

Kremlin Hostile Disinformation Operations

Situational report on Czech Republic and Central European context

Kremlin Watch Program of the European Values Think-Tank

The European Values Think-Tank is a non-governmental policy institute defending liberal democracy.

1. Kremlin Hostile Disinformation Operations in General

Aggressive disinformation effort by the Russian Federation and its allies have been very visible within EU member states since 2013, from the beginning of the Ukrainian crisis. The Kremlin uses this vehicle as a part of its hybrid warfare to achieve its strategic objective Vis-à-vis to disrupt the internal cohesion of NATO, the EU and its willingness to react to aggressive policies of the Russian Federation. It also aims at a change of policy – in cases of sanctions, such as the Dutch referendum on EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, or the Brexit debate. Chief of the Armed Staff of the Russian Federation, Valery Gerasimov, [calls it](#): “*Information confrontation aimed at the reduction of the fighting potential of the enemy*”.¹

These disinformation efforts employ a multi-layer strategy. Where an authentic grievance or setback is present, the Kremlin disinformation machinery tries to explore and exploit it². On the EU and NATO level, it tries to use pro-Kremlin attitudes of selected politicians³ to undermine collective efforts. This practically means supporting anti-US and anti-EU politicians⁴. Within the EU, it aims to widen the already existing gaps, for example, between the South and the East, or between the new and the old member states in the West versus those in the East.

At the member state level, the goal is to undermine the trust of citizens towards their governments, allied organisations and states, democratic political parties, mainstream media or state institutions (such as judiciary or police) in general. Another goal is to promote pro-Kremlin politicians and parties, such as the Alternative for Germany, the Front National in France, Jobbik in Hungary, Marian Kotleba’s LSNS in Slovakia, and UKIP in the UK. You can see clear pro-Kremlin tendencies and policies among governing Greek Syriza or among governing German Social Democrats.

Disinformation efforts target already existing grievances and cleavages and exploit them further. We never can say that disinformation efforts are the only reason for the existence of these problems, but we

¹ For more on what official strategies of Russian Federation state about these war tools, read this OSW study: www.osw.waw.pl/sites/default/files/prace_57_ang_russias_armed_forces_net.pdf

² Generally: in the case of European debate on migration and Islam by implanting disinformation in form of fake stories. Specific example: German „Lisa Case“ in January 2016.

³ See: Political Capital Institute, The Russian Connection: www.riskandforecast.com/post/europe/the-russian-connection_803.html

⁴ For more, read what influential Russian ideologue Alexander Dugin thinks about it: <http://www.counter-currents.com/2012/07/interview-with-alexander-dugin/>

can clearly point out that exploring such weak spots is an aim of the Kremlin machinery and specific documented actions are proof of such effort.

Let us use the most striking empirical examples while keeping in mind the limitations of these data:

- Only 29% of German and 29% of Italian citizens have said [in a 2015 Pew poll](#) that Russia should be blamed *for the violence in Eastern Ukraine*.
- 53% of French and 58% of German citizens said in a [2015 Pew poll](#) that their country *should not use military force* to defend a NATO ally if Russia were to attack it.
- Only 31% of German citizens say that *German soldiers should stand in defence of NATO members - Poland and the Baltic states - if they were attacked by Russia*, according to [2016 research](#) by the Bertelsmann Foundation and the Institute for Public Affairs: an already shocking outcome. While in 2015, 38% of Germans voted in favour of the aforementioned question in [a Pew poll](#), increasing the support for German soldiers in defence of NATO members by 7% within a year.

2. Why We Must Act Now

We are democratic sovereign states. We need to take on difficult discussions on how we want to run our country. **Sovereignty means that we will decide on our own. No hostile disinformation efforts have any right to poison our internal matters.**

If you don't believe me, read official military documents of the Russian Federation, hear what its leaders are saying out loud. They are on the collision course and we keep pretending that they are not. We cannot let a disaster happen. Appeasement never works. That is why we need to defend our democracies against hostile operations which have the very same aim as extremism – undermine our democratic institutions.

Let's see five examples on how we can end up if we fail to form a reasonable defence to this threat:

1. The public will increasingly lose trust in democratic institutions, in free media and in democratic political parties. It is already happening and the hostile foreign activities are helping it out. To feel the impact - look at Brexit, or relative success of Marine Le Pen, Donald Trump, or the Alternative for Germany.
2. Anti-establishment political powers with a pro-Kremlin stance are gaining ground, public support and even financial and media boosts from Moscow.
3. Vulnerable target groups, such as youth and elderly, are becoming more politically disconnected as a result of exposure to fabricated disinformation stories, making it almost impossible for European governments to find constructive policies to deal with migration and minority integration issues.
4. Even more citizens are losing trust in the EU, and the very membership will become questionable.
5. Meanwhile, the European response to Russia's aggressive actions in Ukraine will weaken as its public legitimacy will deteriorate under the rain of disinformation.

This is a course of action we Europeans cannot afford to take.

Seven Tools Used by Kremlin to Influence the Internal Affairs of Targeted Countries⁵

Framework of Kremlin influence efforts	Intelligence and influence operations	Disinformation operations	Relevant political allies of Kremlin already in the institutions	Orchestrating NGO allies and GONGOs	Support for European radical and extremist groups	Using parts of ethnic minority in targeted state	Kremlin-run economic operations with political goals
Characterisation of specific instrument	Foreign - state agents and local collaborators are used to get sensitive and classified information of the targeted state. Those means are also used to influence – bribe, intimidate or blackmail specific figures of the targeted state.	Kremlin funds and runs specific disinformation projects (RT, Sputnik). Dozens of pro-Kremlin disinformation online projects have dubious funding and personal structures and act as Kremlin allies and multipliers.	Kremlin supports political allies in European political groups by personal and financial connections, disinformation and ideological means. They help to spread pro-Kremlin influence in the institutions.	Kremlin orchestrates an NGO in EU member state to have a representation of its interests. Other NGOs who share Kremlin objectives are indirectly supported.	European far-right and far-left radicals and extremists get supported by the Kremlin. Apart from ideological connections, they participate in the legitimisation of elections via electoral monitoring procedures.	A portion of the ethnic Russian minority in EU member state is vulnerable to Kremlin-run intelligence and influence operations. Part of it can be activated for active measures in moments of need or crisis.	State-run companies are often used to lobby for political interest – including decisions on the strategic energy sector.
Model examples	Kremlin intelligence operations in Nordic states (mapping local landscape) or in Baltic states (kidnapping local citizen).	Targeted disinformation campaigns into Dutch referendum on EU-Ukraine AA in April 2016. Numerous fabricated disinformation stories aiming at poisoning European migration debate.	Constant advocacy of pro-Kremlin narratives by Nigel Farage, Marine Le Pen and representatives of the Alternative for Germany.	Activities of some Kremlin-funded Russian-compatriot organisations in Baltic states.	Ideological and quasi-media support for European far-right and extremist groups who get often invited to Russia to coordinate and showcase support.	Anti-governmental demonstrations of German Russians in Germany as a part of disinformation operation Lisa in January 2016.	Influence of Gazprom on German or Serbian politics, Lukoil on Czech politics.

⁵ For more, see study of European Values Think-Tank: Mechanism of Influence of Kremlin, WWW: <http://www.europeanvalues.net/vyzkum/mechanisms-of-influence/>

3. Situation in the Czech Republic

In the Czech case, there are at least three primary interests of Kremlin disinformation operations:

1. **Strengthening of Kremlin’s political allies** and use of these Trojan horses to disrupt the EU and NATO; even to cause a foreign-policy turn towards more submissiveness to actions of Russia.
2. **Undermining public trust towards democratic politicians and institutions**, legitimising extremists and disinformation projects and causing the targeted state to be practically defenceless against those threats⁶.
3. **Undermining public support for EU and NATO membership**; culminating in Czech exit from the EU in the long run. Public support for EU membership is in the high 20s and extremists are already calling for exit referendum.

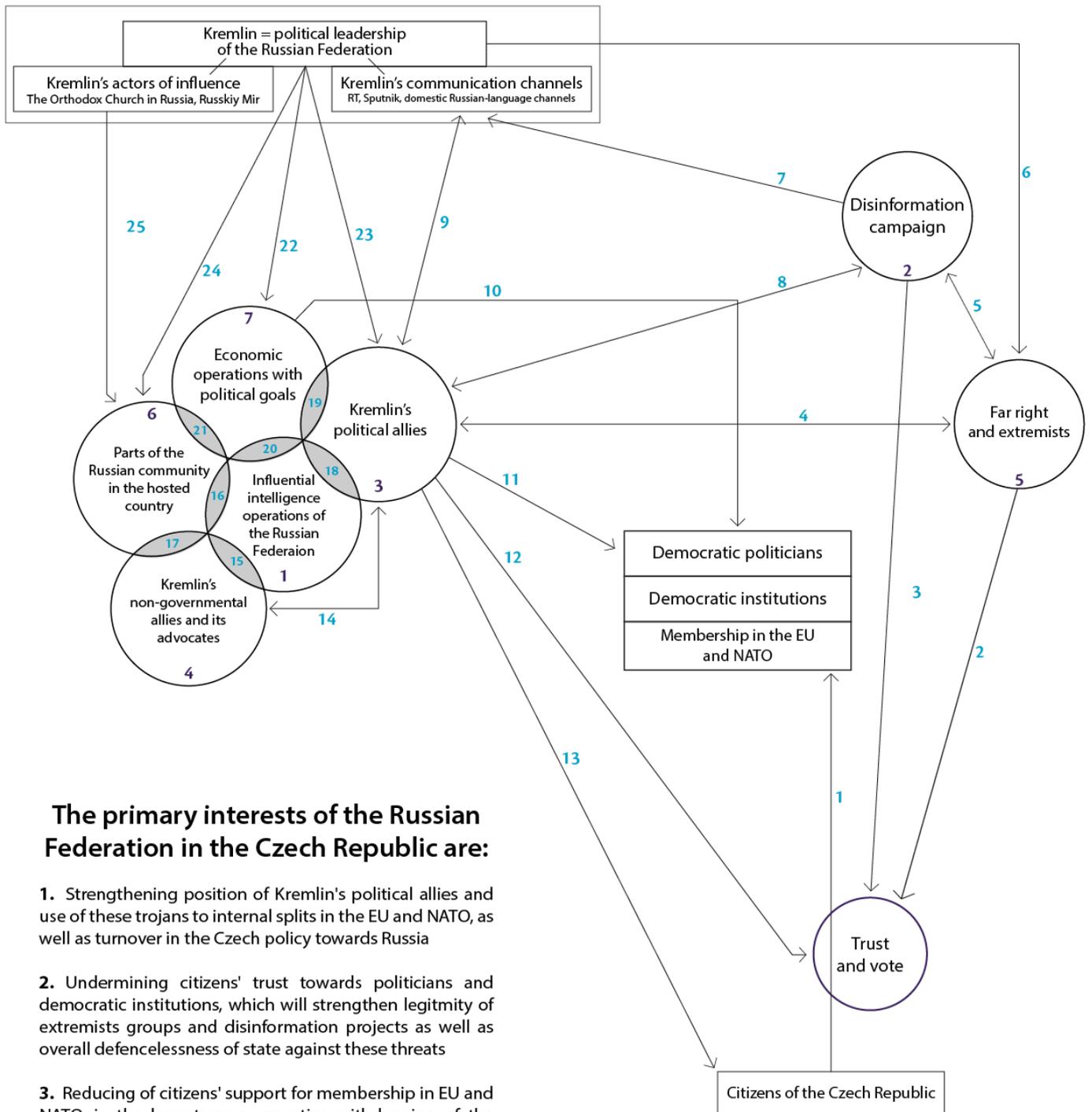
4. Key Tools for Kremlin Influence in the Czech Republic

The key job for interests of the Russian Federation is done by the **political allies of Kremlin**. Namely by the Czech President Miloš Zeman, the Communist party (around 15% popularity), some Social Democrats and most of the far-right groups. Those who copy-paste Moscow interpretation of key events – Russian intervention in Ukraine or in Syria, or the myth of how the West has been humiliating Russia. Just to remind you – there are over 9000 victims in Ukraine as a result of the Russian aggression.

Then, there is an impactful role being played by the disinformation projects – usually websites posing as “news outlets”. Sometimes, we need to remind ourselves of obvious things. If somebody calls himself “an alternative”, we need to look beyond the surface. If you spread false stories, such as that European leaders are intentionally bringing jihadists to Europe, you are simply lying. And yes, **a lie is not an alternative opinion**.

⁶ As Czech Counter-Intelligence Service (BIS) says in its 2015 Annual Report, it is trying to “*weaken society’s will for resistance or confrontation*”.

HOW IT WORKS – SCHEME OF RUSSIAN INFLUENCE INTO CZECH DOMESTIC AFFAIRS:



5. Explaining the Relationship Between Individual Actors in the Scheme of Influence of The Russian Federation in the Czech Republic

1. Democracy is built on the trust of citizen in the democratic regime and their willingness to vote for (various) democratic politicians.
2. The Extremists challenge the democratic state and its foreign policy. They attempt to create the impression that political and media establishment acts against the citizens of the Czech Republic. They share this interest with the Kremlin that likes the democratic politicians to be depicted this way.
3. Authors of disinformation make attempts to manipulate the trust of citizens. They attempt to create the impression that the political and media establishment acts against the citizens of the Czech Republic. This is also the interest of the Russian Federation.
4. The far-right and the extremists often support politicians which are submissive to the Kremlin. Occasionally, the support is mutual; for example, the cooperation between President Zeman and far-right leader Martin Konvička on the 17th November 2015 at a public rally.
5. The far-right and the extremists support their efforts using the disinformation projects; which they see as reliable news outlets. These disinformation projects also offer them a platform on which to showcase themselves. More at Czech database: www.dezinformatori.cz.
6. The far-right and the extremists advocate for the policies of the Kremlin and they often see a role model in the Russian Federation. Kremlin uses them to support their domestic legitimacy by inviting them as “observers” or visitors to Donbas or Crimea. It also gives the individuals a feeling of being important. Connection between the Czech extremists and the Russian Federation is discussed in the Quarterly Report on State of Extremist Scene by the Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic, 2015.
7. Disinformation projects often defend and, advocate for, the actions of the Russian Federation; directly or through a selective agenda. Kremlin’s communication channels such as RT or Sputnik are often the source of inspiration for other disinformation projects.

8. Kremlin's political allies often share and spread⁷ the products of disinformation projects, they legitimise the disinformation projects, and vice versa – the disinformation projects often defend Kremlin's allies.

9. Kremlin's political allies share and spread Kremlin's communication channel outlets (for example, the Spokesperson of President Miloš Zeman repeatedly shares Sputnik stories). On the other hand, Kremlin's allies are portrayed by these communication channels as the allies of Vladimir Putin⁸, and therefore they are used for the domestic legitimization of Putin's regime.

10. Kremlin is attempting to use economic operations for political motives in order to gain influence over some politicians and turn some of them into their allies. For example: in the European context - how Gerhard Schröder made his way into Gazprom; in the Czech context – the activities of Chief Economic Advisor to the Czech President Martin Nejedlý (Lukoil).

11. Kremlin's political allies usually directly attack democratic politicians; not only on the issues of foreign policy. The Kremlin's interest is for its allies to gain public support and to lower the support of democratic leaders who do not tend to be submissive to the aggressive steps made by the Russian Federation.

12. Kremlin's political allies directly attack the public trust of the EU and NATO membership. This goes parallel with the interests of the Russian Federation to weaken how well a given state is anchored within the Euro-Atlantic security structures; or the relationship with its local allies, to cause the state to withdraw its membership. Miloš Zeman demands to hold a referendum regarding the Czech membership in the EU and NATO, KSČM (Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia) permanently calls for the end of NATO and a variety of subjects that form the extreme right demand the exit from the EU. Their domestic motivation thus serves the long-term interests of the Russian Federation.

13. In essence, Kremlin's political allies advocate for some key views of the Kremlin towards the Czech citizens. These allies are playing a role of interpreters of what is happening in the world for the Czech citizens, while using the interpretation of the Russian Federation. They usually share the Russian interpretation of what is happening in Ukraine, and they often deny organized Russian intervention on the territory of Ukraine. They also legitimise the Russian intervention in Syria, and share Kremlin's opinion about the USA and NATO. The domestic population thus often hears Putin's words, but through the voice of his Czech allies.

14. Kremlin's political allies often cooperate with non-governmental actors who also act in accordance

⁷ Think-tank Evropské hodnoty, Kdo sdílí pro-kremelské weby, 14. 8. 2016, WWW: http://www.evropskehodnoty.cz/vyzkum/kreml_na_facebooku/

⁸ See more at: www.kremlinwatch.eu/data

with the interests of the Kremlin; and they often legitimise it. A typical example are the seminars of the “Institute of Slavic Strategic Studies” in the Czech Parliament by the members of the parliament from KSČM and Úsvit. Chief Foreign Policy Advisor to the Czech President, Hynek Kmoníček, has attended those events as a speaker.

15. The degree of connections of non-governmental actors which act in favour of the Kremlin and the Russian intelligence and influence operations are not mapped out well enough in the Czech Republic. From the reports of the Baltic security forces we know that these entities are usually being used by the Russian intelligence services for their operations to gain influence.

16. Selected parts of the Russian community living in the Czech Republic are being used by the Russian intelligence services. The case of agent Rachardžo is well known by the public, as he managed to extract large amounts of sensitive information from top military positions, and subsequently escaped to Russia. Another well-known example is the magazine project Artěk which started to run hard-line Russian propaganda after the annexation of Crimea.

17. Selected parts of the Russian community may work for non-governmental entities which act in accordance with the interests of the Kremlin. An example of this is the action of Russian-origin businessman Ivan Sokolov who, in his own words, is part of the “Institute of Slavic Strategic Studies”.

18. The Russian intelligence services are attempting to use operations to extend influence over the political allies of the Kremlin and influence their actions. They additionally recruit new individuals for conscious and unconscious cooperation. A typical example is the process when Vladimir Jakunin worked on Miloš Zeman and Václav Klaus. These two have, over time, become advocates of the Russian Federation. Naturally, this is not caused only by the work of Mr. Jakunin. Mr. Zeman is a regular visitor of Jakunin’s events, and Mr. Klaus is actually a member of the board of Jakunin’s institute in Berlin.

19. An example of the infiltration of economic operations with political goals and Kremlin’s allies in the Czech Republic is Martin Nejedlý; a long-term executive of Lukoil and chief economic advisor to President Zeman. Lukoil has also paid for the translation of Klaus’ book *Modrá, nikoliv zelená planeta* (*Blue, not green Earth*).

20. The infiltration of influence operations of Russian intelligence services and economic actions with political goals are not sufficiently mapped out in the Czech Republic. The attention of investigation journalists and counterintelligence efforts should be directed at the individuals who surround President Zeman, such as Zbyněk Zbytek and Martin Nejedlý.

21. The degree of infiltration of economic operations with political goals and parts of the Russian

community in the Czech Republic is not sufficiently mapped out. The role of the Big Board Praha Corporation and their support of the initiative "Ne základnám" (No to [American military] bases) is known, but not fully uncovered. Similarly, the role of the Russian citizens in the EKO Corporation is not investigated into detail – it runs the disinformation project Eurodenik.cz.

22. Economic activities of the Russian entities with political interests are being directly or indirectly conducted from the power circle of the Kremlin. As a result, corporations such as Gazprom, Rosatom, and Rosneft are active in Europe. Rosatom was in charge of the consortium for expansion of the Czech nuclear power plant Temelín, but the tender was stopped.

23. Kremlin supports its allies through the media, ideology and even financial means. It offers its allies the feeling of importance and is attempting to offer them a powerful symbolic platform. Kremlin's political allies are then used in the Russian Federation for domestic legitimization of the Kremlin.

24. Kremlin is using the presence of Russian communities in its target states. It uses the excuse of these minorities to be in "danger" in states such as Georgia, Ukraine, or in the Baltic States, and to then use this excuse to justify foreign policy steps or as a propaganda tool.

25. Kremlin is using its influential subjects, such as the parts of the Orthodox Church or political activities disguised as cultural activities, to influence the Russian communities in the target states. The Orthodox Church is often used as the main tool for spreading Kremlin's political agenda while hiding under cover of religion.

6. Measuring the Hostile Disinformation Operations

Data show that⁹:

A quarter of Czechs believes the disinformation and disinformation projects. These people perceive threats differently, often see Russia as an ally and question or deny the geopolitical alignment of the Czech Republic to the West.

- 25.5% of Czechs believe disinformation (tested 9 false statements).
- 24.5% of Czechs believe the alternative (disinformation, pro-Kremlin) media more than the traditional ones.

Despite the limited US involvement in Syria, **half of Czechs believe that the USA are responsible for Syrian refugees coming to Europe.** Creating this impression is the obvious aim of the pro-Kremlin disinformation operations.

- 50.2 % of the public thinks that the hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees coming to Europe are the responsibility of the United States.
- 28.3% of Czechs think that the Russian military intervention in Syria helps to solve the Europe's migration crisis.

Manipulation of the public is successful in the case of disinformation about what is happening in Ukraine. Nearly **four out of ten Czechs blame the USA for the Ukrainian crisis**, although there are Russian troops occupying part of the territory of Ukraine.

- 38% of respondents think that the Ukrainian crisis was caused by US and NATO.
- 30.6% of respondents believe that the fascist forces have a crucial influence on the Ukrainian government.

Only a fifth of the Czech population believes the Kremlin lie that the organised Russian forces are not operating in Ukraine. Czech President Miloš Zeman still claims so.

- 19.6% think that organised Russian forces do not operate in Ukraine.

⁹ Data source: 2016 GLOBSEC Trends Report, Czech part done by European Values Think-Tank and STEM agency, polled in June 2016

Roughly half the population wants the Czech Republic to be in position “between East and West.” Four out of ten Czechs would prefer neutrality to the membership in NATO.

- 48.3% chose a position between East and West.
- When the respondents were asked whether membership in NATO is good or bad, only 17.3% chose the second option. But as soon as the word neutrality appeared, strong 39.4% responded that neutrality would be a better option than NATO. We expect the use of this narrative by disinformation operations, in Slovakia, it is already being used massively.

Only less than one-third of Czechs consider EU membership as a good thing. Four out of ten are undecided whether the EU is a good or a bad thing, which means that in the case of the referendum on EU membership, we can expect that these people would decide only based on the experience during the campaign. The campaign can be strongly influenced by disinformation operations. **Efforts to promote a referendum on leaving the EU come from the far-right, far-left, and the President of the Czech Republic.**

- Only 31.5% of respondents considered EU membership as a good thing.
- If there was a referendum on the withdrawal of the Czech Republic from the EU, 40.6% of people would most likely decide only on the basis of an ongoing campaign before the referendum, as they opted for the “don’t know” option in the questionnaire.

Membership in NATO has a strong support, building of the alliance infrastructure in the country is now rejected, however, four out of ten Czechs would have supported it.

- 55.6% of the public does not agree with allowing NATO to build its infrastructure in the country, 39.1% agree.
- 68.5% of respondents agree that NATO is important for the security of our country.

Already, **53% of Czechs¹⁰ say** that there is pro-Russian and anti-Russian propaganda in the Czech public space and **we cannot trust anything.**

¹⁰ Poll by Czech Television in August 2016, WWW: http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/ct24/sites/default/files/1615635-ct_vyzkum_srpen1968.pdf

Each democratic country has its extremists. The problem is that those fringe political powers are now used by hostile regimes to undermine our political institutions. Once the strong foreign hostile interests get systematically involved, it might become a matter of life and death for our democracies.

This threat gets urgent if three interests get in one line:

1. **domestic economic interest** of those who systematically publish disinformation - they usually get money from adverts on websites which spread lies and fear
2. **domestic political interest** of those to whom it makes sense to use lines which are in the interest of Kremlin – such as promoting **EU exit referendum**
3. **geopolitical interest of Kremlin** – to disrupt domestic political order of a targeted country and have it question its commitments as a European ally

7. Expected Developments

I. Kremlin Intelligence Support for President Zeman in The Campaign (2017)

In January 2018, the Czech Republic will hold a presidential election. Current incumbent Miloš Zeman, a political ally of Kremlin, will seek a second term. He is already popular and he can play a useful geopolitical role for Moscow in the central European region. One can reasonably assume that the **Kremlin will use its Czech infrastructure to do whatever it takes** - including harsh intimidation and black propaganda - **to keep its ally in Prague castle.**

II. EU Exit Referendum Push Incoming (2017)

Data show that EU exit referendum would be a powerful tool for political allies of the Kremlin domestically¹¹, and it would be the strongest strike which could be realistically taken against the geopolitical position of the Czech Republic. President Zeman has already called for **EU exit referendum in July 2016, saying he “will do anything” to arrange it¹².**

¹¹ Current level of EU membership approval rating in September 2016 is around 30%.

¹² He would need a constitutional majority in the Parliament which could be reachable, if these trends continue in a harsh political environment.

This card will give him a comparative advantage against his opponents in the campaign, it will get him more popularity (data show) and it will please Moscow at the same time. Political allies of the Kremlin are successful in connecting the perception of EU membership to be the same thing as the import of Islamists. That is what the Czechs are most afraid of. Disinformation operations are successful in connecting the US and the EU to the blame for Islamist attacks inside Europe.

III. Strong Anti-US Sentiments Transforming Into “Neutrality” - Sovereignty Narrative

As the data show, there is a high level of anti-US sentiments in general, currently massively supported by the disinformation operations. Manipulation of the Czech public is successful in falsely blaming the US for Syrian immigrants coming into Europe, in larger picture creating the narrative “the US are making Europe import Islamists”. With a high degree of support for “neutrality”, there is a solid basis for **aggressive anti-US blame campaigns**, which was already tried out by Czech President Miloš Zeman when he started attacking the US Ambassador in Prague during spring 2015.

8. Central European Context¹³

- The level of support for “neutrality” in Slovakia is by far the highest in the region, almost up to 50 percent of the population.
- The Czech Republic is the most Eurosceptic country in Central Europe and its president recently supported the idea of a referendum on EU membership. At the same time, Czechs are clearly supporting the Western orientation of their country and perceive NATO membership positively. However, **the disinformation campaigns are strongest in the Czech Republic**. 25% of Czechs believe disinformation stories and outlets.
- In Czechia, Slovakia and Hungary, there are some common trends - **about a half the population in all three countries see their country’s position between East and West**, and therefore this segment of the population could become the easiest target for propaganda and misinformation efforts of the Kremlin.

¹³ Source: GLOBSEC 2016 Trends: http://www.cepolicy.org/sites/cepolicy.org/files/attachments/glb_trends_en.pdf

9. Democratic Response: Czech Efforts

There are three steps we need to take to defend our democracies.

1. We need to put hostile disinformation operations on foreign and security policy agenda.

- That is why the Czech Government is currently finishing process called the **Audit of National Security**. We are screening our security infrastructure to find blind spots to fill. This process will establish ***the influence of foreign powers and hybrid threats*** as a legitimate threat to our internal security, next to more traditional areas such as extremism or terrorism. We should talk about it at FAC and JHA Council meetings.
- I am proud to say that the Czech expert is the guy behind the Disinformation Review, a weekly database widely used by security forces. I believe we should do more, **and this team should get more resources to do their job**. They also need counterparts in the member states who would do this agenda on daily basis.

2. We need to publicly challenge and scrutinise those who spread disinformation.

- It should be a part of an honest discussion that once somebody lies, we need to challenge this ungentle behaviour.
- The states themselves must respond in the policy area, but sometimes the non-governmental activities are more flexible. That is why our governments need to **find ways to support independent fact-checkers** such as the Ukrainian StopFake or other institutions countering these faked narratives. We will not create propaganda; we need to expose lies. It is that simple.
- Only a few people know about it, but a network of over **400 volunteer experts** over Europe has emerged during last year. Those people **help the EEAS STRATCOM Team to create its weekly Disinformation Review**. These unknown volunteers already carry the torch of light against systematic conspiracies.

3. Our societies need to disclose and expose disinformation operations.

- Good example of a healthy reaction by democratic society is the **joint statement¹⁴ of 21 editors-in-chief of the main Finnish media**. They called the so-called alternative media for what they

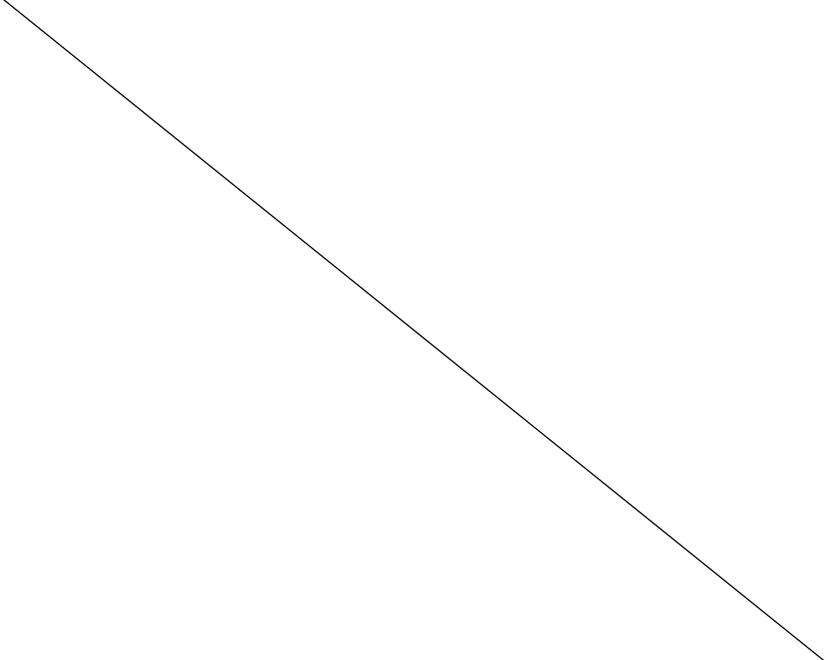
¹⁴ On the Finnish letter: <https://ecpmf.eu/news/threats/archive/finnish-editors-speak-out-against-defamatory-fake-media>

are – spreading lies and disinformation. We need journalist professionals to react to those who only hide their disinformation agenda behind journalist badge. The state can do very little in this field – only media themselves can self-regulate.

- We believe that the government should have an analytical centre which can work with open source and intelligence reports on disinformation operations. It would monitor and gather knowledge on the domestic situation, and closely cooperate with EU and NATO structures. That is why, based on Baltic experience, the **Czech Government is setting up a new Hybrid Threat Centre**. It will monitor the disinformation battlefield and, for example – detect disinformation operations such as the famous “fake letter”¹⁵ – and propose a rapid reaction by government figures or authorities.

¹⁵ Story on fake „letter“ to undermine Swedish support for Ukraine:
<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/29/world/europe/russia-sweden-disinformation.html>

How a Full Scale 50-Measure Response Should Look Like¹⁶:

Measures overview	RESPONSE AREA ONE: Firmly put hostile disinformation efforts on the foreign and security policy agenda.	RESPONSE AREA TWO: Publicly challenge supporters of Kremlin-sponsored disinformation efforts, especially among politicians and public figures.
EU and NATO INSTITUTIONS:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Codify disinformation efforts to European Global Strategy 2. European diplomacy should address disinformation aggression 3. EEAS should triple capacity of the East STRATCOM team 4. AFET should conduct a report and numerous public hearings on disinfo 5. EP should adopt a resolution on counter-measures and 2017 budget requirements 6. NATO STRATCOMCOE and EEAS East STRATCOM need to create common analytical framework for disinformation 7. Disinfo must become one of the key priorities for EU Representations and Delegations, NATO should speak national languages 8. Eurostat should conduct polls on vulnerability of European societies 	

¹⁶ For details, see www.kremlinwatch.eu/strategy

Measures overview	RESPONSE AREA ONE: Firmly put hostile disinformation efforts on the foreign and security policy agenda.	RESPONSE AREA TWO: Publicly challenge supporters of Kremlin-sponsored disinformation efforts, especially among politicians and public figures.
NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Codify disinformation efforts to national security documents 10. Concerned EU governments should make their case 11. FAC should task HighRep to conduct report on disinformation efforts 12. Monitor and name connections between Kremlin and extremist groups 13. Financial Snap Unit should be established and trained for crisis 14. NATO STRATCOMCOE should be supported and used by more member states 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15. Financial and personal connections of politicians to Kremlin must be investigated 16. Special parliamentary committees should investigate and scrutinise 17. Pro-Kremlin politicians should be voted out of posts related to national security 18. Counterintelligence should conduct detailed review reports for their governments 19. Real transparent financing of political parties is a key preventive tool 20. Allies need to cooperate on joined training and support of NGOs
CIVIL SOCIETY:		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21. Civil society should scrutinise and watchdog politicians and institutions 22. Public challenging of disinformation narratives must be strong and regular 23. Debates, mainly in regions, with citizens need to be conducted

Measures overview	RESPONSE AREA THREE: Disclose disinformation campaigns substance and vehicles.	RESPONSE AREA FOUR: Systematically build resilience within free societies.
EU AND NATO INSTITUTIONS	24. EEAS should fund NGO network around its Disinformation Review 25. Do EU comparative study of legal frameworks on quasi-media projects	26. The Commission should appoint 15 million EUR starting 2017 for NGO projects 27. The Commission should conduct a study on vulnerabilities of European institutions to hostile foreign influence
NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS	28. National Disinformation Analysis Teams needs to be established 29. Appoint national governmental coordinator for countering disinformation 30. Conduct national review of available legal tools against disinformation operations 31. Prioritise exposing the Kremlin influence for domestic counterintelligence 32. Transparency of ownership and financing of media is a must 33. Definitions and media legal framework should be debated 34. Media and civic society need to be protected by national security apparatus	35. States should conduct regular and detailed sociological research on grievances 36. Politicians, diplomats and bureaucrats should be trained against influence operations 37. Public broadcasters could dedicate special attention to covering disinformation 38. States need to support university degrees in Eastern European/Russian studies 39. Russian minorities need to be studied, talked to and supported to avoid grievances 40. 10 million EUR allied fund should fund disinfo studies and counter 41. States should pay close attention to influence of disinformation to their security forces 42. Special strategic communication studies programs should be developed
CIVIL SOCIETY	43. Daily myth-busting and challenging of disinformation narratives 44. Disinfo-countering NGO initiatives need to be financially supported 45. Public exposure of companies paying to advertise on pro-Kremlin conspiracy outlets and official Kremlin “media” 46. Detailed and regular polling on disinformation impact must be conducted 47. Journalistic associations need to educate and check their members	48. Journalistic schools should teach about disinformation technics 49. Civic and media education should be taught at primary and secondary schools 50. Think-tanks should present scenarios of future development to make their states prepare for them

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Our vision is that of a free, safe and prosperous Czech Republic within Central Europe that is an integral part of the West.

We help to face aggressive regimes, radicalisation within the society, the spread of authoritarian tendencies and extremist ideologies including Islamism.

We provide decision-makers with expert recommendations and we systematically watch and evaluate their performance. We consider active citizens, accountable politicians, political parties that fulfil their role, as well as cohesive society that shares the values of individual freedom, human dignity and equal rights to be the principle elements of a functioning liberal democracy.

Since 2005, as a non-governmental and a non-profitable organisation which is not linked to any political party, we have pursued research and educational activities. In addition to publishing analytical papers and commentaries for the media, we organise conferences, seminars and training sessions for both experts and the wider public. Our events provide a platform for dialogue amongst politicians, experts, journalists, businesspeople and students.

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