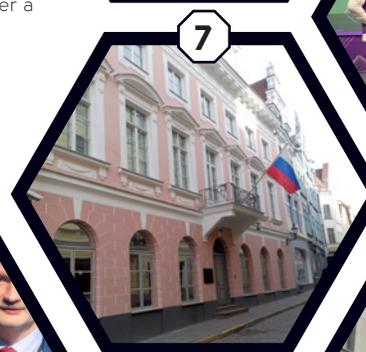
Gathering of Volunteers of Victory regional leaders. A receives training on fighting “falsification of history” and advanced lessons on social media. After the event A is required to put together a plan for the upcoming celebrations and creating social media accounts.

**10. December 2019, Brussels**

Latvian MEP Tatiana Zhdanoka organises the 13th European Russian Forum. Younger activists are invited to boost morale.

**11. March 2020, Tallinn**

A organises a Women’s Day event. Funds (several hundred euros) and plans come from Moscow. Volunteers recruited by A give passers-by flowers, wearing T-shirts “From Russia With Love” written on them. The event is filmed by a Latvian cameraman known to work with Russian TV-channels.



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Affairs, namely Rossotrudnichestvo and Russkiy Mir, have MTÜ Puškini Institut (Pushkin Institute) as their cooperation partner in Estonia. The Institute itself is connected to MTÜ Tallinna Vene Keele Kool (Tallinn Russian Language School); OÜ Euroopa Keele Kool (European Languages School); MTÜ Eesti Vene Keele ja Kirjanduse Õppejõudude Assotsiatsioon (Estonian Association of Russian Language and Literature Teachers); MTÜ Baltic Youth Alliance; and MTÜ Reval Media Agency.

Agreement between the Pushkin Institute, Rossotrudnichestvo and Russkiy Mir (see page 11) reveal the actual background of the so-called soft values (courses, language textbooks, youth camps) disseminated in Estonia and the criteria for securing funding from the Kremlin.

The Pushkin Institute claims to promote the Russian language and culture. In 2020, the institute followed the Putin regime's influence agenda by organising youth camps and seeking interested people for history and public diplomacy competitions organised by the Kremlin. Among the subjects of the competition entries were "The 1917 Revolution", "If Lenin Had Lived Longer", "The Price of Victory" and "The Collapse of the Soviet Union".

## **Creating a basis for international conflicts**

In the Kremlin's eyes, activists and Russian communities abroad are in dire need of greater involvement in influence operations. Last year, attempts were made to revive cooperation by a legal amendment that offers Russian activists abroad Moscow's apparent protection from the activities of so-called hostile foreign countries. This would effectively mean hypothetical support in situations where allegations of human rights violations and distortions of historical truth are fabricated abroad. A sentence on the protection of compatriots living abroad was added to the Russian Constitution. Time will show whether this gives more reason to intervene forcefully (read: by military force) in the internal affairs of other countries.

During aggression in Georgia and Ukraine, the Kremlin was disturbed by neither domestic or nor international law. It is with regard to the latter that the Kremlin has established the supremacy of the Russian Constitution. The Russian Criminal Code

was supplemented with a section on punishment for damaging and destroying Russian (Soviet) war graves and monuments abroad. In addition, Russia wants to simplify immigration and amended its Citizenship Act accordingly.

These legal amendments primarily serve a propagandistic purpose. However, by expanding the legal area in this way, Russia could trigger serious international conflicts through the application of the law. In addition, these legal amendments may have unexpected consequences for so-called suspicious residents of Estonia (and other EU countries) when visiting Russia, in transit and similar situations. These individuals may not be aware of the proceedings initiated against them, in absentia, in Russia.

## **International sanctions combat propaganda**

In February 2020, KAPO conducted public proceedings in response to a request for legal assistance from the Latvian State Security Service. To gather additional evidence in a criminal case opened in Latvia on 19 December 2019, the home of Margus Merima and the offices of the companies BMA Estonia OÜ and BMR Estonia OÜ were searched. The Latvian State Security Service (Valsts Drošības Dienests, VDD) has begun criminal proceedings against Merima and Oleg Solodov from Latvia. They are accused of breaking EU financial sanctions.

Also on the list is Dmitry Kiselyov, the CEO of MIA Rossiya Segodnya – the parent company of Sputnik's Estonian news portal. In December 2019, the Financial Intelligence Unit of the Estonian Police and Border Guard Board informed Sputnik's employees in Estonia that working for or providing services to a person subject to sanctions was a violation of sanctions. The last employment contracts with Sputnik's Estonian portal ended on 29 October 2020, which officially brought MIA Rossiya Segodnya's activities in Estonia to an end. On 12 June 2020 the Estonian Internet Foundation banned the use of Sputnik's domain name in order to prevent its sale.

We emphasise that the reason for the proceedings was not the content of the media channels related to the companies. The production of media content has not been prevented but, under EU sanctions, any economic activities that benefit a sanctioned

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Заполняется организацией фонда

Дата поступления заявки

Заполняется организацией фонда

Регистрационный номер

**ФОРМУЛЯР ЗАЯВКИ**  
на предоставление юридическому лицу гранта Фонда поддержки и защиты прав соотечественников, проживающих за рубежом

**I. Общая информация о проекте**

1.	Наименование соискателя гранта	Таллинский Институт Пушкина
2.	Организационно-правовой статус соискателя	НКО
3.	Полное наименование проекта	Летний правозащитный интеллектуально-образовательный лагерь «Молодой лидер»
4.	Период реализации проекта (дата начала – дата окончания)	
5.	Полная стоимость проекта	24 850 евро
6.	Сумма запрашиваемого финансирования	20 080 евро
7.	Сумма софинансирования	4 770 евро
8.	Организации, принимающие долевое участие в финансировании проекта, их организационно-правовой статус	Институт Пушкина Reval Media Agency портал Русская Эстония КСРСЭ — орг. поддержка

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**II. Информация об организации - заявителе**

Адрес организации (юридический, фактический)	Таллин, Манежаи 7, 10117
Телефон/факс (с указанием кода)	+372 6412256
Адрес электронной почты	info@pushkin.ee
Интернет-страница	
Ф.И.О. руководителя организации, телефон, адрес электронной почты	Красноглазов Андрей Борисович andrei.krasnoglazov@pushkin.ee
Ф.И.О. бухгалтера организации, телефон, адрес электронной почты	+372 641 22 56 info@pushkin.ee
Ф.И.О. руководителя проекта, телефон, адрес электронной почты	Красноглазов Андрей Борисович +372 5644087 andrei.krasnoglazov@pushkin.ee

**III. Краткая аннотация проекта**

Летний интеллектуально-образовательный лагерь «Молодой лидер»

**Форма проведения:** летний правозащитный, интеллектуально-образовательный лагерь.  
**Количество участников:** 24 человека (гимназисты, студенты)  
**Продолжительность пребывания в лагере:** 8 дней  
**Целевая группа:** молодые соотечественники (студенты, учащиеся русских гимназий, так или иначе проявившие свои таланты лидеров и творческие способности).  
**Содержание проекта:** В советское время работала система пионерских лагерей, студенческих отрядов, другие формы социальной интеграции и воспитания. В Эстонии для русских проводятся, в основном, языковые лагеря, где все дружно изучают эстонский язык. Между тем русскоязычной молодежи необходима социально-соревновательная среда, в которой молодые люди могли бы формировать свои жизненные принципы и ориентиры, лидерские качества, познакомиться с основами юриспруденции и правозащитной проблематикой.  
В лагере «Молодой лидер» молодые соотечественники встретятся с русской политической

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и интеллектуальной элитой, профессионалами в нескольких областях: эксперт-правозащитник, юрист, политик, адвокат и т.п. Ребята участвуют в ролевых играх, тренингах, мастер-классах на правозащитную тематику, пробуют себя в креативных заданиях и разрешении кризис-ситуаций, пытаются практически реализовать полученные навыки. Будет уделено внимание риторике, приемам ведения дискуссии, спора. Отдельным значительным пунктом программы станет семинар-тренинг по вопросам защиты прав человека с участием специалистов Центра информации по правам человека (А.Семенов), практикующих юристов, адвокатов, правозащитников. Предполагается итоговая практическая работа по завершении семинара.

Кроме того, молодые люди будут знакомиться с общественно-правовыми концепциями и течениями в современном мире, в эстонском и российском обществе, получают информацию о возможностях построения карьеры и обучения в России по избранной специальности.

**Главными задачами** интеллектуально-образовательного лагеря «Молодой лидер» является

1. воспроизводство в среде соотечественников юристов, в том числе, специалистов в области прав человека, интеллектуальной и политической элиты;
2. формирование у молодежи жизненной позиции, которая предполагает активное участие в гражданских дискуссиях и общественных процессах;
3. формирование позитивного образа России как исторической Родины, культурного и экономического партнера Эстонии и Евросоюза;
4. обучение практическим приемам публичных дискуссий, споров, выступлений. \*

**Цели мероприятия** будут достигнуты путем встреч и дискуссий молодых соотечественников с лидерами русского общественного мнения Эстонии, правоведами, политиками. Путем проведения тренингов, ролевых игр и мастер-классов с участием знаковых фигур из общественно-политической элиты Республики. Будут привлечены специалисты в области защиты прав человека, практической риторики, социальной психологии, социологии.

Про обучение и жизнь в лагере будет снят документальный фильм. Предполагается его полная или частичная трансляция по тв-каналам, интернету. Также планируется всестороннее освещение проекта в новостных и тематических блоках интернет порталов, кабельных ТВ каналов.

**Краткое описание проекта:**  
В лагерь поочередно приезжают лидеры в заявленных областях деятельности (эксперт по

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правам человека, юрист политик, экономист, адвокат, ритор, социолог и т.п.). В первый день читаются лекции и проводятся мастер-классы, во второй день участники сами создают творческий продукт в данной области. Например, первый день – «юриск», как защищать свои права», второй день – участники с помощью ролевых игр моделируют конфликтную ситуацию и ее разрешение. В остальное время с ребятами проводятся неформальные дискуссии, круглые столы, брейн-ринги по актуальным гуманитарно-правовым вопросам отношений России и Евросоюза. Проведение семинара-тренинга по правозащитной тематике. Выработка практических навыков ведения публичной дискуссии, спора, защиты своей позиции.

**IV. Информация об основных исполнителях проекта**

Ф.И.О.	Должность в проекте	Обязанности	Место работы, занимаемая должность
Красноглазов А.	Руководитель проекта	Принадлежит идея проекта, ответственность за его проведение, организация содержательной стороны проекта (подбор специалистов, проведение конкурсов среди участников и т.д.)	Руководитель Института Пушкина
Семенов А.	Участник проекта	Составление правозащитной составляющей программы пребывания в лагере.	Директор Центра информации по правам человека

(подпись руководителя организации) (расшифровка подписи)

М.П.

Agreements between these associations and Rossotrudnichestvo and Russkiy Mir reveal the actual background of so-called soft values (courses, language textbooks, youth camps) disseminated in Estonia and the criteria for securing funding from the Kremlin.

\* The goals of the youth camps were:

1. Developing human rights specialists in the Russian community, thereby raising a future intellectual and political elite among Russian-speaking young people in Estonia.
2. Providing young people with a good position in life, where they would be ready to take an active part in social processes and public discussions.
3. Creating a positive image of Russia as the "historical homeland".
4. Teaching young people the skills of public speaking, debate and discussion.



Dmitry Kiselyov





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person must be stopped. In our opinion, both the Estonian- and Russian-speaking population must be informed about international sanctions, their purpose and the obligation to comply with them. Awareness-raising among entrepreneurs and local governments is especially important so they understand the risks associated with subscribing to advertising in the Russian state media. The national and local governments must not fund Russian media channels that intentionally and purposefully incite hostility against Estonia and its allies.

On 2 February 2021, Elena Cherysheva, a former employee of Sputnik in Estonia, launched the web portal Sputnik-Meedia with the support of the Fund for the Legal Protection and Support of Russian Federation Compatriots Living Abroad, curated by the Russian foreign ministry. Among other things, the portal features articles by the Legal Information Centre for Human Rights, headed by Alexey Semyonov. The content, message and design of the new portal are practically identical to those of the defunct Sputnik Estonia.

### **Strong denial of the occupation and annexation of the Baltic states**

The Kremlin's propaganda is increasingly trying to claim that the "myth" of the Soviet occupation dates back to the beginning of the German occupation in 1941. The longevity of this "myth" is explained by the fact that, during the Soviet period, access to historical documents was difficult and it was impossible to establish the truth. In reality, Russia's continued "disclosures" of archived materials offer no counter-argument to the occupation and annexation of the Baltic states by the Soviet Union in 1940.

History propaganda against the Baltic states is carried out by the Historical Memory Foundation in Russia, the activities of which we have repeatedly discussed in previous yearbooks. Last year, documents were made public through the media stating that the foundation's activities are coordinated

and financed by the Directorate for Interregional Relations and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. According to the foundation's website, its main purpose is to support historical research in Russia and Eastern Europe, but a report leaked to the media states its "main activity" is the fight against the falsification of history contrary to Russian interests. The area in which the foundation operates, according to the report, is the "post-Soviet space" and the "near abroad".

As a specific line of activity, the foundation's report highlights "discrediting the interwar regime of the Baltic states" – in other words, the independent Republic of Estonia. To this end, the Historical Memory Foundation launched in 2020 an online project titled "Disclosed: The Baltics 1939–1941" and launched the website [baltic1940.ru](http://baltic1940.ru). A book titled *Residents Report: A Collection of Documents on the Political Situation in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia between August 1939 and August 1940* was published on this topic. At the presentation of the book, Veronika Krashennikova, a political scientist and adviser to the director general of the media agency Rossiya Segodnya, boasted that the book would leave no stone unturned in the theory of Soviet occupation. A statement that attracted attention in Estonia in the context of the presentation was an allegation by Aleksandr Dyukov, director of the Historical Memory Foundation, that Jaan Tõnisson was a key agent of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKVD). Estonian historians have repeatedly confirmed that such allegations are unfounded. Tõnisson was arrested by the Soviet occupation authorities at the end of 1940, and his exact fate is still unknown. He was probably executed in Tallinn in July 1941. This is where Russian historians could help with research on the biography of one of Estonia's best-known statesmen.

The documents published in the Historical Memory Foundation's book about Estonia come from the Estonian State Archives Fund 138SM, "Collection of Foreign Intelligence Files of the ESSR State Security Committee", which is fully accessible and readable online.

## Support for the Forest Brothers' murderers

On 2 September 2020, Vladimir Putin signed an order to pay 75,000 roubles in support of "participants in the liquidation of the nationalist underground in the territory of the Baltic states, Belarus and Ukraine from 1 January 1944 to 31 December 1951". Financial support for those involved in the murder of the Forest Brothers is further proof that the Kremlin is returning entirely to the Soviet interpretation of history. The legacy of the resistance movements shatters the victory myth of the Great Patriotic War and the theory of the voluntary accession of the Baltic states to the USSR. The fact of the support payments ridicules the Estonian resistance movement and the struggle for freedom, while denying crimes against humanity.

## Violent extremism as a security threat

KAPO is as old as the Estonian state's fight against violent extremism. From a theoretical point of view, extremism is a value system in which the identity of a group is based on hostile (even violent) opposition to another group. On 7 June 1920, the first head of the Estonian Security Police, Helmut Veem, sent instructions to the department heads in which the task of the agency was set out as the exposure and bringing to justice of individuals working to overthrow the public order. The focus was on communists, the Baltic barons and the black-hundredists,<sup>1</sup> who were dissatisfied with the existence of the Republic of Estonia. The fight against various extremists was undoubtedly one of the priorities of the Security Police even in the 1920s.

The left- and right-wing extremist movements differ in content, but they have many similarities in form. The ideology of both sides rationalises a conflict. The goal of the communists was to create a "fair society" in Estonia, for which any obstacles such as other parties, the bourgeoisie and religion had to be eliminated one way or another. To achieve this, it was hoped

that a civil war would break out in Estonia, that the sole power of the Communist Party would be established, and that the country should accede to the Soviet state. According to the violent extreme right-wing ideologies of today (including in Estonia), society's collapse and a subsequent race war ("boogaloo"<sup>2</sup>) is unavoidable. Associates are invited to learn survival skills, weapon handling, physical skills and so on for this purpose. The more violent part of the far right wants to speed up the collapse through acts of terrorism. The groups are united in their belief in a conspiracy theory according to which the white race will be gradually replaced by people from elsewhere. Anger is directed against various groups including immigrants, minorities and politicians.

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### Report extremist agitation!

**In order to prevent and control a threat, it must be detected as early as possible. There is every reason to take an interest in what young people do online. Parents, friends and teachers can help.**

**The role of parents is particularly important, as they have the primary opportunity and obligation to recognise the dangers and to direct easily persuaded young people away from them.**

**Inform KAPO or the police!**

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A century ago, illegal printing shops were used to spread extremist ideas, but today's extremists can skilfully use virtual environments. Extremists have their own symbols and vocabulary, and an image of mystery, concealment and influence is created to draw young people into their sphere of influence. Terrorist attacks are heroised with vocabulary borrowed from computer games – a language familiar to young people. To encourage imitators, attempts are made to film the attacks or even broadcast them online in real time. As there is no longer a need to gather in underground meeting places, the deceptive sense of security of home settings lowers young people's guard and the seriousness of the words published on social networks is often not understood.

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## The creation of a violent extremist

Non-violent and ambiguous content (memes, etc.) is more difficult for service providers to recognise and remove. Such content is distributed by extremists in online environments actively moderated by the group, in which their value system is reaffirmed and external information is kept at bay. This shapes the members' one-sided world-view. When accounts are closed, they move to smaller platforms. There, vulnerable and malleable young people can be manipulated with hateful ideologies unhindered. Those who have already developed an interest are invited to closed groups ("echo chambers") that leave no room for different views.

Vulnerable young people come across various extreme ideologies on their online explorations, which, at worst, ends in glorification of terrorist attacks. In these echo chambers, extreme ideas are amplified in a competitive way in relation to other similar groups. During the coronavirus lockdown, time spent online increased, while the general uncertainty in society and the wide spread of conspiracy theories further reinforced the trend. In the extreme field of information (lectures, videos, memes, forums, etc.) of the echo chambers, young people become radicalised and start to believe that violence is a necessary way of solving problems. Important aspects of preventing radicalisation include a broader public debate on fundamental rights and obligations and the law-abiding behaviour of the parties, including during demonstrations.



Screenshots from Kristo Kivisto's video – the European Union is disliked by many far-right activists.

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**Echo chamber**

**An echo chamber is a virtual group of one-sided content and users with similar views, often defining themselves through opposition to another group. Due to the lack of fact-checking, extreme (conspiracy) theories appearing to offer simple solutions to society's problems, including who to blame and who to hate, may seem very attractive in such groups. The development of a one-sided world-view can also be facilitated by online environments themselves, providing the user with content that they have previously viewed or searched for (known as algorithmic bias).**

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In order to prevent this threat, KAPO had to intervene repeatedly using criminal procedure in 2020. This is a last resort that may no longer change a person's established views. Clear danger signs of involvement in an extremist group or an echo chamber include justifying violence against a social group, disregard for democratic values, and use of extremist symbols. Calls to violence or those who make such calls must be reported to KAPO.

The internet has created fertile ground for the spread of far-right material and the global gathering of ideologically like-minded people. Several fatal violent attacks in New Zealand, the US and Germany in recent years, as well as an increase in convictions in Europe, have led to a wider debate in international working groups on whether the current legal framework is appropriate to respond to growing far-right terrorism. While there is established case law on jihadist terrorism, the manifestations of far-right radicalisation continue to be a grey area and a balance is still being sought between the freedom of expression, religion and belief on the one hand and hate crime on the other.

On 26 February 2021, the judgment of Pärnu County Court entered into force in criminal case No 1-21-426, convicting a person with extreme right-wing views of threats and the desecration of the EU flag as a way of expressing their sympathy for causes that run contrary to democratic values and human rights. Although Kivisto was sentenced to six months' probation, it is perhaps even more important to explore the possibility of subjecting people with dangerous convictions to special social programmes, especially given the young age of those involved in criminal cases in 2020.

– Eleliis Rattam, State Prosecutor

## The threat to society from violent extremism

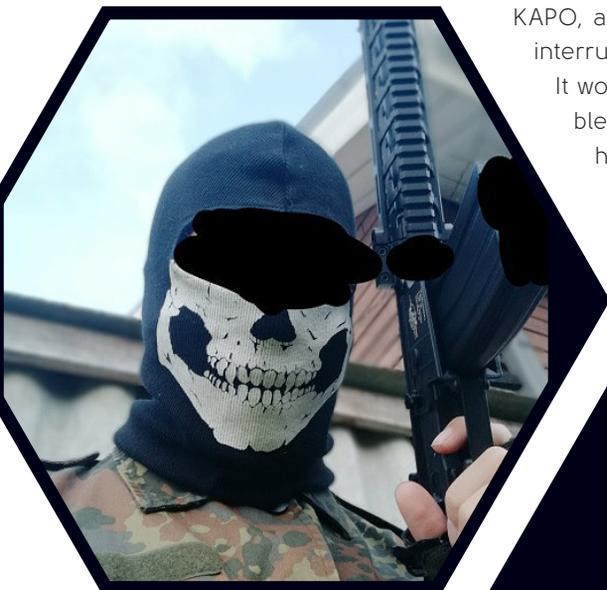
In July 2020, the United Kingdom declared the Feuerkrieg Division (FKD) a terrorist organisation, and in September the Supreme Court of Finland banned the Nordic Resistance Movement (NRM), a far-right organisation in Scandinavia. Both have had members or supporters in Estonia. The proximity of the threat is illustrated by an attempted terrorist attack in October 2019 in Lithuania,<sup>3</sup> which according to the opinion of an Estonian FKD member ought to have targeted a larger number of victims. One person was convicted in Lithuania in September 2020 for the terrorist attack.

An Estonian schoolboy affiliated with FKD had hand-written a manifesto and said in conversations with like-minded people that he had begun planning terrorist attacks in Estonia. The targets were to have been the Social Democrats, LGBT events and police offices. Although the schoolboy was not the author of the posted texts and instead copied the thoughts and material he had read in echo chambers, he led many adults to believe that he was an authority among the far right. He was active online, while his interest in extremism and radicalisation was not apparent outside the home. He was unable to carry out

his plans due to the intervention of KAPO, and his radicalisation was interrupted at a very early stage.

It would have been unthinkable to wait and see where his thoughts and actions would eventually lead.

Hate speech and threats on social networks can lead to punishment. Kristo Kivisto had repeatedly participated in racist, anti-Semitic and anti-LGBT demonstrations abroad and wanted to establish an Estonian cell of the violent far-right NRM. Kivisto threatened to use violence. To this end, he posted photos of far-right terrorists and mass murderers on social media groups of socially active young people. Like-minded people may see such activities as innocent jokes and trolling, but the threat of violence is a serious violation of the law.





Like their Western counterparts, Estonian extremists are interested in weapons and explosives. They read and share literature that has inspired mass murderers in the West. Being familiar with such literature is also a prerequisite for joining an extremist group. The next level of membership is the distribution of propaganda materials (posters, stickers) on the streets. This should be followed by violent attacks, but most members are reluctant to carry these out.

International far-right groups have found only a few followers in Estonia, because young people usually

do not want to engage in the incitement of violence. Calls for violence have sometimes exceeded the tolerance of young people, and there are examples of a more conscientious member exposing some groups by leaking inside information. However, the spread of terrorist ideology online and the associated risk of covert radicalisation remain. KAPO can deal with the consequences of the rise of extremism, but extremism must be dealt with comprehensively by all institutions of society. It is the responsibility of every member of society to report people or groups who call for support of violent extremism.

# COUNTERINTELLIGENCE

Last year, Russian intelligence services were once again at the forefront of hostile intelligence activity against Estonia. In recent years, we have also referred to the growing intelligence activities of the People's Republic of China. This has been confirmed this year by the first criminal case to reach a court decision in the spring of 2021 in which a researcher working in the field of defence was convicted.

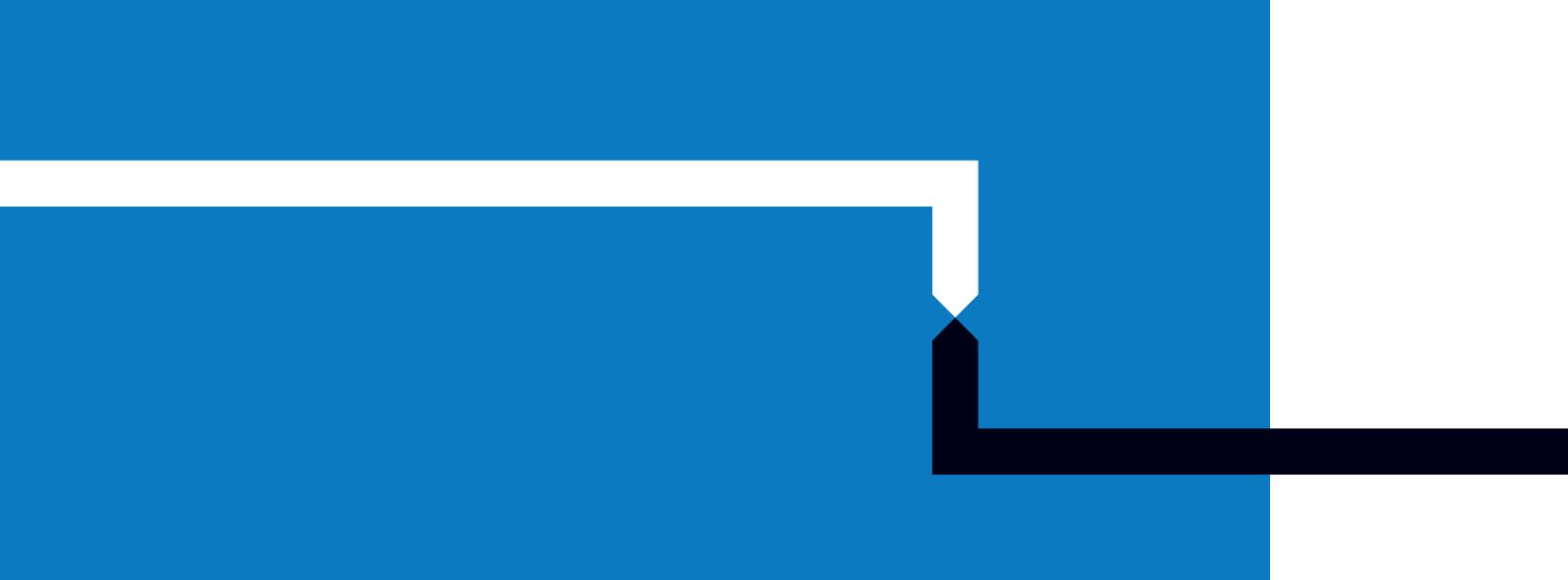
However, there are more hostile intelligence services that threaten the European Union and NATO. Although their footprint in Estonia may not be comparable to that of the Russian and Chinese intelligence services, we are constantly working with our partners to prevent and counter all intelligence threats to Estonia.

The global crisis caused by the coronavirus and the associated restrictions also affected the routine of spies. If borders are closed, they are for closed everyone; if the virus is contagious, everyone can catch it. The Russian special services also had to acknowledge this.

## **Russian intelligence activity remains aggressive**

2020 was a difficult year for intelligence services operating against Estonia, as restrictions on the cross-border movement of people forced them to change their usual work culture and established methods. The whole of society working in shifts and from home also left a clear mark on the activities of spies in Estonia, other EU countries and Russia. For example, in the spring of last year, several units of the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) tried to ignore and deny what was happening, but as the number of those infected increased, this was no longer possible. Even the biggest sceptics found out that the virus does not pick a target based on ethnicity, skin colour or even field of activity. In some cases, entire units of intelligence personnel were placed in isolation. Although the activities of Russian intelligence were significantly hindered due to the spread of the virus during the year, intelligence activities as a whole, including against Estonia, did not stop for a moment.

At the beginning of 2020, the usual activity was still underway and several Estonians were approached, either on Russian territory or at the border, in an attempt to recruit them for cooperation. For the most part, the FSB was behind the approaches in



Russia. They were forced to adjust their methods after the closure of the borders in March. Face-to-face communication was replaced by email or social media, for example. Meetings were postponed. While in previous years we have identified Russian intelligence officers operating in Estonia aggressively approaching Estonians or citizens of other countries living here, there was also less activity in this field because of the coronavirus crisis. The closure of entertainment and catering establishments and operating restrictions pulled the rug out from under many intelligence plans, inevitably leading to limited contacts and reduced efforts.

At the same time, the virus did not affect cyber espionage as much and attacks against Estonia and Estonian targets continued. This year – as many countries return to normal life – we can also expect a resumption of intelligence activity originating from Russia.

Russia's special services are not focused only on Belarus, struggling under the Kremlin's strong grip, or the occupied regions of Moldova, where there are fears of the next "colour" revolution or the loss of Moscow's influence. The number of Russian agents caught by Ukraine's security services in the last year alone is significant, which might be expected due to the armed conflict in the east of the country. The real extent of the Kremlin's activities is illustrated by the number of Russian diplomats expelled from the EU and elsewhere over the past year. Bulgaria, the Netherlands, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Austria – and the first non-European example, Japan – are only the countries that have made their expulsions public.

Compared to previous years, the number of Russian special services agents caught by counterintelli-

gence in several countries has also increased. Denmark and Norway are examples from last year. On the one hand, these statistics show the activity of Russian intelligence, but on the other, they again confirm the increased effectiveness of the European security institutions. The whole of Europe is facing a growing Russian intelligence threat, and changing and modernising working methods has been inevitable in order to deal with this. The Kremlin's aggressive intelligence activities have contributed to the modernisation of the work and methods of European counterintelligence services and led to greater coherence in the reactions of those services in different countries to Russian activities.

### **Criminal negligence in handling state secrets**

In September 2020, Harju County Court convicted T.L., a former member of the Estonian Defence Forces, of disclosing classified information of other countries. Over the years, he had disregarded the code of conduct on access to top-secret state material by taking some home, including classified information of other countries. This also enabled unauthorised individuals to access the secrets. T.L. also kept at home large quantities of illegal weapons, ammunition and explosives, much of it from the Defence Forces. The court considered three years' imprisonment an appropriate punishment for these acts. This criminal investigation has once again shown that many people who have been granted a permit to access state secrets do not understand the responsibilities that come with it. Access to sensitive information comes with restrictions. Both public authorities and officials need to consider seriously their readiness and ability to comply with these.

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## **Chinese intelligence activity in Estonian court for the first time**

The Covid-19 outbreak in China may have affected that country's intelligence activities more than Russia's. Restrictions on movement and strict codes of conduct for civil servants, both at home and in missions around the world, severely hampered the activities of Chinese intelligence officers. At the same time, the reported arrest of Chinese intelligence agents in Poland and Germany, for example, as well as numerous cases in the United States, confirm that Beijing's intelligence activities are not expected to subside in the near future. As a member of the EU and NATO, the threat posed by Chinese intelligence to Estonia is also a daily reality. We see this as a growing threat.

Intelligence activity is part of China's quest to become a world leader, including in economic and technological terms. As an example of its high ambitions, in the current five-year plan China has set itself the goal of achieving independence from Western technology by 2025. Step by step, Beijing is seeking to assert itself in Europe in the fields of politics, the economy and technology procurement. This must also be taken into account by Estonia, both in its cooperation with the People's Republic of China and in attracting Chinese capital investment. Since 2017, the Chinese government has obliged all its citizens, companies and organisations to cooperate fully with the country's intelligence agencies if required, and to keep this cooperation secret. Thus, if an Estonian company plans to look for cooperation partners in China, the interests of the Chinese state are included in the package.

Following last year's detention, a criminal case in KAPO's proceedings where the accused acted in the interests of the Chinese state reached court for the first time in early 2021. Through a mediator,

Tarmo Kõuts, a long-term employee of an Estonian university, had established a relationship with the Intelligence Bureau of the Joint Staff Department of the Central Military Commission of the People's Republic of China (hereinafter: Chinese military intelligence). Although Chinese military intelligence officers originally appeared to be employees of a Chinese think-tank, their true face and involvement in intelligence became apparent quite quickly. Kõuts met Chinese military intelligence representatives in various Asian countries.

The researcher's professional work was related to the defence field, which is why he had also been granted access to state secrets. He was ready to talk to Chinese military intelligence about his research, but when detained he had not been able to disclose any state secrets. In return for useful information, the researcher received cash and paid foreign trips to Asia, accommodation in expensive hotels and banquets in Michelin-starred restaurants, among other things. The long-term goal of Chinese intelligence was to gain access to secret information, but the security police managed to prevent the leak of state secrets by taking timely action. Regarding the case, there is another person under custody charged with the same activities. Her case is pending at Harju County Court.

This criminal case confirms that, as has been said in our previous yearbooks, intelligence services of hostile countries can target people of very different backgrounds, not just civil servants. The information that intelligence services seek is not necessarily state secrets. This case should raise vigilance levels among all researchers involved in excessively remunerated "research collaboration" with think-tanks in China and elsewhere. Well-paid advisory services for institutions of uncertain background outside the EU and NATO are also a danger sign. We call on all Estonians to notify KAPO of any suspicious job offers of the type described.



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## PROTECTION OF STATE SECRETS

Since 2008, when the legislation regulating state secrets was thoroughly revised, the number of people with access to such material has almost doubled. There are various reasons for this, including closer collaboration with NATO and EU institutions, events in Ukraine in 2014 and extended national defence tasks. Just as every stamp denoting classified information must be substantiated and have a legal basis, so must every security clearance. However, public institutions must not rely on KAPO's security vetting for checking an employee's trustworthiness: this task is the responsibility of every institution's internal audit unit.

The economic crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic may be the reason that companies' interest in the right to handle state secrets increased by leaps and bounds in 2020. While a decrease in the number of new projects in the construction market can be expected, the government is nevertheless planning large-scale ventures. However, the right to handle state secrets is necessary to participate in certain types of public procurement.

### **Security vetting is essential if access is unavoidably necessary**

The State Secrets and Classified Information of Foreign States Act regulates the protection of state secrets, including handling and granting access. The act entered into force on 1 January 2008, supplementing the 1994 version. It was drafted in the spirit of eliminating excessive secrecy and making sure that documents are only classified if their disclosure would pose an actual threat to the national security of the Republic of Estonia. The act also made the definition of a state secret (classification levels and terms) more flexible, and specified how security vetting related to clearance for access to state secrets is carried out.

The purpose of security vetting is to ascertain whether a person's circumstances (e.g. addictions, criminal background, contact with foreign intelligence, economic dependence and other reasons specified in Section 32 of the act) might prevent their receiving clearance. In the 2012 Annual Review, we pointed out that vetting does not assess whether a person has the necessary competence to work in their field, or appropriate training and qualifications. It is up to every employer to assess their employees in that respect. However, the legislation prescribes that the security vetting must ascertain whether, for



example, a person actually needs to know the state secret which the clearance is being applied for.

Vetting is essential if access to state secrets is unavoidably necessary for the performance of a specific job or for the provision of a contractual service. The fact that, since the implementation of the State Secrets and Classified Information of Foreign States Act, the number of persons with access to a state secret has doubled raises doubts whether such access is always necessary.

### **The application for security clearance must be unavoidable**

In the last two years, KAPO has paid more attention to how institutions justify the need for individuals to have state secret access clearance (“secret” and “higher” level). We do not question whether access clearance is required for a particular job. However, we do emphasise that any application for state secret clearance must be purposeful and sufficiently substantiated by the institution in which the applicant works or carries out service duties. In addition to having a clearance, it is also necessary to follow the “need to know” principle (Sections 3 (6) and 25 (1) of the State Secrets and Classified Information of Foreign States Act).

Security vetting is a procedure that must follow the principles set out in the Administrative Procedure Act. If the submitted application does not, in fact, involve a need for access or need to know a state secret of a particular classification level, the question may well arise whether subjecting the person to security vetting is justified.

Trustworthiness checks need to be regulated soon. During the whole of 2020, only 10 new individuals were given security clearance. This figure shows a reduction in the previous growth (since 2008) of an additional 200–500 persons a year with security clearance.

Staff-related risks can be prevented from materialising through internal audit measures, including background checks. Trustworthiness checks should not be confused with security vetting.

We hope that the recommended amendments to update the State Secrets and Classified Information of Foreign States Act, drafted by a working group chaired by the Ministry of Justice, will reach the Riigikogu in 2021, and that work on an act on trustworthiness checks will continue and that the act can be adopted.

### **Companies want the right to handle state secrets**

In 2020, we noted growing interest among companies in handling state secrets outside government institutions, i.e. on their own premises. That is possible only when KAPO has issued a handling permit. There has also been more interest in participating in public procurements which could involve a state secret. These areas are mainly national defence inventions and research; the installation of low-current systems (surveillance, alarm, communications and information systems in public institutions); and the construction of buildings used by security authorities and certain Defence Forces units, and the security measures implemented for their protection.

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However, a company can fulfil a contract with a public institution even if such material cannot be handled on its premises. This material can be used in the security rooms of the client (i.e. the public institution). Thus, it is not absolutely necessary to apply for a handling permit in order to participate in and fulfil public procurements.

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**Handling permit: a company's right to process a state secret on its premises.**

**Security clearance: a company employee's right to access materials declared a state secret, if they have a need to know.**

**Applying for one type of permit does not automatically entitle the applicant to the other.**

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If a company finds a way to access material classified as a state secret in the security area of the client or its subcontractor, for example, the person working with the material must nevertheless have the necessary security clearance. It should be noted that a handling permit does not grant right of access to a state secret to any natural person in a contractual or service relationship with the legal person holding the permit. This means that all company employees who will be handling state secrets must submit a separate application for security clearance.

## Applying for a handling permit

The documents needed for a handling permit application must be submitted to KAPO through the public institution sponsoring the issue of the clearance to the legal person. That institution must forward the documents with its letter of support to KAPO. The templates for these documents are available on KAPO's website ([www.kapo.ee](http://www.kapo.ee)) and in the electronic State Gazette ([www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/VV/reg/512092017002/consolide](http://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/VV/reg/512092017002/consolide)).

A sponsoring government institution is the institution with which the company concludes a contract upon securing the public procurement. At the same time, exceptional situations must also be taken into account, such as a company's interest in participating in procurements for which a handling permit is a prerequisite: this means applying for a permit before the procurement contract has been let. A company does not need to obtain a new permit every

time it wants to participate in a public procurement organised by another public institution.

The classification level of the state secret for which the company (handling permit) or its employee (security clearance) is applying is determined by the contracting institution, as it is best placed to establish what information applicants will be exposed to.

## Prerequisites for a handling permit

Handling permits are granted only after the prerequisite security vetting carried out by KAPO regarding the company ("the applicant"), which must also take the appropriate organisational, physical and electronic information security measures for the protection of state secrets. The security vetting of legal persons generally lasts up to six months, and can be extended for another six. During this period, the applicant must:

- select the persons organising the handling of the state secret and apply for security clearance for them as natural persons
- draft an internal guide for the protection of state secrets
- consider which employees will be exposed to state secrets, and apply for security clearance for them as natural persons (additional clearances may be applied for later, as people change jobs or if contract volumes increase and more people need clearance)
- applicants seeking a handling permit for "confidential", "secret" and "top secret" state information must build a security area on their premises. A "restricted" state secret does not need to be handled in a security area; it is sufficient to implement administrative requirements in the office, i.e. all people and vehicles entering the company's premises must be identifiable if necessary.
- If a state secret is to be handled on a computer, the Estonian Foreign Intelligence Service must be contacted for the accreditation of the computer and issue of a certificate of conformity.

A security area can be any room that can withstand a physical attack and where people outside the room cannot watch or listen to what is happening inside. KAPO must be consulted in setting up this room, helping to choose the best location and providing all the necessary construction requirements. KAPO will supervise construction to ensure that the process runs smoothly and to avoid the need for alterations.

### Obligations arising from state secret clearance

A company holding a handling permit and its employees with a personnel security clearance must keep the state secret confidential, prevent its disclosure and protect it from being accessed by an unauthorised person. The employer and KAPO must be notified of anyone who has tried or is trying in any way to gain illegal access to a state secret, or immediately report any violation of the requirements for the protection of state secrets. The clearance holder is required to take lawful measures upon illegal disclosure of a state secret or becoming known thereof to an unauthorised person with no right of access to state secrets to avoid the damages potentially resulting from such disclosure or communication. KAPO must be notified immediately of the address of the clearance holder's place of residence and other contact information when staying in another country for longer than three months; such persons are also required to notify KAPO immediately of any change of name.

In addition, a legal person governed by private law holding a state secret handling permit is required to notify KAPO immediately of the following circumstances: merger, division or restructuring; changes in the members of the management board or supervisory board; contact details of the members of the management board and supervisory board if they are abroad for more than three months; changes in proprietary liabilities if the proprietary liability incurred exceeds 30% of the equity or if the total volume of the proprietary liabilities exceeds 70% of the equity; bankruptcy or winding-up proceedings initiated against a legal person.

### Denying a handling permit

If a company has not built a proper security area during the security vetting stage, or if the person appointed to organise the protection of state secrets in the company has not received security clearance, a handling permit will not be issued.

A handling permit may be issued to the following persons:

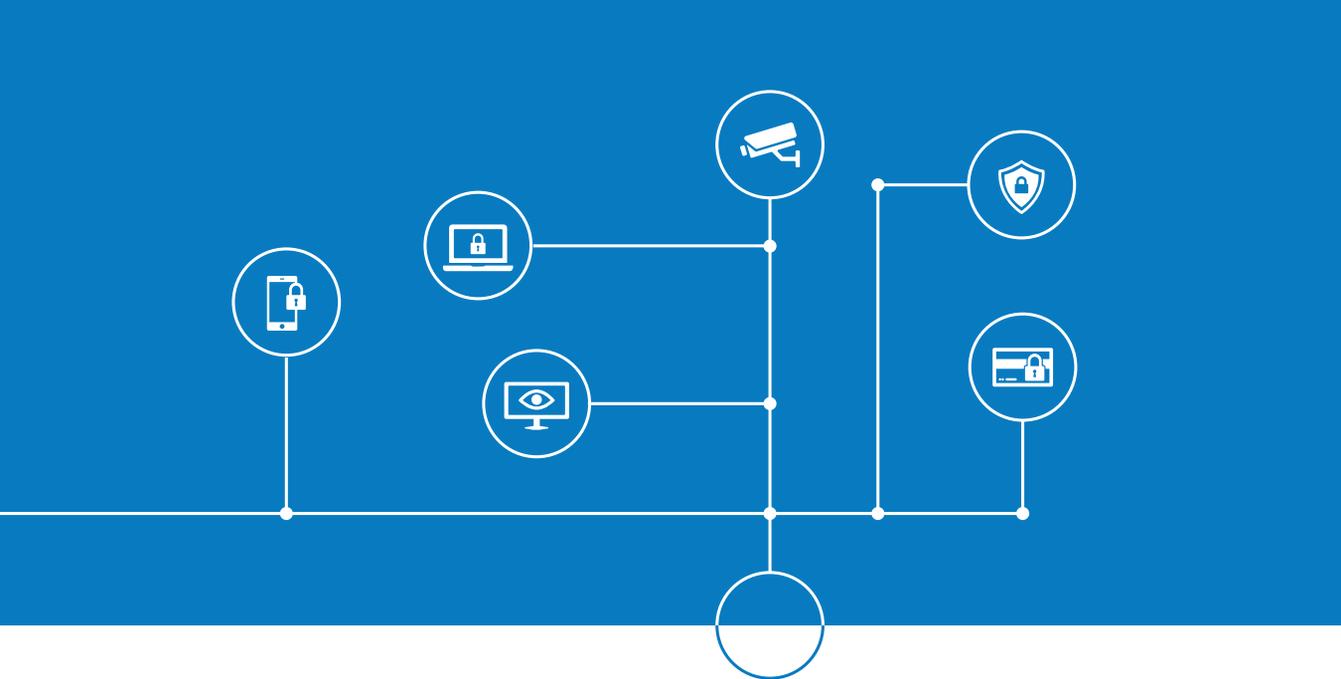
- a self-employed person (*füüsilisest isikust ettevõtja, FIE*)
- a legal person governed by public law in Estonia
- a legal person governed by private law, registered in Estonia
- a foreign legal person, for participating in a public procurement or in negotiations for an international procurement, or if the institution in possession of a state secret requires this person to have access to a state secret for performing the tasks imposed on the institution and this person has the necessary knowledge, skills or resources to assist in the performance of such tasks.



## PROVIDING CYBERSECURITY

KAPO is constantly and consistently working to identify and prevent cyberattacks that threaten the national security of Estonia. Cyberattacks and hacking as individual crimes are not KAPO's focus; our task is to detect and prevent advanced persistent threats (APTs) at the government level. While the Covid-19 pandemic has currently closed physical state borders, making human intelligence operations more difficult, foreign cyber intelligence units are still operating very actively in cyberspace, seeking access to information important for Estonian security through computer networks and their users.

We are a permanent target for the cyber intelligence of hostile countries. Membership of the UN Security Council made Estonia a target for a country that had previously not focused on us, and shows how the emergence of an interesting topic can activate the cyber intelligence services of such countries which we have not seen before or whose intelligence interests have previously not overlapped with Estonia. Restrictions intended to curb the spread of the virus and the need to work from home probably created opportunities for several hostile cyber intelligence units to search for security vulnerabilities via communication apps and email exchanges.



## Identify your own vulnerabilities before any attackers do

In cyber intelligence, it is common to scan targeted networks, services and devices of national importance, with the goal of finding security vulnerabilities and gaps in cyber defence. Vulnerabilities discovered in such a way are used to access networks and the information they contain. Even the smallest security hole helps an attacker gain a foothold and, depending on the attacker's skills and the vulnerabilities of the targeted network, the damage may be extensive. KAPO has seen this method of attack used by units associated with both the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China. Cyberattacks are a constant threat in all European countries. Often, inadequate work by system administrators also contributes to security breaches: incorrect configurations, weak or reused passwords, errors in the authentication process, and so on.

For example, in the autumn of 2020, Norway reported cyberattacks against its parliament, which the security service, PST, attributed to APT28, associated with Russia (<https://pst.no/alle-artikler/trusselvurderinger/nasjonal-trusselvurdering-2021/>).<sup>4</sup> Like Norway, we identified an unsuccessful attempt at the beginning of 2020 by an APT attributed to Russia to access the computer network of the Riigikogu. The attempted break-in targeted the Outlook web application. In addition to this attack, several attempts were made to access the networks and information of other Estonian government agencies.

The activities of hostile countries in the cyber domain are of a permanent nature, and we do not foresee an end to them. Therefore, to prevent attempted cyberattacks, it is essential to scan important computer networks constantly to detect potential security vulnerabilities before the attackers do. This requires each institution to be familiar with its systems, conducting regular system tests and scans, regularly checking and installing security updates, and ensuring data logging over a longer period of time.

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## Phishing emails

Human weaknesses remain one of the entry points for hostile cyber intelligence units. Targets of interest are identified among the employees of an institution, and these people are then approached through private email accounts. In this case, the preferred method of attack consists of phishing emails, and email users must remain careful and vigilant to be able to detect these. Take, for example, a case known from recent national attacks. The attacker had found a target of interest and knew or guessed the name of a person from whom the target could expect an email. The target then received an email from an address very similar to that of the actual contact. The attacker used this fictitious account to send an email about a current topic to the target, with malware attached.

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**korrapidaja@kap0.ee / kapo@kapo.info**

**At first glance, an email address may appear trustworthy, but a typo or the domain name is indicative of fraud.**

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The cyber hygiene and security awareness of the user of the email account is of utmost importance here, as it helps to identify malicious emails. Foreign cyber intelligence units generally carry out comprehensive preliminary research about their targets, and know how to choose relevant topics for their phishing emails, such as the coronavirus. Phishing emails sent by national attackers are drafted carefully and made to appear as similar as possible to legitimate messages. That is why it is important to trust your intuition, in addition to other security measures: whenever you receive an email and it seems strange or somehow wrong, you need to take the time and check various elements of the email, such as the sender's details, any attachments and links. If the phishing email achieves its purpose, and you figure out the true nature of the email only after opening an attachment, clicking on a link or entering your username/password, you will also need to notify your institution's information security team to prevent further damage.

## Cyber threats from third countries

In Estonia, it is customary to look only at Russia when talking about threats, but our security information is also of interest to other countries. Several countries now have their own cyber threat intelligence capabilities and specific APTs. Estonia might not be a constant intelligence target for third countries, but our growing international relations and position may lead to such attacks. Barely a month after Estonia became a member of the UNSC at the beginning of 2020, phishing emails were used for cyberattacks against our representatives working at the UN. Behind this attack was the cyber intelligence unit of North Korea, which is known to target the Security Council. In 2020, attacks against Estonian universities continued to be made by the cyber intelligence group Silent Librarian, which targets universities and has links with Iran.

Last year, the Estonian state networks mentioned above were scanned by China. A database of a data processing company, Zenhua Data, which was leaked in mid-2020, containing a considerable number of names of people involved in Estonian society, politics, government and other important fields, and their next of kin, also gives an indication of Beijing's interest in and awareness of Estonia. Given that only an estimated 10% of the actual database had leaked (and almost 440 Estonian residents and their relatives were mentioned in that batch), we can only guess how many names were involved in total.

## Working from home

Never have so many people (including civil servants) carried out their duties from their home office as in 2020, due to the coronavirus. Physical meetings and appointments were replaced by virtual ones, which in turn led to greater use of remote communication and messaging applications. However, due to their shortcomings or accessibility, these channels can be targeted by foreign cyber intelligence units.

We wish to take this opportunity to remind everyone – employees working with sensitive and confidential information as well as the IT security managers of these institutions – that working remotely from a home office means adhering to the requirements of data processing, applying proper cyber hygiene and performing regular security checks on electronic devices used for remote work. State secrets must be handled in an appropriate electronic system, and any state secrets classified confidential must only be handled in a secure area.



# PREVENTION OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

Islamist or jihadist terrorism is a violent religious phenomenon, based on an ideology claiming that, as only God creates laws and rules, the Western system of governance is illegal. The radicals believe that the use of violence is justified if the objective is to create an Islamist state. In Europe, the situation regarding Islamist terrorist attacks in 2020 was similar to that of the last decade as a whole. The only trend that can be outlined is that, thanks to the work of security and law-enforcement agencies, the number of serious terrorist attacks with a high number of casualties has been significantly reduced. As of 2020, there are no terrorist groups operating in Estonia and there is no support point for any branch of one. At the same time, as a member of the EU, Estonia is a credible target in terms of Islamist terrorism.

Last year, no intentional explosions were organised in Estonia; however, a major concern relates to hobby archaeologists and history and military enthusiasts whose discoveries are not reported to the security police. Such concealment leads to trial and imprisonment. People who have illegally collected weapons and ammunition from former battlefields have also been detected in the course of investigations into other offences.

## **The contradiction between extreme Islam and European values**

International Islamist terrorism has been a major, if not the main, terrorist threat in Europe for the past 20 years. It is generally characterised by attacks on civilians, which are being justified by the ideology of radical Islamism. Security authorities focus increasingly on the fight against terrorism, and it is becoming ever more difficult to organise complex terrorist attacks. As an alternative to major attacks, Islamist terrorist organisations use radicalised individuals who are either recruited or respond to incitement. Stand-alone attacks with blades or firearms can injure or kill many people, but they are simple and cheap in nature.

Most followers of conservative Islam do not support the violence that accompanies terrorism, but they do believe in the supremacy of Islamic religious rules and practices. Conservative Islam disagrees with European values. This binding element brings together networks supporting terrorist organisations and conservative Islamic extremism. These networks are fertile ground for the messages spread by radical Islamic opinion leaders and terrorist organisations.

Direct links between religious networks and terrorist organisations may not always be present,



but support for the activities and goals of terrorist organisations may be given indirectly, sometimes unknowingly. The combination of the presence of strongly conservative and profoundly religious networks, incitement by Islamist opinion leaders, and propaganda by terrorist organisations creates a favourable environment for the radicalisation of individuals and communities. Network members serve as a customer base to condone terrorist activities, recruit support staff for terrorist organisations, and find potential perpetrators for attacks.

Islamist terrorist organisations operate in the Middle East, North Africa, the Sahel, West Africa, the Horn of Africa, Central Asia and South-East Asia. Major terrorist organisations such as Daesh, Al-Qaeda and their allies have lost a large part of the areas previously under their control as a result of the fight against terrorism. At the same time, they have not given up on their international goals or attacks on Western countries. The financial capacity of these groups and their allies, and their freedom to prepare attacks in Europe, have been significantly reduced. This is an additional factor making them increasingly dependent on simpler and smaller-scale attacks. Finding supporters through propaganda and ideological influence in European countries gives terrorist organisations the opportunity to carry out attacks in those countries, while saving their own fighters and money. At the same time, they have not

abandoned sending fighters to Europe to carry out attacks, using both illegal and legal migration.

**Targets of Islamist terrorism:**

1. the civilian population, law-enforcement agencies, the military;
2. symbolic objects and people attending them – religious institutions, public festivals and other crowded events;
3. crowded places, including public transport and transport hubs.

**Methods of attack:**

1. an attack by one person or a small group;
2. use of blades, handguns or explosives;
3. vehicles used to attack people or as car bombs.

The planning, financing and execution of attacks can be carried out by either a self-radicalised individual or the terrorist organisation itself. Existing terrorist and pro-terrorist networks in Europe are used for this.

The threat of Islamist terrorism in Europe will not diminish in the coming years.

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## Radicalisation

Restrictions related to the Covid-19 pandemic channelled an even larger share of extremist communication onto the Internet. Islamist propaganda is diverse and goes beyond justifying and glorifying violence. Skilfully disguised incitement to violence is generally transmitted in a style that is not punishable within the framework of Section 237<sup>2</sup> of the Penal Code (Preparation of and incitement to acts of terrorism). However, international efforts to reduce propaganda for extremism and Islamist terrorism have markedly limited its spread. Nevertheless, robot editors of websites are still unable to grasp all the nuances of human language and completely exclude transmission of hidden messages.

Islamist terrorist propaganda is disseminated on well-known platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok and Telegram, as well as in lesser-known environments. Extremists are especially attracted to newer channels of communication that do not require user identification and pay little attention to content editing. When the rules are changed and the anonymity of users decreases, their interest in the channel also wanes. This points to the need to agree specific requirements applying to communication platforms in order to protect the public and prevent serious crime. To defend young people, it is important to be aware that terrorist content may also be distributed through, for example, forums and chat rooms of online gaming environments.

In October 2020, the Islamic killing of a school-teacher in France was preceded by a wave of threats and incitement to violence on social media, which

had an impact on the outcome. To combat radicalisation, such incitement and hate speech must be removed from the web. Removal of dangerous content is effective if web hosting providers and moderators are involved.

In addition to the widely used social media platforms, anonymous and encrypted platforms, encrypted voice solutions, anonymous calling cards and VoIP solutions are also used to disseminate terrorist and extremist content. This makes it difficult for security authorities to access the content and the identity of users for intelligence purposes, as well as during criminal proceedings. We consider it necessary to create legal solutions for identifying terrorist messages and their disseminators on encrypted communication platforms.

It is also essential to prevent the dissemination of messages and symbols that demonstrate, justify and glorify violence. In many cases, their effects are similar to direct incitement to violence. Terrorist organisations are illegal associations and supporting their ideology and activities is a criminal offence under the Penal Code. Nevertheless, the dissemination of terrorist posts and insignia is not regulated. We consider it necessary to introduce such regulation in the interests of the effectiveness of counterterrorist measures and for the protection of the public.

Restricting incitement to violence through encrypted channels is a challenge for all democracies. The Security Police Board wants Estonian society to be able to discuss this problem and develop solutions before our country is hit by a terrorist attack that could have been prevented.

## Situation in Estonia

The terrorist threat level in Estonia is low but, as part of the European Union's security mechanism, we cannot rule out manifestations of terrorism. At the same time, Estonia has not escaped the impact of international terrorism. People of Estonian origin still remain in the Syrian conflict zone. Thousands of individuals currently in Europe and in third countries have been engaged in active combat in Syria and Iraq or have supported terrorists' objectives through their actions. When returning to their homeland, some have served a sentence while others escaped criminal charges. While it is possible that they may not pose an immediate threat to national security and public order in the future, they may remain active supporters and disseminators of terrorist or extremist ideology or become subject to manipulation.

Such individuals also move through and to Estonia. Flight restrictions due to the spread of the coronavirus have forced the individuals we are interested in to travel by land and by ferry on the Gulf of Finland. Last year, we observed more than 40 people probably related to Islamism and terrorist organisations travelling through Estonia. We identified four people involved in terrorism in Estonia. Two of these – citizens of Georgia and the Russian Federation – entered Estonia illegally, and two – citizens of Uzbekistan and an EU member state – used legal migration channels. In addition to being deported from Estonia, they were banned from re-entry.

The residence permit of a Ukrainian citizen who had lived in Estonia since 2009 was revoked because his radicalisation, which had begun in mid-2017, had reached a stage where the person became a threat to Estonian security and public order.

On one occasion in 2020, during the Azerbaijan–Armenia conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh, pigs' heads were placed in front of the Estonian Islamic Centre and the embassies of Azerbaijan and Turkey in Tallinn. The perpetrator's motive was not related to the conflict. Instead, the young man of Estonian nationality wanted to draw attention to the violence of Islamism in a provocative way.

## Foreign fighters and travellers to conflict zones

Around twenty people with ties to Estonia have been or remain in the Syrian-Iraqi conflict zone. Their return to Estonia in the near future is unlikely. There are still some isolated individuals in our country who are interested in going to the conflict zone. We aim to prevent any travel to conflict areas. If this cannot be prevented, we will be forced to initiate criminal proceedings; from 14 January 2019, travelling for terrorist purposes has been a criminal offence under the Penal Code, punishable by up to five years' imprisonment. Not only are enthusiastic and radicalised Islamists ready to fight, but more than a thousand women have left Europe (including Estonia) to live with their husbands or marry in the Syrian-Iraqi conflict zone.

In order to prevent any Estonian from undertaking such a trip, it is important that friends, acquaintances and family cooperate with the state authorities to prevent travel and to involve the person in a prevention programme.

## Terrorist financing

Terrorists and terrorist organisations must find ways to fund their activities. Money is needed to buy weapons, ammunition and explosives, as well as to travel and cover everyday expenses. A share of the expenditure goes towards propaganda. Daesh, or ISIS, the most infamous terrorist group in recent history, has lost its local revenue base along with its former territory in Syria and Iraq, and has been forced to seek more and more financial support from outside, including Europe. It must not be forgotten that, in addition to Daesh, many other terrorist organisations in the world's conflict zones are raising money.

IT development in the financial sector has significantly changed the methods of terrorist financing in recent years: the fees related to various payment intermediaries and anonymous virtual currencies are much cheaper than traditional bank payments. Such services also make it easier to hide the flow of money and interfere with tracing efforts. There has been a significant change in the amounts of individual transactions: money is often sent in 10 euro increments and even in the form of gift cards. On social media, followers are invited to raise money and those interested are taught how to acquire cryptocurrency and how to exchange it for physical currency.

Communication platforms such as WhatsApp, Telegram and IMO are used to conduct funding campaigns and circulate guidelines. Campaigns often emphasise empathy: for example, they ask for support for the women and children of Islamic militants (mujahideen) in Syrian refugee camps in Al-Hawl, Al-Roj or Idlib. In fact, a portion of these donations is spent on supporting Islamic militants and buying weapons or ammunition. The campaigns are mostly targeted at foreign fighters who have returned to Europe, their family members, and the more radical faction of local Muslim communities.

Last year, we identified a former Islamist foreign fighter who had settled in Estonia from an EU member state, found a job here and opened a bank account. This person was repatriated. In addition, we have identified Islamist extremists making transactions using platforms of several Estonian virtual currency companies. Nevertheless, we have not yet established any details of terrorist financing in relation to these individuals.

As of 31 December 2020, there are more than 370 licensed virtual currency companies in Estonia. Fewer than ten of these have reported unusual payments or possible attempted terrorist financing to the authorities. This should not lead us to any conclusion about the small number of suspicious



Screenshot from Telegram group "Bitcoin Transfer" – video describes how to send cryptocurrency from Turkey and how to receive it in Syria.



ShitCoins.Club ATM in Tallinn enables anonymous transactions worth up to 10,000 euros.

transactions, but rather about a lack of awareness among the licensed virtual currency companies about the possibility of terrorist financing or their negligence in identifying such transactions. Guidelines concerning the prevention of terrorist financing can be found on the website of the Financial Intelligence Unit. In order to raise risk awareness, the Security Police Board, in cooperation with the Financial Intelligence Unit, is helping to train these companies.

There are three companies in Estonia operating 10 ATMs for buying and selling cryptocurrencies. The most problematic of these is a company operating under the name ShitCoins.Club, in whose activities we have identified clear security risks. The company's ATMs allow customers to anonymously send up to 10,000 euros-worth of virtual currency per virtual wallet and repeat the transaction for each new wallet number.

In addition, several virtual currency companies in Estonia operate in a "grey zone": the company is registered in Estonia and offers its services here, but with a licence from a third country and in accordance with the laws of that country. Such entrepreneurship not only involves a security threat but will also, in the event of problems, harm the reputation of Estonia and not of the third country that issued the licence. Better regulation is also needed concerning companies that engage in selling ready-made companies with a virtual currency licence. In order to prevent terrorist financing, ready-made cryptocurrency companies should not be sold to individuals without controlled background, knowledge or skills.

E-residency (of which we wrote about last year) may offer an additional layer of anonymity to hide the actual ambitions of a cryptocurrency transaction. When combining opportunities provided by cryptocurrencies and e-residency, the state may not have effective measures to avoid criminals taking advantage of the Estonian business environment. Risks are even higher when dealing with people living in countries that do not have working relationships with Estonia's judicial system and national security. Often these are the states that can be connected to a higher risk of (financing) terrorism.

## Increase in the number of people from high-risk countries in Estonia

The spread of terrorism, internal conflicts, poverty and climate-change-induced changes in living conditions, as well as young people's desire to fulfil their potential, are all important drivers of migration. Estonia has several pull factors – possibilities that seem commonplace to us but would significantly improve the situation of people from many countries. Life in the countries of origin of migration has not improved compared to last year. The pressure of migration to Estonia will not decrease. Estonia is of interest to immigrants both as a destination and as a stopover on their route to other European countries.

The migration rules of EU member states, including Estonia, are relatively liberal. Nevertheless, as part of a common area of visa-free movement, we carry shared responsibility for the security and safety of the whole of Europe. This means that Estonia must demonstrate due diligence in checking migrants, people crossing borders, and compliance with visa-free travel rules. In this way, we must prevent the arrival and movement of individuals posing a terrorist or security threat through Estonia or from Estonia to other EU countries. The number of citizens of countries associated with Islamist terrorism, i.e. high-risk countries, in Estonia is growing. The threats associated with a significant growth of these communities are described in more detail in our 2019–2020 yearbook.

In communities associated with high-risk countries, we see the emergence of systemic problems, fostering and creating addictive and criminal relationships within the community.

1. Citizens of high-risk countries engaged in entrepreneurship in Estonia fictitiously employ their compatriots in order to facilitate their immigration. In such cases, the person receives a residence permit in Estonia or a long-term visa, during the validity of which he or she can look for an actual job in Estonia or move on to another EU country.
2. Educational migration is used inappropriately: people come to work in Estonia instead of studying.
3. Compatriots who have not been issued a licence are allowed to work in a workplace that requires an activity licence (especially on sharing service platforms and in the provision of courier services).

These activities involve tax evasion and make the new immigrant dependent on the person who allows the illegal activity. To avoid Islamist terrorism, it is important to integrate new members of the community into the Estonian cultural and legal space. From a security point of view, it is important that communities do not develop into parallel societies that seek to establish their own community rules under the guise of religion, lifestyle or culture, which would be considered as taking precedence over the laws and social norms of the country of residence. Encapsulation and isolation of communities is a breeding ground for radicalisation and, through this, recruitment for terrorism.

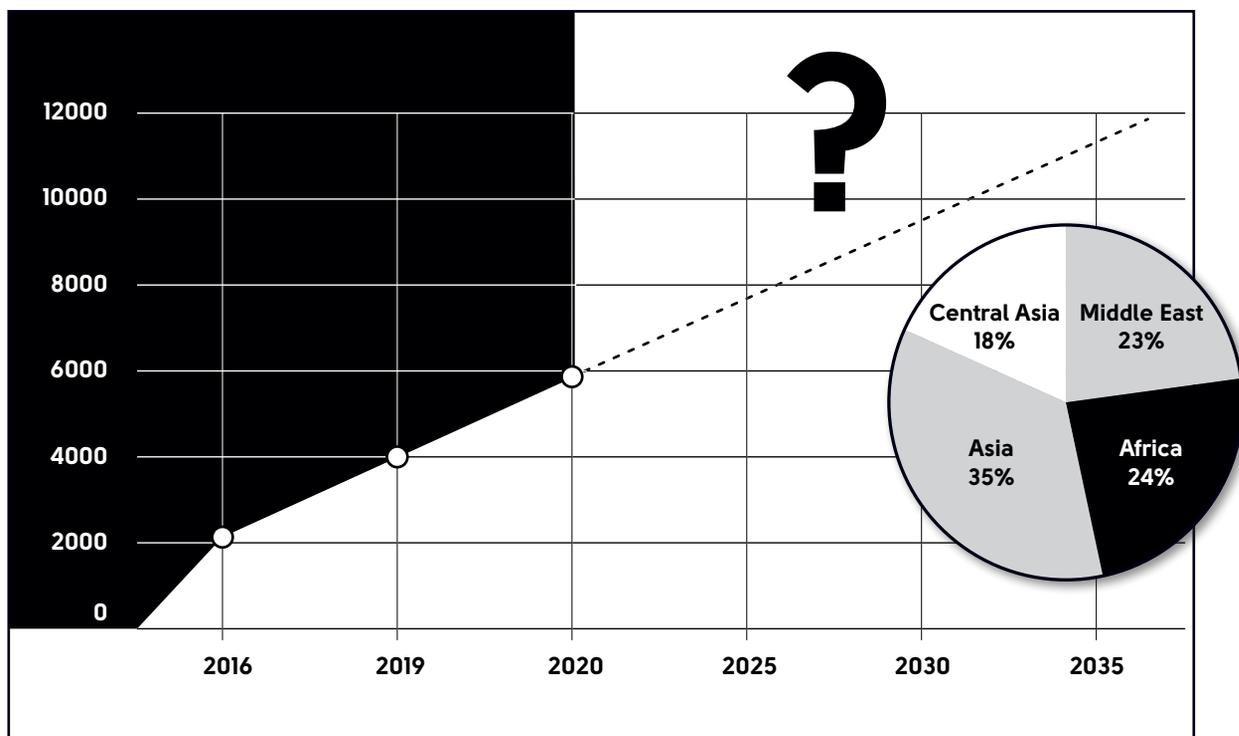
The political steps France took last year to curb radicalisation and the spread of Islamism annoyed many Muslims, as they forced Muslims living in France to violate Islamic customs. The media may give the impression that radical changes are taking place and that the fundamental right to religious freedom is not being respected. In fact, the protesters do not represent all Muslims. They are fighting against European norms, which foresee that religion and the state are independent of each other and that religious beliefs are not placed above human rights.

It is in the interests of the state to offer immigrants opportunities to compete fairly in the labour market, to adapt to local practices and to learn about the law. The integration of these people is important from the point of view of ensuring both public order and security.

The Estonian Islamic community is for the most part peaceful and does not promote radical Islam. At the same time, there are a number of people in our society who joined the "Boycott France!" campaign and drew attention on social networks to the primacy of Islamic rules and practices over secular legislation. This points to shortcomings in integration and non-acceptance of fundamental democratic values.

### Illegal handling of firearms

A few days after the publication of our previous yearbook, the media described an arsenal found in the Raasiku home of an imprisoned criminal gang leader. An automatic weapon, explosives, grenades and handguns – all illegal – were hidden inside the roof of a dog kennel. Had it not been for the intention to sell and move the kennel, the illegal



High-risk countries' citizens in Estonia and their regional origin.

Urmas Piht collected duds, mines, grenades and different ammunition in his apartment. He was sentenced 7 years and 6 months in jail.



Tidying up in a village in eastern Estonia revealed 10 kg of explosives. This was immediately handed over to the Rescue Board.



Andrei Popov and Vladimir Pavlov hid explosives, ammunition and detonators underground.



Stolen automatic rifle and part of stolen ammunition that was confiscated in an operation by the Internal Security Service, Prosecutor's Office and Police and Border Guard Board.



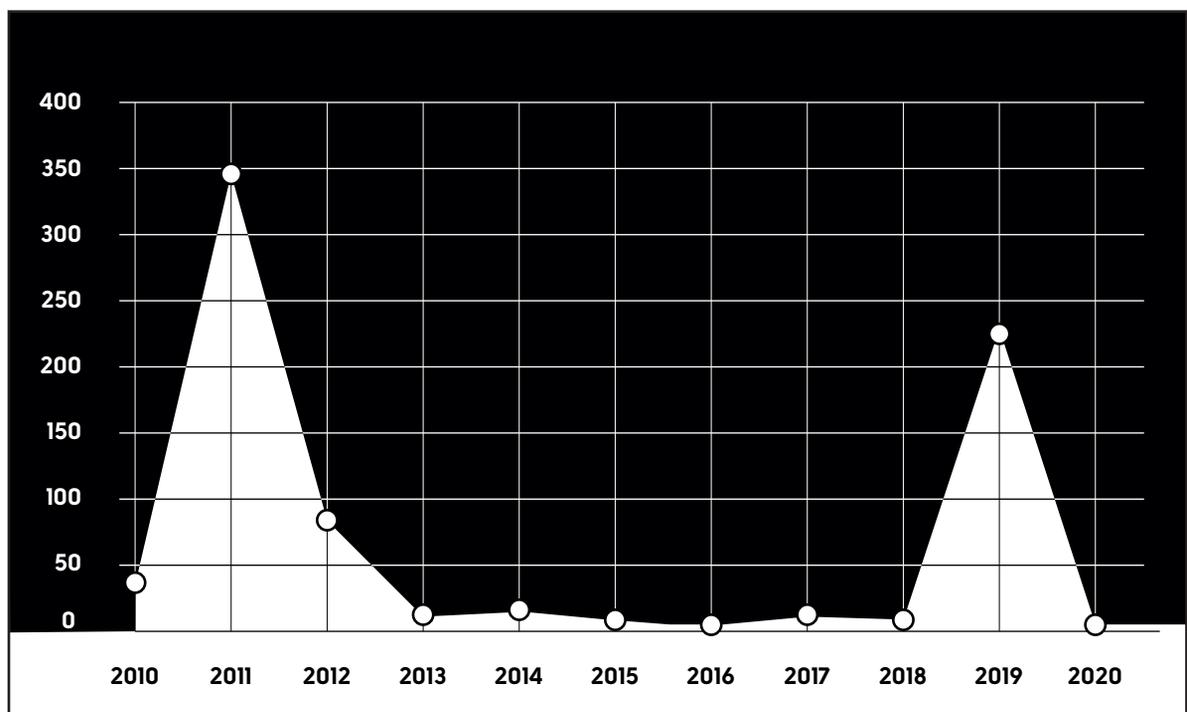
weapons would have gone undetected and the criminal organisation could have sold them on the black market. Unbeknownst to them, the individuals who found the weapons may have helped in the fight against international terrorism. That is because the illicit trade in arms is the only way for radicalised individuals or terrorist organisations to acquire firearms. Illegal weapons must be surrendered voluntarily to the police or security police – this is the only way to escape sanctions.

Last year, thefts that took place in southern Estonia brought the Southern Department of the Security Police Board, the Southern Prefecture of the Police and Border Guard Board and the Southern District Prosecutor's Office together behind one table. We concluded the pre-trial proceedings in a criminal case concerning the theft and illicit possession, transfer and sale of firearms prohibited for civilian use. In the course of the proceedings, we also identified three individuals (J., A. and V.), who are accused of the theft of an automatic weapon, rifles, handguns, firearm silencers and firearm ammunition in Põlva County in 2018 and in Tartu County in 2020. In addition, during the investigation, the accused were discovered to have ties to the illegal

handling of firearms stolen from Viljandi County in 2013 and from Finland in 2011.

On 11 September 2020, Tartu County Court convicted Aleksandr Koshelev of attempted illegal handling of a firearm prohibited in civil circulation and one count of illegal handling of a firearm. Koshelev illegally bought a PPSH-41 submachine gun. He had also purchased essential components of a firearm hand-converted from an MP-654K pneumatic pistol. In both cases, he also tried to pass the weapon on. This was the final element in the large-scale case of illegal handling of firearms and explosive devices, the main convictions related to which we discussed in our 2018 yearbook.

On the first weekend of September last year, when Tartu and a large part of southern Estonia was caught up in the WRC rally, an attack against air safety took place in Tartu. 66-year-old Aleksandr Kostjuk considered it necessary to aim a laser beam from his kitchen window at a Robinson R44 helicopter that was flying over at an altitude of about 300 m and had started to land. With the beam, he posed a risk of blinding the helicopter pilot, which in turn could have led to him losing control of the



1.7 kg of explosives and two detonators were confiscated in 2020.

aircraft. Such laser beams can reach up to 10km and may damage the human eye even in daylight. With this thoughtless act, Kostjuk endangered the lives of those in the helicopter. During the criminal proceedings conducted to clarify the circumstances of the case, Kostjuk could not reasonably explain his motives, but he will be reminded of his thoughtlessness by his conviction for a crime in the first degree. Under Section 112 of the Penal Code, such an act may be punishable by up to 10 years' imprisonment. If the act causes death, the punishment can be up to 20 years in prison or life imprisonment.

### **Notable explosives-related cases**

During both World War I and World War II, Estonia became an active combat area. As a result, dangerous substances, explosives and their components will probably be found in the ground, in the sea and in manmade facilities for centuries to come. It is not possible to remove all this material from Estonia completely. In order to prevent danger, we need to raise awareness among Estonians of the need to notify the state of any explosive material found. Despite publicity by the Rescue Board and the Security Police Board, as well as successful amnesty campaigns, some people still either throw explosives, ammunition or weapon parts into the ordinary rubbish or knowingly collect them for various purposes.

In 2020, a criminal case was concluded against Urmas Piht, who will spend seven and a half years in prison as a result of his conviction by Harju County Court on 5 June 2020.

In 2020, a criminal case of illegal handling of a large quantity of explosives was resolved in Tartu County. During the investigation, it emerged that a person (O.L.) living in Kallaste acquired a large quantity (more than 1.7 kg) of brisant high-explosive trotyl prior to December 2019 and deposited it with his acquaintance (K.M.). As neither O.L. nor K.M. had the necessary licence to handle explosives, both men were issued with an official notice of suspicion of handling large quantities of explosives illegally and received a "home visit" from officers of the security police, as is usual in this type of case. During the searches, illegal explosives were seized, along with illegal firearms and ammunition.

Last year, a verdict came into force against Jaanus Rannaoja from Lääne County, who was charged with a long list of crimes: illegal handling of large quantities of explosives, essential components of explosive devices and ammunition; handling large quantities of munitions; and illegal handling of firearms. The reason for prosecution was the man's decision not to inform the Rescue Board and the Security Police Board of having found prohibited substances and objects in the ground in the vicinity of his residence and on construction sites. Rannaoja brought the items home out of his interest in military matters and, using knowledge acquired during a Defence League course, blew up some large stones in the garden of his home. Such behaviour is obviously extremely dangerous both for the amateur pioneer himself and for other people.

On 26 June 2020, Viru County Court convicted Andrei Popov and Vladimir Pavlov of illegally handling large quantities of explosives, essential components of explosive devices and ammunition. A total of 2.99 kg of trotyl, 15 units of various electric detonators and blasting caps, and 398 units of ammunition for firearms of different calibres were seized from them.

On 18 August 2020, a decision of Harju County Court entered into force against Veigo Jaanson and Madis Kirsipuu, who were sentenced to prison sentences of six and five years respectively for handling illegal munitions.

On 29 October 2020, Viru County Court convicted Nikolay Shevelev of illegally handling essential components of an explosive device. A detonating fuse built from a fuse and a blasting cap, two electric detonators and a piece of fuse were confiscated from him. Although the list may not look as impressive as those related to some other amateurs, detonators have great potential for damage and are industrially fabricated for one purpose only – to make an explosive go off. Illegal use of detonators can cause serious injury and, in the worst case, death.

In contrast to these cases, a positive example was provided by people from Viru-Nigula (Lääne-Viru County), who immediately notified the Rescue Board of 10kg of explosive trotyl found during maintenance work. Specialists from the Explosive Ordnance Centre removed the dangerous substance.

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Proper surrender of explosives is not subject to any sanctions, regardless of the amount of material involved.

In addition to the risk of explosion, invisible hazards must be taken into account in the case of materials of wartime or unknown origin – the objects found may contain substances harmful to the discoverer, accidental passers-by and the environment. For example, before Christmas 2019, seven wartime metal barrels were found in the forest near Sõrve peninsula in Saaremaa, dug up by amateur metal detectorists and left unattended on the forest floor. Inhalation of the substance in the barrels caused nausea. Subsequent analysis of samples revealed that the barrels may have contained a mustard agent, which was used as a poison during World War I. The barrels were removed to the warehouse of the Environmental Inspectorate at the beginning of 2020.

## **Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction**

Weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and the equipment and technology necessary for their production are not yet produced in significant quantities in Estonia. Estonia is not a source of direct threat in this area. In the future, the situation may change due to the emergence of strategically important high-tech, materials, machinery and equipment industries in Estonia. Nevertheless, one of the tasks of the Security Police Board is to combat the proliferation of WMD. Any threat to Estonia would stem from our potential as a transit country for smuggling WMD and strategic goods to the Russian Federation and other pariah states.

Due to Estonia's history and geographical location, we have a lot of people with a good command of Russian and contacts in the Russian Federation, which is why we may be an attractive target for mediation purposes. Estonia might be a source of

logistical support in the movement of such goods or mediation of contacts with EU producers. While our job is to identify contacts, activity and perpetrators, investigating such cases is complex and resource-intensive. The Kremlin has no interest in combating smuggling and there is no substantive international cooperation with Russia. The issue, after all, has to do with procuring equipment and technology from the EU to increase the military capacity of the Putin regime.

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**In Estonia, the permits required for the import, export and transit of military and dual-use goods are issued by the Strategic Goods Commission of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This includes representatives of several agencies, including the Security Police Board. Goods that do not require a special permit are inspected by the Tax and Customs Board. Due to the specific nature of the equipment and technology, the identification of dual-use items requires expert knowledge.**

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Increasingly, pariah states are trying to improve their military capabilities with civilian technology, which is of high quality thanks to scientific advances and can, to a certain extent, help to develop weapons. Even if such technology is not classified as military or dual-use, countries may still define this equipment as strategic goods and restrict its export (due to technical characteristics, end-use or end-user, public security or human rights considerations). In 2020, the Estonian Strategic Goods Commission made many such decisions and the export of strategically valuable devices was blocked.

In order to prevent and combat the proliferation of WMD, the Security Police Board cooperates primarily with the members of the Strategic Goods Commission. For prevention, it is important to obtain information from international partners on which end-users the military goods are procured for.

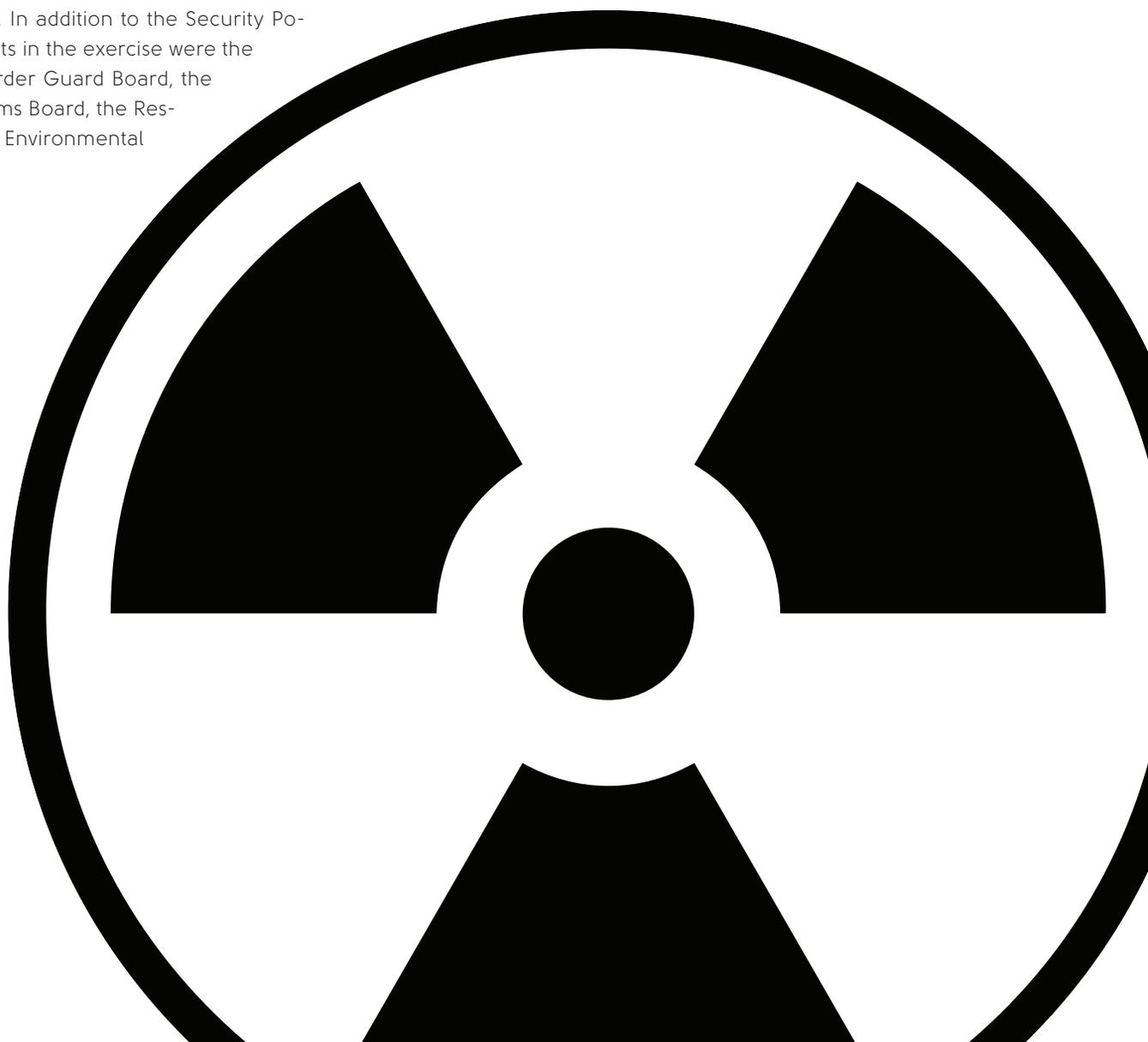
## Chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear hazards

Fortunately, the threat of terrorist organisations using chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) material to carry out an attack in Europe remains theoretical. At the same time, Islamic extremist propaganda has made calls to obtain such materials. A CBRN attack – such as adding a chemical to a bomb or contaminating a scene with radiation – would certainly lead to panic and chaos, serious economic consequences and, depending on the circumstances, a high number of casualties.

In February 2020, the Security Police Board organised a tabletop exercise, KBRT2020, within the framework of which such a terrorist attack scenario was simulated. In addition to the Security Police, participants in the exercise were the Police and Border Guard Board, the Tax and Customs Board, the Rescue Board, the Environmental

Board, the Veterinary and Food Board, the Health Board, the Defence Forces, the State Chancellery, East Tallinn Central Hospital, Tallinn Ambulance, the Port of Tallinn and the shipping company Tallink.

During the exercise, practice and discussions focused on solving the scenarios from the previous year's field exercise. The institutions involved received a good overview of Estonia's current ability to respond to and resolve a CBRN event. In the course of the exercise, current bottlenecks and needs of the institutions were mapped. An inter-agency CBRN steering group will be set up under the auspices of the Security Police to coordinate actions in this field and increase preparedness for attacks.





# ECONOMIC SECURITY AND THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

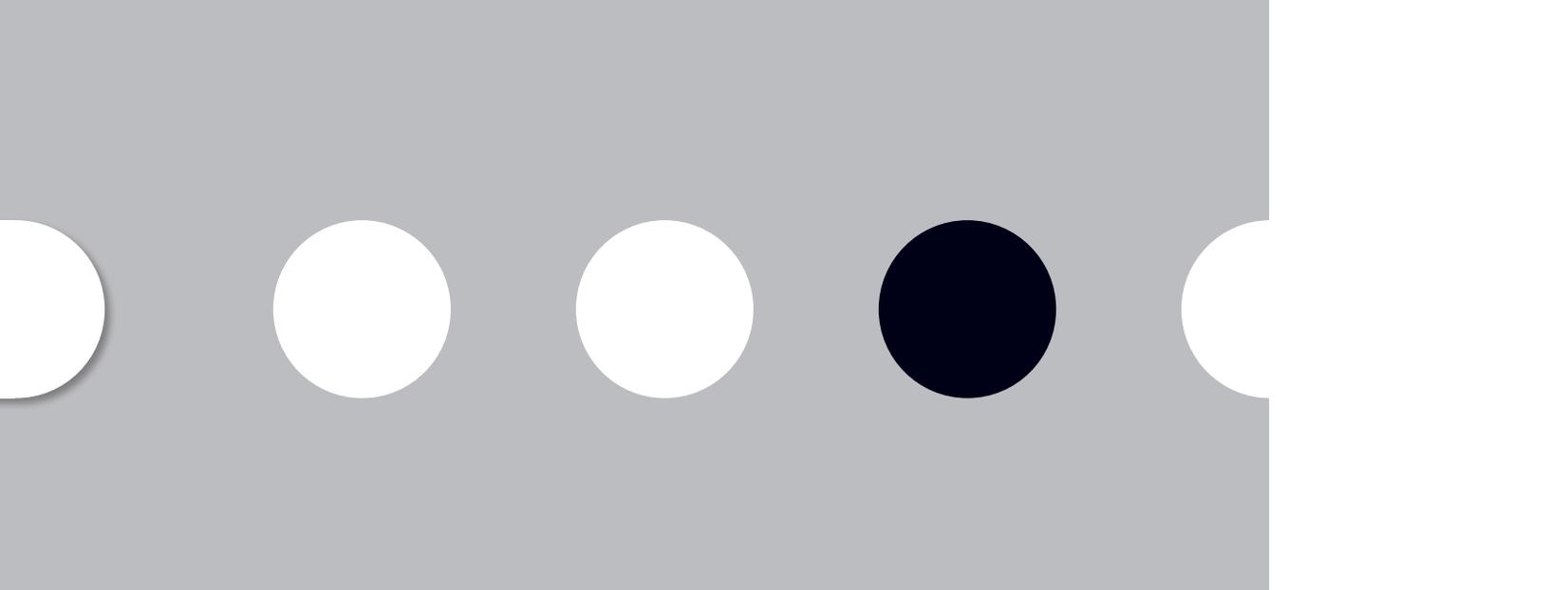
KAPO's goal in ensuring economic security is to prevent and combat intrusions into Estonian sovereignty through the economy. Economic security ensures Estonia's ability to implement a freely chosen economic policy, develop the country's economy, increase the well-being of the people and withstand economic pressure. Economic pressure can come from other countries or Estonia's own sovereign decisions. To this end, it is important to identify any politically motivated economic pressure from hostile countries. Such a strategy is mainly used by Russia and China.

Equally dangerous are factors affecting the economy from within the country that undermine people's trust in the state. The actions of a corrupt official can cause damage that can take years to put right. Officials need to be aware of procedural restrictions, and making decisions on behalf of the state in favour of their acquaintances is probably a violation of procedural restrictions. Estonia must move forward vigorously to make catching a big fish in muddy water unacceptable in our country. Both politicians and businesspeople interested in fair competition agree that lobbying needs regulation.

National security can also be threatened by economic dependence. This can happen, for example, if political or public-sector decisions in Estonia are made not in the interests of the country and people, but rather those of an undemocratic state. Hostile countries try to create leverage through investment to steer Estonian policy in a direction that suits them. Economic pressure can be manifested in the creation of an artificial deficit if the supply chains related to strategically important companies or sectors are controlled by a state whose interests conflict with those of Estonia.

Economic pressure may result in restrictions on Estonian companies at the national level (e.g. a ban on imports of a product) or measures taken on the initiative of companies against Estonian partners based on the general political environment of the country (e.g. no longer fulfilling contractual obligations). The use of such techniques provides an opportunity to try to manipulate related parties.

KAPO's primary focus in ensuring economic security and analysing foreign investments is critical infrastructure (transport, communications and other essential services) and the IT and energy sectors. Potential vulnerabilities in these areas are particularly detrimental to national security. KAPO has scrutinised intended investments from countries where several companies are guided by political or security interests rather than business considerations.



## **Strategic companies must be protected**

In 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on economic security risks. The economic downturn resulting from the crisis has further highlighted the need to screen foreign investments, both in Estonia and with our partners. If companies providing strategic and essential services run into difficulties, they must be protected from takeovers. They are targeted by companies controlled by hostile states. Risk areas have been reassessed and expanded, and the threshold screening for investments has been lowered. The general trend for both EU and other partners has been to tighten the screening of foreign investments. This is due to the increased need to protect the domestic economic environment from external influence.

KAPO prevents and investigates breaches of international sanctions. We cooperate with domestic implementers of international sanctions and sectoral supervision, as well as with partner services in other countries. When preventing sanctions violations, we can see that international sanctions have an impact both on the direct subject and on the economies of those countries that have caused the imposition of sanctions on themselves by flouting international norms.

It is more difficult for individuals and companies on the sanctions list to maintain their trade relations and make new investments in sanctioning countries. Companies whose beneficial owner is a sanctioned person therefore seek intermediaries for their economic activities from among those who do not attract suspicion.

Awareness of sanctions has increased and more attention is being paid to transactions with companies in sanctioned countries. Regular information on sanctions still needs to be provided, as some economic operators do not pay attention to the application of sanctions, for various reasons. As a result, they may find themselves in breach of a sanction.

In Estonia, the greatest risk concerns violations of sanctions imposed on Russian subjects. It is important for our businesses to be aware of this and identify the actual beneficiaries of their transactional counterparts and the latter's related parties, so as to avoid unintentional breaches of sanctions. With respect to our region, newly sanctioned individuals from Belarus were added in 2020, and the lists are constantly being updated.

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## Lobbying needs regulation

In international reports assessing countries in terms of governance and development, Estonia maintains relatively high ratings. The intolerance of corruption in Estonian society and the established practice of publicly treating all manifestations of corruption with sufficient thoroughness help to keep Estonia a low-corruption country. The public sector serves the people and must comply with the highest standards of public ethics in its decisions and actions. Any circumstances leading to corruption must be eliminated at an early stage.

For many years, KAPO has pointed out that clear rules are needed in relation to lobbying. Signs in the fight against corruption continue to show that, through regulated and publicised lobbying, Estonia can take an important step towards integrity and transparency. The public expects clarity on how lobbying influences decisions in areas such as the timber industry, the pharmaceutical and pharmacy markets, telecommunications and energy production. A lack of transparency in decision making and choices that are impossible for the public to understand constitute a breeding ground for corruption.

Only those operators and politicians who benefit from muddying the waters do not support the regulation of lobbying. Operating in a grey area makes it possible to hide the real motives behind decisions and allocations of state resources. Recognition is due to those senior government officials and lobbyists who inform the public about their lobbying and demand that the principles of lobbying be set out in writing. Such rules need to be established as soon as possible, at least in the public sector, in order to reduce the proportion of shady decisions and actions. The fact that Estonia does still not have a functioning lobbying law or good practice similar to other EU countries is incompatible with our image of openness.

In the economic crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic, it is crucial to keep the economy functioning to ensure efficient healthcare and to pro-

cure large quantities of medicines and healthcare equipment quickly. Public authorities are under pressure to resolve the crisis quickly and financial aid can be distributed on the basis of vague criteria. This has been pointed out by the National Audit Office. Failure to ensure impartiality and fair competition in public procurement creates an environment conducive to corruption. Emergency decisions might not always follow due process and documentation might be incomplete. This makes audits and inspections or investigations difficult. KAPO pays particular attention to the risk of corruption in the policy and economic sphere involved in combating the coronavirus crisis in order to prevent and detect corruption crimes.

## An official must be able to withdraw from decision-making at the right time

The main crimes classified as corruption are bribery, embezzlement, violation of procedural restrictions and trading in influence. The actions and decisions of an official must be fair, transparent and impartial. Estonia is a small country and officials cannot rule out that, at some point, they may have to make decisions on behalf of a local government, the state, a legal person in public law or another institution performing public functions<sup>5</sup> that affect people they know personally. In such a situation, this relationship must not be hidden, and the correct thing to do is withdraw from the decision-making process. In the simplest case, a breach of this rule constitutes a breach of procedural restrictions.<sup>6</sup> Depending on the financial scale of the decision, it can be a misdemeanour (value under 40,000 euros) or a criminal offence (40,000 euros or more). In more serious cases, if the matter affects the financial situation of both parties, the offence of bribery can occur. In this case, both parties are perpetrating a crime, as bribery is a criminal offence.

In a violation of a procedural restriction, the official does not receive corrupt income from the decision or action, but the decision or action is made in con-

ditions of a conflict of interest, and the bystander understands this as an abuse of power. In these cases, the legitimate way out is not to deny the official's non-work relationships, but to withdraw oneself from making the decision and taking action. An understanding of what constitutes a violation of procedural restrictions could be formulated as follows: "Don't make decisions concerning people and their interests with whom you have financial dealings at the time of deciding."

## Cases of corruption

On 3 November 2020, the Tartu County Court convicted the former deputy mayor of Tartu, Valvo Semilarski, of violating procedural restrictions on a particularly large scale. In doing so, the court of first instance upheld the allegation that the deputy mayor had participated in the decision as a member of the city government when the addressees were companies with which the deputy mayor was involved in debt obligations amounting to almost half a million euros at the time of the decision. Whether the settlement remains at the county court level will be determined in the further proceedings of the case in the next court instances. The judgment of the court of first instance also provided an answer to a question regarding the lawfulness of the surveillance, which Semilarski's counsel constantly questioned in public communication in parallel with the court proceedings. This did not save the counsel's client.

## Inside information on a public procurement for a BMW

On 15 January 2020, KAPO detained Taavo Randna, a member of the management board of Elektrilevi OÜ, as a suspect in bribery. Randna, who had long worked in leading positions at Elektrilevi OÜ, was responsible for managing communications services, including the company's high-speed internet network project. In 2019, Elektrilevi organised a framework procurement to find someone to build

the network, and one of the successful bidders was Winester OÜ, a company engaged in the construction of electricity and communication networks. What Elektrilevi's tender evaluation team did not know was that their boss, Randna, had already delivered the procurement documents to Tarvi Velström, the owner and manager of Winester OÜ, before the tender was announced. The Elektrilevi officer had also advised his acquaintance to submit false information about Winester OÜ's previous work, assuring him that the procurement committee would not check the submitted information very thoroughly.

Through Randna, Winester OÜ also found out the highest price at which Elektrilevi OÜ was ready to sign the procurement deal. Randna also shared Elektrilevi's other confidential information: the content and prices of the bids of other companies participating in the tender did not remain a secret to Velström. Thanks to the inside information received from Randna, Winester OÜ gained an advantage over other bidders. In return for the information, Velström paid the lease payments and maintenance costs of Randna's BMW electric car to the tune of over 26,000 euros. Taavo Randna, Tarvi Velström and Winester OÜ agreed to a compromise procedure.

The case is another example of how a senior employee of a state-owned company performing public functions chose the path of corruption. As we have repeatedly emphasised, the participation of corrupt individuals in the management of state-owned strategic companies is, on the one hand, detrimental to the company's business and the fulfilment of strategic goals, and, on the other, a threat to the country's economic security. At the same time, it is pleasing to note that the threat has been increasingly understood and the fraud risk assessment and internal audit units of state-owned companies have been strengthened. The work of Eesti Energia and its subsidiaries in this area is commendable.

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## An IT specialist sold Air Force assets online

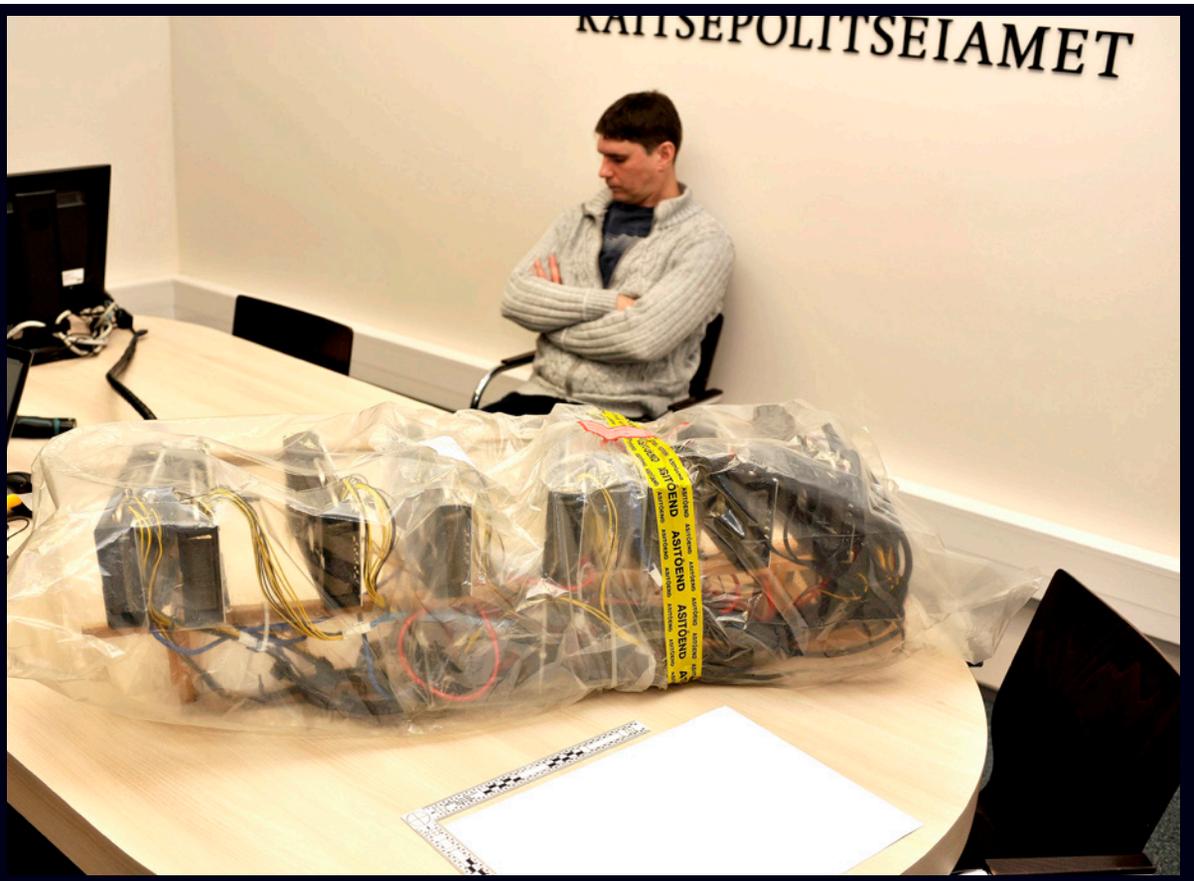
On 4 November 2020, Armin Annus, an IT specialist in the Air Surveillance Wing, was convicted by Harju County Court of large-scale embezzlement and illegal use of Defence Forces property. According to the judgment, Annus misappropriated information and communications technology (ICT) equipment from the Defence Forces worth a total of at least 48,935 euros during the period 2015 to 2019, and illegally used ICT equipment belonging to the Defence Forces, worth at least 30,404 euros, to mine cryptocurrency.

As an IT specialist, Annus had the authority to order various ICT equipment for the institution in order to perform his official duties, some of which he

sold online for his own benefit. To conceal his actions, he used the current account of his wife and even the minor child of a colleague, to whom he had the sales proceeds of the Defence Forces property transferred.

In addition, he assembled a large number of computers from ICT equipment belonging to the Defence Forces, which he set up both at home and at work to mine cryptocurrency. At the Ämari Air Base alone, he had installed a total of 17 such computers in different locations, including the base's server room.

The court sentenced Annus to two years six months' imprisonment with a probation period of two years eight months. Annus must compensate the state for the damage caused.



Armin Annus and the confiscated computer system he used to mine cryptocurrency.

## A customs official neglected his duties in return for drugs

On 25 June 2020, Konstantin Chernilovsky, a customs inspector and shift manager at the Eastern Customs Station of the Customs Department of the Tax and Customs Board, was convicted of bribery by Viru County Court in a compromise procedure. Among other things, the official was ready to allow smugglers to cross the border without a customs check in return for drugs. Chernilovsky was a respected colleague and in April 2020 he was elected Person of the Month of the Tax and Customs Board, but unfortunately the shiny facade concealed a corrupt civil servant.

An official who is ready to neglect their duty on the country's border in exchange for a narcot-

ic substance is a high security risk and a potential recruitment target for foreign special services. KAPO pays particular attention to corruption crimes at the state borders, especially when the border between Estonia and the Russian Federation is closed. This situation puts pressure on smugglers to look for new ways to continue their illegal trade, with the risk that opportunities will be found among corrupt officials.

Chernilovsky was sentenced to two years six months' imprisonment with a three-year probation, of which three months' shock imprisonment was to be served immediately. The official repeatedly failed to carry out customs inspections on three men who smuggled cigarettes across the border. In return, Chernilovsky received smuggled cigarettes, cash and drugs.



Customs inspector and shift manager Chernilovsky conducts an ostensible customs inspection on the briber and smuggler Maxim Koltsov, while the smuggler's father, Sergey Koltsov, who also has smuggled cigarettes in his bag, passes through the customs station. A moment later, Maxim Koltsov enters Estonia with smuggled goods.

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## **Judgment on a ministry's IT procurement entered into force**

The 2019–2020 Annual Review described a corruption case in a ministry's IT procurements, a judgment on which entered into force at the beginning of 2021. On 25 June 2020, the Supreme Court annulled the Tallinn Circuit Court judgment of 19 December 2019 and referred the criminal case to the same panel of the circuit court for a new judgment. The Tallinn Circuit Court judgment of 21 September entered into force by a ruling of the Supreme Court of 5 January 2021, acquitting Ivo Ahun. At the same time, convictions entered into force concerning Margus Dsiss for bribery, trading in influence and violation of public procurement requirements. The former information security manager of the Ministry of Rural Affairs, Aivar Ilves, and his company, Sheli OÜ, were convicted of giving a bribe. Margus Dsiss took a bribe of 1,000 euros from Ilves when procuring a data migration service for the Civil Aviation Administration. Dsiss also asked officials at the Maritime Administration to transfer assets in the amount of 4,000 euros for exercising influence. In addition, in order to grant an advantage to Sheli OÜ, Dsiss violated the rules in the procurement of theory examination software, of maintenance of the pilot examination software and procurement of personnel competency software, and the procurement of software for unmanned aircraft (drones) for the Civil Aviation Administration. The individuals received a pecuniary punishment.

## **Criminal case against Edgar Savisaar closed**

According to an Estonia proverb, it's people that catch illnesses, not stumps and stones. The criminal case related to Edgar Savisaar, former mayor of Tallinn and leader of the Centre Party, which was finally resolved last year, involved individuals already notorious for corruption and others who became discredited after the case was closed. On 22 September 2015, KAPO detained Savisaar, the then mayor of Tallinn, as a criminal suspect. He was later tried together with other individuals accused in a criminal case opened on 17 July 2014. As the court found that the former mayor was irreversibly ill, the criminal case against him was ended in 2018. However, court proceedings continued against the others accused in the case. On 30 November 2020, the court proceedings were completed when the

Supreme Court did not accept the complaints of the parties and the judgments of the courts of lower instances entered into force.

In summary, the compromise procedure found Vilju Reiljan guilty of brokering a bribe to Savisaar in connection with illegal construction activities at 108 Sihi Street, Tallinn<sup>7</sup> and he was fined 33,320 euros. Reiljan's employer, Vello Kunman, was convicted of promising a bribe to Savisaar<sup>8</sup> and was fined 15,000 euros.

Savisaar was involved in another case of bribery, when election advertisements for MTÜ Eesti Keskerakond (the Centre Party) were financed with a prohibited donation. To conceal the traces of bribery, no money was donated to the party or its members but a loan of 275,000 euros was given to Midfield OÜ, the party's advertising partner owned by Paavo Pettai. (Pettai helped to reveal the circumstances of the crimes and the Prosecutor's Office closed the criminal case against him.) Kalev Kallo was convicted of arranging a bribe, aiding in the acceptance of and giving a bribe, and aiding in the giving and acceptance of a prohibited donation. The object of the bribe was to provide a loan to MTÜ Eesti Keskerakond as a type of other benefit. Kallo was a member of the Riigikogu at the time of committing these crimes.

MTÜ Eesti Keskerakond was found guilty in a compromise procedure of accepting a prohibited donation on a large scale. The board members admitted the guilt of the party and agreed to the compromise. The court punished the party with a financial penalty of 275,000 euros, of which it ordered that 25,000 euros be paid immediately, the rest to remain unpaid if no intentional crimes were committed.

Hillar Teder committed large-scale bribery and gave a large prohibited donation, the latter being paid through the company of his son, Rauno Teder. However, the criminal proceedings against the individual were terminated on the basis of section 202 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, as the person gave meaningful and thorough testimony in the court proceedings and thereby contributed to the establishment of the circumstances. This is a mitigating factor. The court ordered him to pay 200,000 euros into state revenue. However, based on the suspicion presented in January this year, it is possible that, despite the negative experience gained in the Savisaar criminal case, Teder has not learned a lesson, but continued to influence (bribe) officials and politicians in a way that benefits his companies.

**At a meeting on 15 December 2014 Reiljan said:** "... the boss greets you on the coming holidays and sends you a good sweet drink, ... first of all I will say this one thing, that you may be interested in, that he greets you cordially, but that's nothing. Secondly, he tells you that if you are interested, he will support your party with a few dozen kilos."

**Savisaar:** "Sure, I'm interested."

**Reiljan:** "I am authorised to tell you that if you ... send a ... let's say a person who deals with these things for you."

**Savisaar:** "I will send someone to you."

**Reiljan:** "You can also send them to me, I'll go with them where needed, right."

**Reiljan adds:** "Yes, he says yes, that he would gladly ... let's say contribute, well, it's not the city elections, but well, let's say for the sake of truth and justice in the state" (laughs).

**Reiljan asks if Savisaar is ready for the elections, to which Savisaar replies:** "Yes, but well, if you help, then ..."

**Reiljan answers:** "We are also positive ... we will help," and whispers, "here in the drawer, a few cents into this drawer, a few cents. Look, that was the particular thing I told you. Send your bogeys, your bogeys ... to [incomprehensible] ... and [whispers] I put these on the table, then pull things together and then a few cents will be in the drawer."

**Savisaar answers:** "Sure."

**At the end of the conversation, Reiljan thanks Savisaar, to which Savisaar answers:** "Don't thank me, but I'll try to clear these things up."



# TRIALS OF WAR CRIMINALS IN RUSSIAN HISTORICAL PROPAGANDA

In today's civilised world, the principle that crimes against humanity or war crimes are not subject to any statute of limitations has become increasingly self-evident and it surprises no one to see people over the age of 90 who took part in World War II crimes being brought to justice. Estonia's connection with crimes against international law as they are currently defined dates back to World War II and the subsequent years of Soviet occupation. Understandably, Soviet investigative and judicial authorities did not engage in investigating crimes committed by representatives of their own regime. However, as early as 1943, the USSR launched public trials for crimes by the German side.

In this yearbook, we publish two top-secret KGB compendium articles from 1963 and 1969 that discuss trials of war criminals in occupied Estonia in the 1960s and their use in historical propaganda. Under the leadership of the KGB, crimes committed by the German side were used to justify post-war Soviet mass repressions and to minimise the impact of the Estonian expatriate community. In today's Russia, we are witnessing an ever-accelerating return to Soviet historiography and, in parallel, the readoption by security services of the methods tried and tested decades ago. The articles, translated from Russian, are preceded by an article by historian Meelis Maripuu that discusses the background to the war criminals' trials in the USSR and their connection to the use of propagandistic historical material in modern Russia.

## **„Без срока давности – No Statute of Limitations“**

**Meelis Maripuu**  
**Historian, Estonian Institute of Historical Memory**

At the end of World War II, the USSR and the Western Allies signed the Treaty of London (also known as the London Charter or the Nuremberg Charter) in August 1945. On this basis, an international military tribunal was set up to try the perpetrators of war crimes committed during World War II by the losing parties. Also on this basis, senior German statesmen and military personnel were tried during the first and subsequent Nuremberg Trials from 1945 to 1949. During the decades that followed, a glorified picture of the international Nuremberg Tribunal emerged. In parallel, the winning Allies organised numerous trials in their own zones of occupation, with their own military tribunals ruling. In the years after that, thousands of trials took place to convict citizens of National Socialist Germany and its allies (or its occupied territories) accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity in their countries of location based on the laws of those countries.

According to the data of Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB), from 1943 to 1953 more than 320,000 people were arrested in the Soviet Union, most of them accused of cooperating with the German occupying power in some way or another. As far as is known, more than 5,000 people were arrested



in Estonia as early as the autumn of 1944 and over 12,000 during the next year. By the end of 1949, more than 27,000 had been arrested on political grounds, mostly charged with cooperating with the German occupying power. Thereafter, the momentum of arrests declined. A majority of the people who had cooperated more closely with the German occupying powers and could have had a link with the crimes committed by them were probably among the roughly 100,000 people who had fled to the West

to escape the Red Army. During the early post-war years, investigations were usually quick and superficial and in the Estonian SSR convictions of people who had cooperated with the Germans were not based on the international definition of war crimes but, rather, they were charged with treason. This took place regardless of the fact that none of the Estonian citizens in question had ever expressed any wish to become Soviet citizens. "War crimes" were only referred to in communications with other countries,



Supreme Court of the Estonian SSR during the trial of K. Linnas, E. Viks and J. Jüriste.

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for example when demanding the extradition from Finland of Estonians who had fought in the Finnish army.<sup>9</sup>

During the Cold War, trials of Nazi criminals became extremely politicised. A new campaign to this effect was carried out between 1958 and 1969. The Soviet regime, which had weakened after the end of the cult of Stalin, needed a new mobilising organisational framework. The symbolic place of the Great Leader was superseded by the Soviet Nation (mostly defined as Russians). The Great Patriotic War – or, on a larger scale, the fight against German occupation in Eastern Europe – became the symbol to unify the nation. The victory over Germany and the suffering of the people during the war were accorded grandiose and even sacred dimensions, and the Soviet Union was positioned as the main victim and the sole saviour of the world.

The collaboration of nations subjugated under German occupation and alleged crimes by their representatives were again taken up from another angle. The “shame” of the millions of Russians who had collaborated with Germany was now to be “washed away” through open shaming of other nations. Thereafter, Eastern European nations were depicted as criminal allies of National Socialist Germany – worse than the Nazis themselves. Show trials of criminals from the era of the National Socialist occupation came in handy in creating this image. In addition to accusing the peoples of Eastern Europe, the USSR also started levelling accusations at Western countries, suggesting that they had continued to pursue National Socialist policies after the fall of Hitler’s Germany.

As early as May 1957, the USSR began a propaganda campaign, operated in the guise of the German Socialist Unity Party, against judges and lawyers of the Federal Republic of Germany who had served the Hitler regime. In November 1958, the Soviet Union provoked another crisis in Berlin, issuing an ultimatum that the Allies ultimately withdraw their forces from West Berlin. In 1959, the new leader of the USSR, Nikita Khrushchev, visited Austria, where he made a symbolic revelation in the former concentration camp at Mauthausen, making public the task given to the leadership of the German Democratic Republic to prepare for an attack on the Federal Republic through accusations of Nazism and by means of show trials. The fate of the divided Germany had not yet been finally decided, and the Soviet Union sought to undermine the position of West Germany in the

eyes of the international community, using accusations of revanchism, fascism and militarism. Khrushchev’s speech kicked off a court farce, curated by the USSR’s security services in East Berlin, which ended in April 1960 with a life sentence handed down to a West German minister in absentia.

At the same time, a campaign started to take shape against the refugee communities that had emerged after a mass flight from the countries that had fallen under Soviet rule. From the USSR’s point of view, anything that happened in the USA and in North America in general was of the highest importance: the USA was its main ideological adversary and was home to very large refugee communities originating in the territories held by the USSR (Russians, Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Latvians, Estonians, people from the Caucasus etc.). From the Estonian point of view, the activities of the refugee community in Sweden were undoubtedly also important. In 1959, the US president had legalised the annual celebration of the week of support for the peoples entrenched by the communist regime of the USSR, which became an important milestone in the struggle against the communist regime by the refugees who had fled Soviet rule. The hope of the mass return of the refugees had disappeared, and it remained an important task for the Soviets to recruit agents from among them. Manipulation of individuals, using information about their alleged cooperation with the occupying regime, participation in crimes and so on, was an important means of influence. In addition, also in 1959, the presidium of the Central Committee of the CPSU ordered the destruction of all “anti-Soviet emigrant centres” in the coming years, which meant the launch of an active propaganda war.

Show trials against those accused of crimes committed on the German side began in the Baltic states in 1959, and refugees following the Estonian press concluded that “a new campaign has been launched in the Baltics against Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians in the free world”.<sup>10</sup> In the years that followed, a wave of show trials rolled from Leningrad to the Caucasus, covering almost the entire territory of the Soviet Union that had been under German occupation.

Five show trials took place in Estonia before 1967, accompanied by extensive campaigns in the domestic and foreign press. In total, the Supreme Court of the USSR ruled on 14 people: five defendants living outside the Soviet Union were sentenced to death in absentia; eight people arrested in Estonia were sen-

tenced to death and executed; and one person was sent for coercive psychiatric treatment. In addition, a number of trials took place, which, though reported in the press, generated more modest coverage, without extensive associated propaganda manoeuvres. The Communist Party made the political decisions and provided the necessary guidance to the security services, which prepared the evidence and formulated the indictments. The court was left with only a formal role in pronouncing a conviction approved by the political leadership.

The main focus of the show trials was on members of the refugee communities of the peoples living under the rule of the USSR, who had been involved in crimes committed during the German occupation. Suspects in exile could be influenced through the press and direct contacts before the trial, and this may have involved attempts to persuade them to cooperate in some way with Soviet intelligence agencies in return for e.g. charges being dropped. The lack of direct evidence in this respect is compensated by the examples of suspected refugees who appear in the investigative files but are excluded from further proceedings for no apparent reason, or whose investigation is obviously terminated for concocted reasons.

The charges in the trials were based on actual war crimes and crimes against humanity, but the main focus of the investigation and judicial enquiries was not on clarifying all the facts of the crimes, but on achieving the regime's political objectives. The extent of the crimes – the number and identities of murder victims – was essentially ignored. Although questions were asked about this during the interrogations and cited as concrete examples in the indictments and judgments, the total number of victims was nevertheless based on the arbitrary figures released in 1944 by the Special Commission of the ESSR,<sup>11</sup> which differed from the probable number of victims by several orders of magnitude.

Due to the nature of the crimes (generally undocumented, or evidence had been destroyed), circumstantial evidence, and witness statements in particular, played a very important role. The guideline to make extensive use of witness testimonies came from Andrey Vyshinsky, the Prosecutor General of the USSR, who had already become infamous during the show trials of the Great Terror of the 1930s: "Witness statements are one of the oldest and most common types of forensic evidence. And this is perfectly understandable, because the living word of the immediate

witness of the event, which tells the investigation and the court calmly and objectively about the circumstances of the event, the offender, the crime situation, etc., is of paramount importance to the judgment."<sup>12</sup> Under the totalitarian regime, however, witness manipulation was quite simple and widespread. In the early 1960s, there was a separate room in the then National Central Archives of the October Revolution and Socialist Reconstruction under the Ministry of the Interior of the ESSR, in which KGB personnel introduced archival documents to witnesses taking the stand during show trials and prepared them to testify. In the case of the death sentence handed down in absentia against the former head of the Lääne County Home Guard (Omakaitse), Ago Talvar (who lived in Sweden), the security officers themselves admitted a few decades later that, despite the verdict, the direct participation of the defendant in the shootings had not been sufficiently proven.

The show trials became a farce that did not live up to the principle of the independence of the prosecutor's office and the court, only subject to the law, as declared in the USSR's own constitution. Their verdicts must be regarded as quasi-decisions resulting from a decision reached by a judge based not on the facts presented in the indictment but on a politically and propaganda-motivated administrative order. The most obvious example of this is the trials in January 1962 of individuals accused of mass murders in the Tartu concentration camp (Juhan Jüriste, Karl Linnas and others). Although the start of the trials had been postponed, a "report" of the trials and the death sentence appeared by accident in the USSR Prosecutor's Office's magazine *Социалистическая законность* (The Socialist Law) before the actual trials even began. The Soviet regime created a situation in which potential perpetrators of blatant war crimes and crimes against humanity were brought to justice, but their convictions were void from the moment they were handed down. In 1987, Karl Linnas, who had been convicted in absentia in the USSR 25 years earlier, was somewhat unexpectedly extradited to the USSR, putting the local Soviet authorities in an embarrassing position. Although the crimes with which he had been charged were not subject to any statute of limitations, the 1962 verdict against him was. It is alleged that preparations for a new investigation and trial were also started, but it is doubtful that a repetition of a farce akin to 1961–2 would have been possible in 1987, at the peak of *perestroika* and *glasnost*. It is clear that it would have been politically impossible for the USSR to acquit Linnas, but the embarrassing

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situation was resolved by the sudden death of the accused, which in turn raised certain suspicions.

All defendants in the show trials were convicted on the basis of Section 62 (1) of the ESSR Criminal Code (treason). This was also the case after 1965, when the decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR “On the Conviction of Persons Guilty of Crimes Against the Peace and Humanity and of War Crimes, Regardless of When the Crimes Were Committed” was adopted. This decree was taken into account, but only in terms of the statute of limitations. Crimes committed against peace and humanity and war crimes were not included in the Criminal Code of the Estonian SSR or any other criminal code in the USSR. Based on the continuity of the Estonian state, the defendants were citizens of the Republic of Estonia and not of the USSR occupying Estonia. Thus, those convicted during the trials in question, as well as all the remaining tens of thousands convicted of “treason”, were automatically rehabilitated under the Law on the Rehabilitation of Extra-judicially Repressed and Wrongfully Convicted, which entered into force in 1992, and any convictions concerning them are considered to have been null and void since they were made.

In the 1970s, the momentum of show trials subsided. In the 1980s, propaganda was spread by the relevant Soviet authorities as necessary, using the press (mainly publications directed at foreign readers) at opportune moments to publish accusations against targeted refugees. The recovery of refugees convicted in absentia from abroad was still being addressed. This period culminated in the previously mentioned case of Karl Linnas, who was the first person accused of war crimes to be extradited from the United States to the USSR against his will.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, this issue was certainly not one of the primary concerns of the Russian Federation as its successor state. In the years immediately after the collapse of the communist regime, Russia, like the liberated nations, exhibited significant interest in the crimes committed by the Soviet regime, which had affected millions of people living under Soviet rule. Putin’s reign brought a gradual return to the Soviet understanding of things. The special role of the Soviet Union, and Russia as its successor, in the conquest of Nazi Germany and the liberation of Europe was put on a pedestal.

Prior to 2009, different approaches to World War II, especially its prelude, and attempts to place these events

in a broader international context, could be observed in writing about Russia’s history. In the years since, there has been a return to Soviet-era positions, with some ideological changes. The most visible change was the abandonment of class theory in explaining the causes of World War II and its replacement by the theory of civilisations. As history goes full circle, the study and condemnation of wartime collaborationism has, once again, attracted national attention. Unlike in the past, today’s focus is primarily on foreign nationals in countries that regained independence from the Soviet regime and in countries on the western border of Russia or further to the west that took part in the war against the Soviets in one way or another during the Second World War. This issue is clearly highlighted in an article published in the summer of 2020 in the name of Russian president Vladimir Putin to mark the end of the Second World War, which was translated into English as “The Real Lessons of the 75th Anniversary of World War II”.<sup>13</sup> In the light of this, those who fought for their national independence or freedom from communism will also be inflicted with the title of masquerading “traitors and executioners”. In Putin’s judgement: “In inhumanity, they often exceeded their masters” (i.e. the Germans).

The question rightly arises as to the purposes for which 75–80-year-old crimes have been raised to prominence at this time. Of course, the crimes in question are without a statute of limitations, but are we really dealing with the hope of finding out and catching the unpunished culprits, the youngest of whom would be around 95 years old. The indisputable precondition for the fulfilment of such hopes is the mobilisation of new sources. For historians who do not work for national investigative bodies, a number of previously classified documents were released from the Russian FSB and other archives in the 1990s and 2000s and from that point of view the re-examination of the subject is completely natural. The investigation files related to the trials held in Estonia have been kept in the Estonian National Archives and have been open to investigators since the regaining of independence.

According to the information available to the public, keeping the issue up to date is largely related to Russia’s national interests. The FSB “discovers” and publishes documents, attempting to create an aura of novelty that would allow for (re)exposure of the crimes by collaborators against Soviet citizens. It is unclear where the discovery lies when the FSB selectively, and based on current needs, takes relevant

documents (including past interrogation records) from the investigation files of its predecessor, the KGB, which have never left the shelves of its own archive. In the Soviet Union, records covering the entire wartime period were enclosed in archives under the Ministry of the Interior and the investigative bodies of the time had 50 years to comb them through meticulously. We are really talking about opening up access for historians not affiliated with investigative bodies; however, the Investigative Committee of Russia does not belong to this category. In the 1960s, at least a "letter from a reader" would be published in a newspaper, pointing to an as-yet-unconvicted criminal and resulting in a quick wrap-up of the investigation by the KGB "in response". Today, the FSB releases an earlier investigation document to the media and then reopens the investigation, supposedly reacting to the "discovery". At least four new investigations were launched on the basis of journalists' data in 2019–2014 concerning crimes with no statute of limitations dating back to World War II, in an attempt to present them as genocide against Soviet citizens. With the help of documents from cases resolved decades ago, new allegations of genocide are constructed, such as the "Finnish Nazism" in relation to the prison camps in Petroskoi (Petrozavodsk), Karelia.

In Russia, the Russian Military History Association (Российское военно-историческое общество) and the public association Russian Search Service (Поисковое движение России) are the organisations carrying the public campaign "Без срока давности" (No Statute of Limitations), executed in close cooperation with the FSB, which releases suitable documents related to the case at hand. The possible discovery and prosecution of hitherto unpunished perpetrators is not considered a direct goal of the project, but it is recognised that investigative work may lead to this. The aim of the project is to preserve the historical memory of the tragedy that struck the Russian civilian population during the Second World War.<sup>15</sup> The activities of historians and volunteers can indeed be motivated by a concern and desire to study and maintain knowledge of the history of the homeland. Of course, only the sources held by the KGB/FSB so far offer them new perspectives. However, with the active support of the state, the cause has been turned into a political tool. Releasing the documents needed to shape the desired historical image, providing approval for fieldwork and other research and so on actively supports the current national trend in shaping the historical image of Russia, focusing on the glorification of the Great Patriotic War and the suffering of the Soviet people at the hands of "German fascists and their henchmen".

With the help of such a powerful theme, which affects the majority of the population personally, another, no less important, theme is successfully marginalised. The decades-long political terror of the communist regime against its own citizens and those of the subjugated countries also affects the vast majority of Russia's current population. However, as the legal successor to the USSR, it is increasingly difficult for today's Russia to acknowledge its moral responsibility for these millions of murderers and victims. During the upheavals of the early 1990s, a large number of documents revealing the communist terror were made public, in the hope of leaving this period of history behind and bringing about a change in political attitudes. Today, the attitude of the state authorities towards exposing the crimes of the communist regime could be characterised as an attempt to put the genie back in the bottle. The attitude of the state authorities is hypocritical while becoming more and more unambiguous. In 2020, Anatoly Tereshchenko, a former KGB officer and prolific "documentary filmmaker", published a book entitled "Переписчики истории. Мифы о Катыни" (The Rewriters of History: Myths of Katyn).<sup>16</sup> In this work, we return to the Stalinist sources of the current historical approach without the slightest hesitation, once again presenting to bona fide readers an "analysis" proving that "fascists" were guilty of the mass murder of Poles in Katyn.

We can see obstruction of the work of associations and individuals investigating the crimes of the communist regime, renewed blocking of access to documents, and obstructing investigation of victims' burial sites and excavations that could bring to light direct evidence of political assassinations. Authorities are applying the brake on the investigation of those crimes not subject to a statute of limitations committed by the henchmen of the communist regime, to halt a train that started moving in the early 1990s. The existence of victims of political terror of the time cannot be denied by the current authorities, but the burial sites already identified are being given a different meaning by portraying the deceased as victims of the Great Patriotic War or preventing them from being celebrated and remembered through means that extend to the intimidation and conviction of activists on fabricated grounds. The political direction of the state's money and information flows will gradually stifle the investigation of the crimes of the communist regime and rehabilitate the authoritarian and imperialist way of thinking of that era.

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## **From KGB Collection No 4 of 1963: Compromising criminals detected abroad<sup>17</sup>**

Colonel (polkovnik) J. Kisselev,<sup>18</sup> Lieutenant Colonel (podpolkovnik) S. Kopylov,<sup>19</sup> Lieutenant Colonel (podpolkovnik) S. Larionov

From 1958 to 1963, ESSR KGB units searched for more than 300 people who fled to the capitalist countries upon the crushing defeat of the German fascist occupiers – traitors, agents, bourgeois nationalists and death squad members. Many of them are continuing their hostilities to this day. As seen in practice, an effective means of preventing this is to tarnish the reputation of the criminals in a wide range of foreign circles, as well as in our own country.

For these purposes, on the initiative of the KGB of the Estonian SSR and with the support of party and Soviet authorities, a series of public trials were organised against major war criminals who were wanted on Soviet territory and abroad. To cover one such trial, 40 representatives of the foreign press arrived in Tallinn, including from the USA, West Germany, France, Sweden and Italy.

Records of the trials and other documents on the crimes of the German fascist occupiers, especially the Estonian bourgeois nationalists, are being widely published in the Soviet and foreign print media, radio, cinema and television. Between March 1961 and August 1963, nine information notices were transmitted by TASS and the Estonian Telegraph Agency. 23 radio and television programmes were aired for Estonians living abroad.

Based on the ESSR KGB's material, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent diplomatic notes to the governments of the USA, England and Australia with demands to extradite the war criminals Mere, Viks and Linnas, convicted in absentia. The notes were published in the press, both centrally and in the republics.

From 1961 to 1963, the Estonian State Publishing House published for mass circulation documentary books in Estonian, Russian and English with titles like "Masks have fallen",<sup>20</sup> "People, be vigilant!",<sup>21</sup> "The Servants of the Swastika"<sup>22</sup> and "12,000".<sup>23</sup> These books, written on the basis of ESSR KGB records, reveal the activities of Estonian bourgeois nationalists

and other criminals hiding abroad. With the help of agents and trustees, the books were distributed to places with the highest concentration of Estonian emigrants (the USA, Sweden, Canada, Australia and England).

The books contributed to public resentment among ordinary emigrants towards the crimes of the leaders of the Estonian nationalists, and in several cases they were forced to cease their active anti-Soviet activities.

A typical example of the success of articles published in the foreign press to expose hidden war criminals is an article published in Canada on the crimes perpetrated by the former commander of the Jägala concentration camp, Laak.<sup>24</sup> He personally took part in the mass extermination of Soviet people. Following this publication, Laak started to receive visits from local newspaper correspondents seeking clarification concerning the allegations against him. The public outcry was so great that Laak committed suicide.

An Associated Press correspondent reported from Winnipeg (Laak's last place of residence in Canada): "A 53-year-old immigrant accused by Russia of being a Nazi war criminal and wanted for massacres in Estonia committed suicide by hanging himself on a beam in a garage ... According to TASS, the former Estonian Nazi camp commander lived in Winnipeg, where he bought a house with the proceeds of the sale of valuables looted from murder victims ...".

Former Tartu Security Police Commissioner Luitsalu<sup>25</sup> fled from Estonia to Canada, fearing responsibility for the killing of Soviet citizens. Leading the so-called Estonian National Committee and the Baltic-Canadian Federation, he was an anti-USSR activist. To compromise Luitsalu, articles about his crimes were organised to appear in Canadian newspapers, after which his apartment in Toronto was besieged by correspondents. Others telephoned Luitsalu and urged: "Follow the example of Laak. Find yourself a rope." As a result, Luitsalu died unexpectedly.

Department Head of the Estonian Political Police Ervin Viks,<sup>26</sup> wanted in Australia, about whom articles were also published, left his house in Sydney and went into hiding, fearing the wrath of Australian dockworkers.

Former Commander of the Estonian Security Police Mere<sup>27</sup> is a member of an anti-Soviet organisation, the Association of Estonians in England. After being



In front of the Naval Officers Building before the trial of Ain-Ervin Mere, Ralf Gerrets and Jaan Viik.

compromised in the press, he ended his defamatory statements against the Soviet Union.

In addition, all these measures contributed to the establishment of special committees by the public in London and Chicago to expose war criminals living there. In Sweden, the committee was made up of professors, writers, artists, musicians and others who launched a fight against neo-fascism.

Jewish communities in the United States, England, Israel, Australia and other countries are particularly active in responding to the crimes committed by German fascist convicts. We also take this opportunity to compromise war criminals, paying special attention to influential Jews. Among other things, we are using the London community, which consists of businessmen, many of whom are connected with Estonia to some degree (previously lived there or have relatives), to expose Mere. As a representative of Israel, a close acquaintance of our trustee belongs to that community. He is interacting daily with many influen-

tial Jews living in London and other parts of England. To ensure active and purposeful action by the London community, we used our trustee to send photocopies of documents certified by the National State Archives disclosing the involvement of Mere, Viiks, Linnas<sup>28</sup> and others in the extermination of the Jewish population. We also sent some copies of the books "Masks have fallen", "Servants of the Swastika", "12.000" and "People, be vigilant!".

Similar material has also been sent to Hillel Zaidel, a former prisoner of the Klooga camp,<sup>29</sup> and an anti-fascist and correspondent for several Israeli newspapers. In addition, material on war criminals was sent via the London community to the Australian MP Einfeld,<sup>30</sup> who called in the Parliament for Viiks to be extradited to the Soviet authorities, along with the US journalist Juniar, author of the book published in the US "Nazi War Criminals Among Us".<sup>31</sup> Material from the KGB of the Estonian SSR has been used in this book.

Tallinn

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## **From KGB Collection No 3 of 1969: Tireless exposure of fascist death squad members<sup>32</sup>**

Colonel (polkovnik) L. Barkov,<sup>33</sup> Lieutenant Colonel (podpolkovnik) V. Shirshov

... In the summer of 1968, in cooperation with the film studio "Tallinnfilm", episodes were filmed documenting the locations indicated by the accused Bibikov, Nüüd, Tomba, Anderson and Pindis<sup>34</sup> as the places where they carried out mass shootings of Soviet people. This material then became the basis for the script of the documentary "Next to the Monastery Wall", which was released on the screens of the republic.<sup>35</sup>

Investigators and operational staff shall endeavour to draw certain conclusions from each criminal case and, where appropriate, to inform the general public thereof. The proposals of the National Security Committee are coordinated in advance with the Central Committee of the Estonian Communist Party. The chekists are helped in their implementation by a well-established team of qualified authors. The KGB cooperates with publicists such as writer Ants Saar,<sup>36</sup> Daniil Rudnev, Candidate of Historical Sciences,<sup>37</sup> Vladimir Raudsepp, Executive Secretary of the Writers' Union of the ESSR and Merited Journalist of the ESSR,<sup>38</sup> Igor Gaspl, Head of the Department of the newspaper Sovetskaya Estoniya<sup>39</sup> and others.

Already during the investigation, it is determined through which channels the information should be directed, including abroad. It is taken into account which newspapers or radio stations have an audience particularly interested in one event or another (youth or literary papers, Russian-language pages). In order to ensure that material placed in newspapers is not perceived as "in-your-face propaganda", publications describing the same event are usually not immediately available in all national newspapers, as was the case in the past.

The publishing house Eesti Raamat has published five books in recent years based on investigation

records, some literary works have been written, and the film studio Tallinnfilm has made three documentaries.

In this way, all these measures serve the identified political objectives. What is being achieved?

First, published documentaries and literary works are using concrete examples to show the real face of Estonian bourgeois nationalists, by whose hands the Hitlerites tried to establish a "new order" in Estonia and implement a policy of abduction and terror.

Secondly, the reactionary nature of the leaders of Estonian nationalist emigration, among whom war criminals are now increasingly infiltrating, is being publicly revealed. The circles that received active helpers of German fascist usurpers when they fled Estonia have also been disclosed.

Thirdly, hostile propaganda here and abroad, claiming that all Estonians arrested by the Soviet authorities in the pre-war and post-war periods had been unjustifiably prosecuted, will be completely refuted.

Fourthly, the Soviet people are being inoculated with a sense of high political vigilance and dissatisfaction with the enemies of our country.

Fifth, the public is hearing the truth about outstanding party workers and members of councils, workers, peasants who received land from the Soviet state and other honest citizens who participated in the revolutionary movement during the bourgeois dictatorship and in social reorganisation in the Soviet era and died at the hands of nationalists – that they gave their lives for the Soviet power.

Investigators and operatives of the State Security Committee attached to the Council of Ministers of the Estonian SSR are working hard to ensure that fascist murderers, whose hands have not been washed of the blood of innocent victims, serve the punishment they deserve – we owe this to the memory of the people who have perished by the hand of Hitler's executioners, who gave their lives in the fight against fascism.

Совершенно секретно

# СБОРНИК

СТАТЕЙ ПО ВОПРОСАМ  
АГЕНТУРНО-ОПЕРАТИВНОЙ И СЛЕДСТВЕННОЙ  
РАБОТЫ КОМИТЕТА ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОЙ  
БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ ПРИ СОВЕТЕ МИНИСТРОВ СССР

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**Розыскная работа**

**КОМПРОМЕТАЦИЯ ПРЕСТУПНИКОВ,  
УСТАНОВЛЕННЫХ ЗА ГРАНИЦЕЙ**

Подполковник Я. Киселев, подполковник С. Копылов,  
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Органы КГБ Эстонской ССР за период 1958—1963 гг. разыскали более трехсот государственных преступников, бежавших во время разгрома немецко-фашистских оккупантов в капиталистические страны, — изменников Родины, агентов, буржуазных националистов, карателей. Многие из них и поныне продолжают враждебную деятельность. Эффективным средством ее пресечения, как показала практика, является компрометация преступников перед широкими кругами за границей и в нашей стране.

В этих целях по инициативе Комитета государственной безопасности при Совете Министров Эстонской ССР, поддержанной партией и советскими органами республике, была организована ряд открытых судебных процессов по делам на крупных военных преступников, разсыпанных на советской территории и за гра-

ницей. Для освещения одного из процессов в Таллин приезжало 40 представителей зарубежной прессы, в том числе из США, ФРГ, Франция, Швеции, Италии.

Материалы процессов и другие документы о злодеяниях немецко-фашистских оккупантов и их приспешников, прежде всего эстонских буржуазных националистов, передаются широкой гласности через советскую и зарубежную печать, радио, кино и телевидение. С марта 1961 года по август 1963 года передано девять информационных сообщений ТАСС и эстонского телеграфного агентства. По радио и телевидению организовано 23 передачи для эстонцев, проживающих за границей.

По материалам КГБ Эстонской ССР Министерство иностранных дел направило ноты правительству США, Англии

**СЛЕДСТВИЕ  
И ДОЗНАНИЕ**

**ФАШИСТСКИХ КАРАТЕЛЕЙ РАЗОБЛАЧАТЬ НЕУСТААННО**

Подполковник Л. Барков, подполковник В. Ширшов

Почти четверть века минуло со времени окончания второй мировой войны, однако проблема ответственности нацистских преступников и их сообщников не потеряла своей актуальности. В памяти народов живы чудовищные зверства фашистских варваров, открываются все новые факты тягчайших злодеяний. Еще немало гитлеровских убийц, совершивших кровавые преступления на оккупированной территории Советского Союза, не выявлены и остаются ненаказанными.

Следователи Комитета государственной безопасности при Совете Министров Эстонской ССР во взаимодействии с оперативными подразделениями за последние годы добились некоторых результатов в расследовании уголовных дел на изменников Родины, участников фашистских зверств и в проведении по материалам этих дел необходимых мероприятий.

Накопленный опыт раскрытия злодеяний карателей позволяет несколько подробнее остановиться на отдельных обстоятельствах совершения этих преступлений и приемах их расследования.

Характерным, в частности, является то, что в Эстонии каратели действовали под флагом национализма. Тягчайшие преступления, совершенные националистами в годы Отечественной войны, имеют определенное историческое корни, которые уходят в период буржуазной диктатуры в Эстонии. Отсюда берут начало палаческие традиции эстонских националистов. Они, не задумываясь, расправлялись со своими политическими противниками, не брезгуя самыми гнусными приемами. Национализм стал орудием реакционной политики правящей клики буржуазной Эстонии, расчищавшей путь германскому фашизму. Гитлер не мог и мечтать о лучших союзниках, чем эстонские националисты.

С нападением на СССР гитлеровских орд, еще задолго до прихода оккупантов, в республике активизировались кулацкая, враждебная часть офицерства бывшей эстонской буржуазной армии, реакционное духовенство и разные другие представители эксплуататорских классов, которые связывали с бесноватым фюрером свои мечты о реставрации буржуазного строя. С помощью забрасываемых гитлеровцами парашютистов и ранее подготовленной агентуры стали создаваться националистические банды, которые развернули антинародную деятельность. Бандитизм принимал все более широкие размеры. Обнажили свой предательский облик местные фашисты. Скрываясь в лесах, они по-разбойничьи нападали на советских воинов, убивали советских патриотов, мирных жителей, не щадя ни женщин, ни детей, ни стариков. В местах, где бандитам удавалось захватить власть, производились повальные аресты советских людей и устраивались над ними расправы. С приходом немцев

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## ENDNOTES

### DEFENDING THE CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER

- 1 The Black Hundreds (in Russian: черносотенцы) was a movement of monarchists and right-wing extremists in Russia after World War I and during the Civil War.
- 2 The term is used by far-right movements in the United States. Boogaloo is a humorous and mocking term, just like the tradition of the adherents to take part in demonstrations wearing a combination of automatic weapons, tactical equipment and Hawaiian shirts.
- 3 The Lithuanian FKD member made a 6kg explosive device that he placed in the centre of Vilnius. Fortunately, it did not go off. Along with the installation of the explosive device, extremist symbols and messages were painted on the wall of a financial institution.

### PROVIDING CYBERSECURITY

- 4 [www.euronews.com/2020/12/08/norway-s-intelligence-service-says-russian-groups-likely-behind-parliament-cyber-attack](https://www.euronews.com/2020/12/08/norway-s-intelligence-service-says-russian-groups-likely-behind-parliament-cyber-attack) direct link <https://www.pst.no/alle-artikler/pressemeldinger/datainnbruddet-mot-stortinget-er-ferdig-etterforsket/>

### ECONOMIC SECURITY AND THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

- 5 For the purposes of anti-corruption rules, a decision is one directed at the creation, alteration or termination of the rights and obligations of other persons, including agencies performing public duties involving, inter alia, participation in or substantive directing of the decision.
- 6 Anti-corruption Act, Section 11. Procedural restrictions
  - (1) An official is prohibited from performing an act or making a decision, if:
    - 1) the decision is made or the act is performed with respect to the official or a person connected to him or her;
    - 2) the official is aware of an economic or other interest of that official or a person connected to him or her and which may have an impact on the act or decision;
    - 3) the official is aware of a risk of corruption.
- 7 Pursuant to Section 295 (1) of the Penal Code; from 1 January 2015 arranging of a bribe, pursuant to Section 296 (1).
- 8 Pursuant to Section 297 (1) of the Penal Code; from 1 January 2015 promising a bribe, pursuant to Section 298 (1).

### TRIALS OF WAR CRIMINALS IN RUSSIAN HISTORICAL PROPAGANDA

- 9 For more information about the trials conducted in the 1960s, see: Meelis Maripuu. "Külma sõja aegsed näidiskohtuprotsessid Eestis. Õigus ja propaganda kaalukaasil" (Show trials in cold war Estonia: the weight of justice and propaganda) – Eesti Ajalooarhiivi toimetised, ACTA ET COMMENTATIONES ARCHIVI HISTORICI ESTONIAE. *Nõukogude Eesti külma sõja ajal* (Soviet Estonia During the Cold War), 2015, pp. 88–140.
- 10 Newspaper *Vaba Eestlane* (*The Free Estonian*), 12 December 1954, "Me ei andesta kunagi nendele roimaritele ..." (We will never forgive those criminals ...).
- 11 The ESSR Commission for the investigation of the crimes of the German fascist invaders and their accomplices and the damage caused by them.
- 12 Б.Н. Ковалев. "Свидетельские показания в уголовных делах коллаборационистов в России". – *Вестник Новгородского Государственного Университета 2005*, No 33, pp. 108–113.
- 13 Vladimir Putin. The Real Lessons of the 75th Anniversary of World War II. – *The National Interest*, 18 June 2020. (<https://nationalinterest.org/feature/vladimir-putin-real-lessons-75th-anniversary-world-war-ii-162982>)

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- 14 [www.currenttime.tv/a/nazi-crimes-peobed-again/30655103.html](http://www.currenttime.tv/a/nazi-crimes-peobed-again/30655103.html)
  - 15 [www.currenttime.tv/a/nazi-crimes-peobed-again/30655103.html](http://www.currenttime.tv/a/nazi-crimes-peobed-again/30655103.html); <http://rf-poisk.ru/>
  - 16 Анатолий Терещенко. *Переписчики истории. Мифы о Катыни*. – АО Издательский дом «Аргументы недели», 2020.
  - 17 This article appeared in a top-secret periodical for KGB employees, KGB Collection No 4 (21) 1963 of the USSR, pp. 72–74 (Сборник КГБ).
  - 18 Jakov Petrovich Kisselev (1919–95) was the Commander of the 2nd Department of the KGB of the Estonian SSR from 1960 to 1964 and the Deputy Chairman of the organisation from 1969 to 1971, then worked in different units of the USSR KGB, most recently from 1979 to 1987 as the Head of the USSR KGB Press Office.
  - 19 Sergei Danilovich Kopylov (1913–93) was an employee of the Estonian SSR KGB.
  - 20 *Маски сорваны!* (Masks have fallen) (1961). Compiled by Ants Saar (1920–89).
  - 21 *Inimesed, olge valvsad!* (People, be vigilant!) Records from the trial of A. Mere, R. Gerrets and J. Viik (1961). Compiled by Vladimir Raudsepp (1907–98).
  - 22 Ervin Martinson (1924–77). *Haakristi teenrid* (The Servants of the Swastika). On the crimes of Estonian nationalists and fascists during the years of Hitler's occupation (1962).
  - 23 *12,000*. Records from the trial of the mass murderers Juhan Jüriste, Karl Linnas and Ervin Viks in Tartu on 16–20 January 1962 (1962). Compiled by Karl Lemmik and Ervin Martinson.
  - 24 Aleksander Laak (1907–60) was a leading official of the Estonian Security Police and the SD during the German occupation. He was tried in absentia in the Estonian SSR in the early 1960s.
  - 25 Aksel-Aleksander Luitsalu (1913–61) was one of the most active fighters for Estonian independence in Canada. In 1960, Luitsalu led a delegation of Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians to propose that the Canadian prime minister raise the issue of the violent annexation of the Baltic states by the Soviet Union at the UN Plenary. Luitsalu denied accusations of war crimes, saying he had been in the police service in Estonia since 1937, and that during the German occupation he was the commissioner of the 1st police station in Tartu.
  - 26 Ervin Viks (1897–1983) was a leading official of the Estonian Security Police and the SD during the German occupation. Viks was sentenced to death in absentia in a 1962 war criminals' trial in the Estonian SSR.
  - 27 Ain Mere (1903–69) was a leading official of the Estonian Security Police and the SD during the German occupation. In the 1950s, the KGB tried to recruit Mere as an agent. The attempts failed and in the war criminals' trial in Tallinn in 1961, Mere was sentenced to death in absentia.
  - 28 Karl Linnas (1919–87) was the commander of the Tartu concentration camp during the German occupation. He was sentenced to death in absentia at a trial in the Estonian SSR in 1962, and as a result he later lost his US citizenship and was deported to the USSR in 1987. He died in Leningrad Prison Hospital.
  - 29 Hillel Zaidel (1920–99).
  - 30 Sydney David Einfeld (1909–95) was an Australian politician and leader of the Jewish community.
  - 31 Charles R. Allen, Jr. (1924–2004). *Nazi War Criminals Among Us* (1963). The name in the KGB article is probably wrong.
  - 32 This article appeared in KGB Collection No 3 (43) 1969 of the USSR, pp. 89–94.
  - 33 Leonid Ivanovich Barkov (born in 1928) was the Head of the ESSR KGB Investigation Department from 1959 to 1969, the Head of the KGB Leningrad Oblast Administration Investigation Department and Deputy Head of the Administration from 1969 to 1977, and the Deputy Head and Head of the USSR KGB Investigation Department from 1977 to 1989.
  - 34 Roland Bibikov (b. 1913), Rudolf Nüüd (b. 1918), Verner Tomba (b. 1902), Karl Anderson (b. 1919), Leonhard Pindis (b. 1916) and Voldemar Kana (b. 1903) – KGB case in the National Archives (ERAF.I29SM.1.29020).
  - 35 1968 documentary about war criminals in Petseri during the German occupation of 1941–4, directed by Vladimir Zhukov.
  - 36 Ants Saar (1920–89) was a communist writer and party worker.
  - 37 Daniil Rudnev (1911–2008) was a journalist in the Estonian SSR.
  - 38 Vladimir Raudsepp (1907–98) was a journalist in the pre-war Estonia and the Estonian SSR.
  - 39 Igor Gaspl (1924–2001) was the author of documentary short stories "True Stories" (1960) based on KGB investigation records, as well as other propaganda stories describing the work of the KGB.

Compiled by:  
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Translation:  
**Refiner Translations**

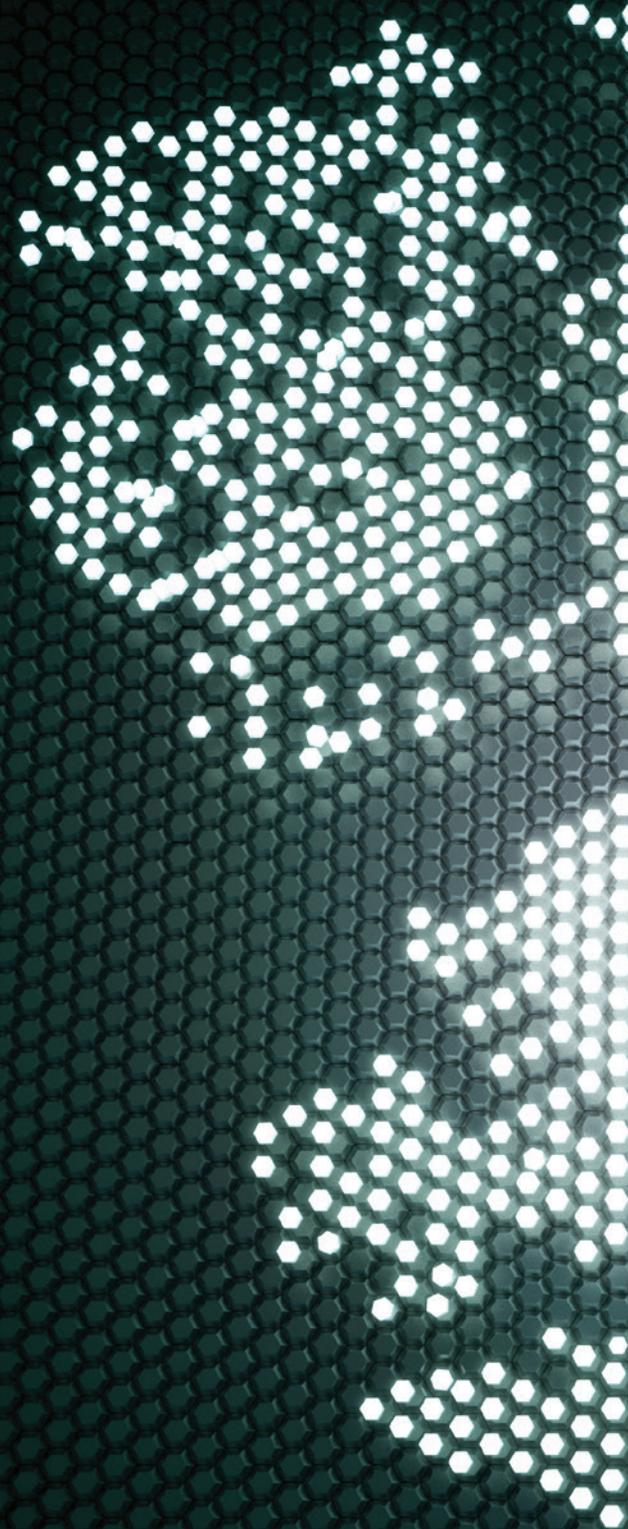
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