

#WEARENATO

We Are NATO's Eastern Flank



Vilnius/Rukla 2018



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Linas Skirius

NATO training and practical activities "We Are NATO's Eastern Flank"

"We Are NATO's Eastern Flank" training of the #WeAreNATO initiative was first implemented in Lithuania on the 19-21st of October and took place in Vilnius and Rukla military base. The purpose of this project was to introduce high school and college students to NATO, the mission of its troops in Lithuania and one of its biggest threats - disinformation.

Each seminar was dedicated to broadening the knowledge of the participants about NATO's basic principles and about the mission and purpose of its troops in Lithuania. Also, one of the goals of the training was to help participants understand the methods of disinformation that are employed by NATO's opponents, to distinguish fake news from real facts and to learn to double check the information that is easily accessible to all of us.

This publication consists of articles prepared with regards to the lectures and seminars that were presented during the event. All of the presenters unanimously agreed that disinformation is one of the main threats to Lithuanian security at peacetime. Hostile powers tend to affect the society's will to resist and their unity in case of an outside danger as well as their acceptance of European values.

Besides the lecturers, who contributed to this publication, such presenters as the director of the Media department at the Vilnius Institute for Political Analysis, Dalia Bankauskaitė, military journalist at Delfi.lt, Vaidas Saldžiūnas and the director of Res Publica organization Giedrius Sakalauskas also took part in the event. Moreover, the participants had the opportunity to meet with a well known Lithuanian TV show host and producer Algis Ramanauskas, who dedicates a lot of attention to such topics as national security as well as NATO in his work.

Opening remarks: what NATO means to us?



RASA JUKNEVIČIENĖ
President of the NATO Parliamentary
Assembly

When we joined NATO, it seemed to many of us that the story was over. The attitude that Lithuania does not need to take care of its own defense, because we will be protected by NATO, has gradually settled. It was a grave mistake. The year 2014 has come and everything has changed. The naivety ended, we had to return to reality. It's a pity that thousands of Ukrainians had to die for us to understand that.

We have to think of our security every day, just like we brush our teeth. Every young man, who has come to serve in the army, makes an enormous effort, by helping to deter Kremlin's aggression. And deterrence is the key strategy for us today. Only in this way we can save peace and prosperity in our lands. Our geography dictates that our defense is different from that of other NATO nations, therefore, we must walk the extra mile. All of us.

Not only the strengthening of our army matters to us. The everyday work of diplomats, politicians is also crucial. The 21st century began with hybrid attacks. Elections and referendums became the

front lines for securing democracy, NATO and the European Union itself.

It is very important for us to help the countries east of us. Especially those people who want democracy and to be European, to lose the shackles of corrupt, oligarchic governments, like Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia. Only their success can give a sense of different direction to the people of Russia.

History of disinformation and use of propaganda in military: the historical perspective



Dr. DEIVIDAS ŠLEKYS
Associate professor, researcher at Vilnius
University Institute of International
Relations and Political Science

The recent events in Ukraine and Syria have encouraged conversations about new means of warfare. Such notions as “hybrid” or “information” have been used much more often in the public than before. The sudden popularity of these notions reveals that something has essentially changed and that a new qualitatively different era of warfare has begun. The use of propaganda and disinformation could be considered as the original features of this fresh new era.

Although this originality is rather conditional as the use of propaganda in warfare itself is not a new feature at all. The significance lies in its latest applications. If we looked at the history of warfare, we would see that even in the ancient times enemies used spies and phony fugitives, who spread misleading information among the opponents and affected their game plan. One of the most important scrips on the thought of warfare, written by the Chinese strategist Sun Tzu (who is thought to have lived in 6th century B.C.), reveals that the most significant part of war belongs to activities that can psychologically demoralize and break the enemy. After that, the soldiers of the op-

posing side enter the battle field believing that they have already lost. Some of the modern day scientist and warfare specialists would say that we have entered the age of Sun Tzu.

When talking about warfare, it is always important to determine, which level of warfare one has in mind: strategic, tactical or operational. Country leaders, who tried to win the sympathy of citizens of the neighbouring countries, took on the strategic level. A great example of such measures is the propaganda war between Sigismund I The Old, the leader of The Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and the Grand Duke of Moscow as well as the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire before and after the battle of Orsha. These two leaders wrote letters to leaders of other countries and tried to form a negative opinion about their opponent or win their sympathies symbolically or financially. Similarly, after having won an important battle the son and successor of Sigismund I The Old, Sigismund II Augustus, would write about his victory to the leaders of the West. The purpose of this was to prove that it is not only important to win the physical battle, but also the ideological one.

Approaching nowadays, the warfare has become more complex, therefore, the role of disinformation and propaganda

has changed and expanded. Today, many would say that the western warfare has been greatly influenced by the ideas of Napoleon's wars. However, it is usually forgotten to underline, that Napoleon was only able to successfully apply the famous division strategy and win battles, because a lot of work and preparation was directed towards misleading the enemy. Hence, the enemy was not able to determine the direction of his army's attack. Such activities became known as ideas of deception and masking in the long run and were widely applied during the World War II.

Applications of the tactical level of disinformation are probably the most well known. The most common form of this type of propaganda were flyers, which were thrown out of airplanes and contained incites to surrender, threats or false information regarding the surrender of the home front. The information in the flyers was reinforced by messages on the radio or through the speakers on the front line. The aim of these measures was to break the will of the soldiers before the battle had even begun.

However, it is important to point out that for ages the informational battle was executed only as a measure that supplements the physical fight. It was believed that only the physical defeat of the enemy would bring victory. Misleading, deceiving or psychologically breaking the enemy could only ease the fight, but nothing could replace the physical battle. That is why events in Ukraine and Syria could be considered as the beginning of the new era of warfare. It seems that in these conflicts the physical battle is pushed back to the second place and only compliments the informational war.





NATO Coverage in The Baltic States: Who's Dominating the English Language Space?



LUKAS ANDRIUKAITIS

**Open source analyst, Atlantic Council's
Digital Forensic Research Lab,
associate analyst, Vilnius Institute of
Political Analysis**

The Russian annexation of Crimea and invasion into Eastern Ukraine in 2014 served as a wake-up call for NATO countries. Not only had it helped to understand the threats of hybrid warfare, but also to rally public support for increase in NATO defense measures. One of the most successfully implemented measures was the Enhanced Forward Presence Battalions on the Eastern NATO flank. The Baltic states and Poland each received a multinational battalion of NATO troops making the vulnerable Eastern flank a hard nut to crack for the Kremlin. As a result, Kremlin again turned to information warfare methods to counter these measures by trying to turn local populations against the troops and donor countries to lose faith in the idea. Using a social media listening tool "Buzzsumo" we were able to investigate which articles and posts regarding NATO in the Baltic countries were the most engaged with. But what is more, we were able to see which domains and platforms dominated the public space. In our latest research, we investigate different media

sources and their content that was engaged with the most during the past two years to see who dominated the public space in the English language regarding NATO in the Baltic States.

Social Listening Tool and Methodology

"Buzzsumo" is one of the top social media analytics tools. It comes with a powerful social media search engine that helps to find and analyze the best performing content related to a specific niche. Originally used in marketing for doing content and competitive research, this tool is also very useful in analyzing information warfare trends. In this case, we were interested to see the most engaged with media content with regards to NATO in the three Baltic states. We used the keywords "NATO Lithuania", "NATO Latvia", "NATO Estonia" and "NATO Baltic States". We were able to check two years worth of data from July 21, 2016 to July 21, 2018, also taking a deeper look at February 2017, when the first Enhanced Forward Presence (EFP) troops entered the Baltic States. Sorting the media content by the most engaged with criteria, we were able to see which media outlets were the most influential in the English language digital space.



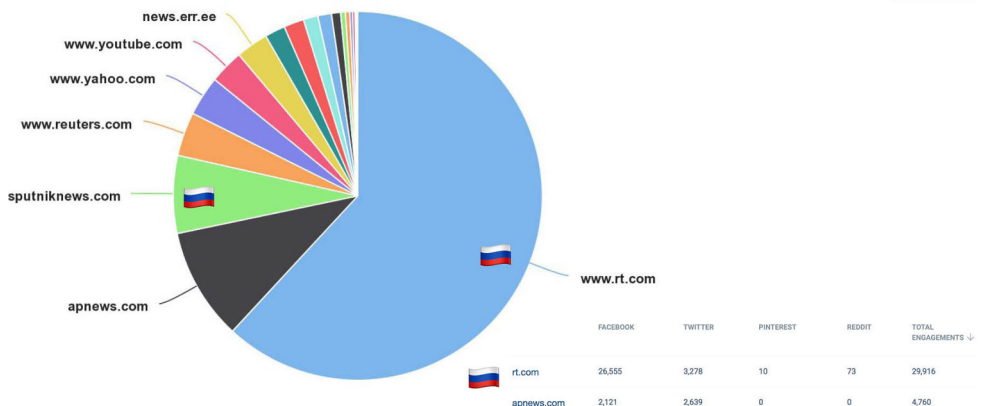
Estonia

In the case of keywords “NATO Estonia”, Russian state funded media outlet RT dominated the engagement stats, with almost thirty thousand engagements. The second most popular outlet was US based “Associated Press” with almost four thousand engagements and the third was

Russian state funded media outlet “Sputnik News”, with slightly over three thousand engagements. As we can see from the graph, Russian state funded media outlets garnered over two-thirds of the total engagements in the past two years.

Most Engaged With Media Content: ‘NATO Estonia’

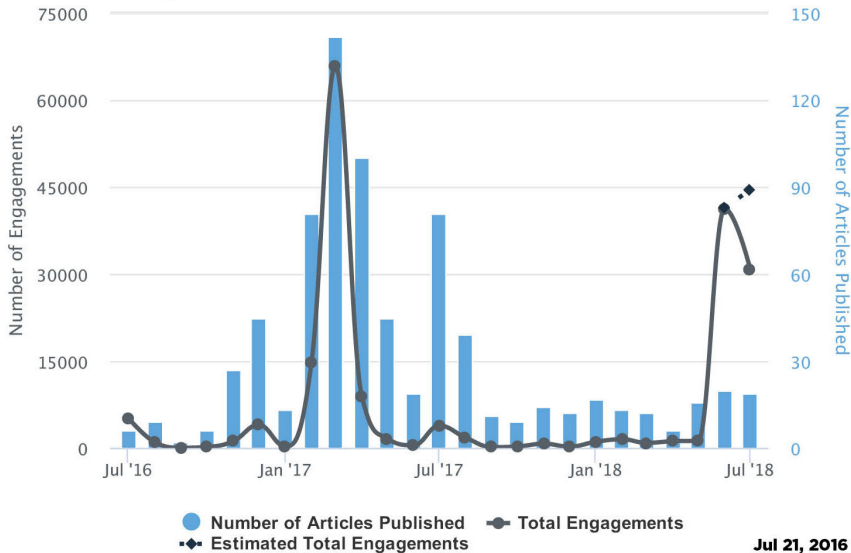
Top Domains on All Networks



Source – “Buzzsumo”

"Buzzsumo" analysis also provides a time graph, which demonstrates the most active months of engagement. In this case, the bars peaked at the period from February 2017 to April 2017.

Most Engaged With Media Content: 'NATO Estonia'



Jul 21, 2016 - Jul 21, 2018

Source – "Buzzsumo"

We also took a closer look into the most engaged with articles in the periods of February 2017 and March 2017, right after the first EFP soldiers reached the Baltics. "Buzzsumo" suggested that amongst the three most popular articles in both months, two were from Russian state funded media outlets.

Most Engaged With Media Content: 'NATO Estonia'

Most Engaged Articles for NATO Estonia (February 1st, 2017 - February 28th, 2017) Export

	Facebook Engagements	Twitter Shares	Pinterest Shares	Reddit Engagements	Number of Links	Evergreen Score	Total Engagements
US tanks, infantry fighting vehicles arrive in Estonia amid NATO buildup on Russian borders By RT - Feb 6, 2017 rt.com	6.4K	619	5	11	80	5	7K
Estonia Worried Sexy Russian Agents Could Provoke Bar Fights With NATO Troops By Sputnik - Feb 21, 2017 sputniknews.com	2K	79	2	2	13	2	2.1K
Estonia 'not afraid' to be on Nato frontline, president says By Richard Milne - Feb 9, 2017 ft.com	1K	5	0	0	15	0	1K

Most Engaged Articles for NATO Estonia (March 1st, 2017 - March 31st, 2017) Export

	Facebook Engagements	Twitter Shares	Pinterest Shares	Reddit Engagements	Number of Links	Evergreen Score	Total Engagements
UK troops in Estonia to deter 'Russian aggression' By Bbc News - Mar 18, 2017 bbc.co.uk	24.4K	1.2K	1	89	7	5	25.7K
UK troops deployed in Estonia to 'defend NATO' from Russia (VIDEO) By RT - Mar 18, 2017 rt.com	8.3K	756	1	5	23	3	9.1K
Over 100 NATO military vehicles arrive in Estonia as part of 'biggest deployment since Cold War' By RT - Mar 23, 2017 rt.com	4.9K	557	3	0	18	4	5.9K

Source – "Buzzsumo"



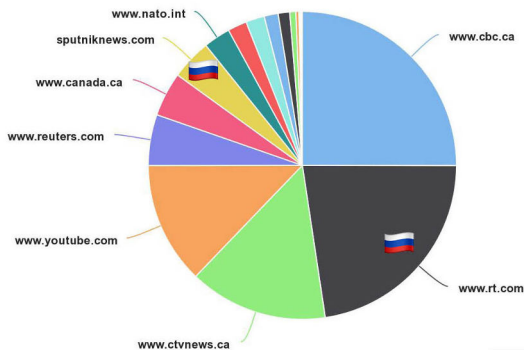
Latvia

Meanwhile, with the keywords "NATO Latvia", the engagement stats were less dominated by Russian state funded media. The most popular and the third most popular outlets were "Canadian Broadcasting Corporation" with six and a half thousand en-

gagements and "CTV News" outlet with three and a half thousand engagements. Russian state funded outlet RT came in second place with almost six thousand engagements.

Most Engaged With Media Content: 'NATO Latvia'

Top Domains on All Networks



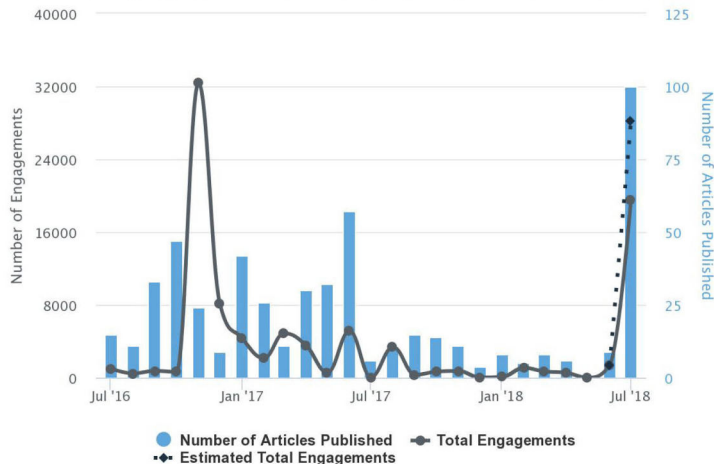
	FACEBOOK	TWITTER	PINTEREST	REDDIT	TOTAL ENGAGEMENTS
cbc.ca	5,207	489	0	850	6,546
rt.com	4,951	931	3	26	5,911
ctvnews.ca	3,417	327	0	56	3,800

Jul 21, 2016 - Jul 21, 2018

Source – "Buzzsumo"

The time graph also did not show any particularly high engagement during the first months of EFP deployment. Overall number of published articles over the two year span also seemed to be less than in the case of Estonia or Lithuania.

Most Engaged With Media Content: 'NATO Latvia'



Jul 21, 2016 - Jul 21, 2018

Source – "Buzzsumo"

Looking at the most engaged with articles from February 2017 and March 2017, similar patterns appeared. Russian state funded media had a highly engaged with article in both February and March.

Most Engaged With Media Content: 'NATO Latvia'

Most Engaged Articles for NATO Latvia (February 1st, 2017 - February 28th, 2017) [Export](#)

	Facebook Engagements	Twitter Shares	Pinterest Shares	Reddit Engagements	Number of Links	Evergreen Score	Total Engagements
Spain plans to send 6 tanks & 350 troops to Latvia as part of NATO buildup – reports By RT – Feb 15, 2017 rt.com	1K	187	0	0	10	2	1.2K
Winter march: US troops conclude NATO drill in Latvia Feb 6, 2017 youtube.com	227	264	0	1	7	2	490
Video: Winter march: US troops conclude NATO drill in Latvia By Adrien – Feb 10, 2017 youtube.com	227	2	0	0	5	2	229

Most Engaged Articles for NATO Latvia (March 1st, 2017 - March 31st, 2017) [Export](#)

	Facebook Engagements	Twitter Shares	Pinterest Shares	Reddit Engagements	Number of Links	Evergreen Score	Total Engagements
Rezekne, Latvia, Frets About Trump NATO Stance, War With Russia By Alexander Smith – Mar 20, 2017 rt.com	4.3K	446	0	23	1	6	4.7K
Turning Blind Eye to Neo-Nazi Marches in Latvia 'Shame for EU, NATO' By Sputnik – Mar 17, 2017 sputniknews.com	22	38	0	0	2	0	60
Defense Ministry dispels false reports over NATO troops in Latvia By Englemis.lv – Mar 13, 2017 ism.lv	11	24	0	0	0	0	35

Source – "Buzzsumo"



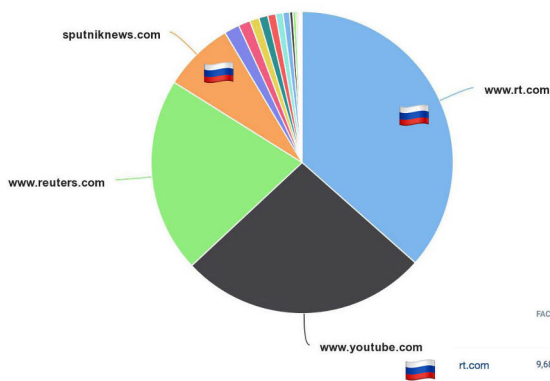
Lithuania

As of Lithuania, RT took a leading position with approximately one-third of all the engagements. The second most engaged platform was "YouTube", but to understand what kind of content was post-

ed on this platform, it requires a more thorough investigation. "Sputnik News" appeared as the fourth most engaged with platform.

Most Engaged With Media Content: 'NATO Lithuania'

Top Domains on All Networks



Jul 21, 2016 - Jul 21, 2018

	FACEBOOK	TWITTER	PINTEREST	REDDIT	TOTAL ENGAGEMENTS
rt.com	9,686	1,645	11	31	11,373
youtube.com	7,839	304	0	110	8,253
reuters.com	4,251	1,861	0	386	6,498

Source – "Buzzsumo"

On February 2017, the two most engaged with articles were written by "RT" and "Sputnik News". Only the third most popular was provided by Bloomberg, and garnered roughly half of the engagements of the RT article. On March, the most popular article only had 64 engagements, compared to one and a half thousand on February. None of the most popular articles on March were of Russian origin.

Most Engaged With Media Content: 'NATO Lithuania'

Most Engaged Articles for NATO Lithuania (February 1st, 2017 - February 28th, 2017)

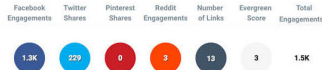
Export



NATO troops from Germany arrive in Lithuania as Trump pledges support for alliance

By RT - Feb 7, 2017
rt.com

Save
View Backlinks
View Sharers
Share



Germany Deploys Tanks in Lithuania as Part of Mission to 'Intimidate' Russia

By Sputnik - Feb 27, 2017
sputniknews.com

Save
View Backlinks
View Sharers
Share



One NATO Member Thinks Trump Is Right

By Darius Simonas - Feb 6, 2017
bloomberg.com

Save
View Backlinks
View Sharers
Share



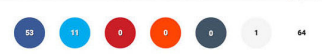
Most Engaged Articles for NATO Lithuania (March 1st, 2017 - March 31st, 2017)

Export

Lithuania Wants NATO Command To Move Closer To Eastern Borders

Mar 17, 2017
rferl.org

Save
View Backlinks
View Sharers
Share



NATO, Nordic and Baltic air force commanders meeting in Lithuania to discuss security

Mar 22, 2017
baltictimes.com

Save
View Backlinks
View Sharers
Share



Another information attack against NATO troops in Lithuania - German battalion leader in the crosshair

By Valdas SaidAidAunas, Delfi... - Mar 31, 2017
delfi.lt

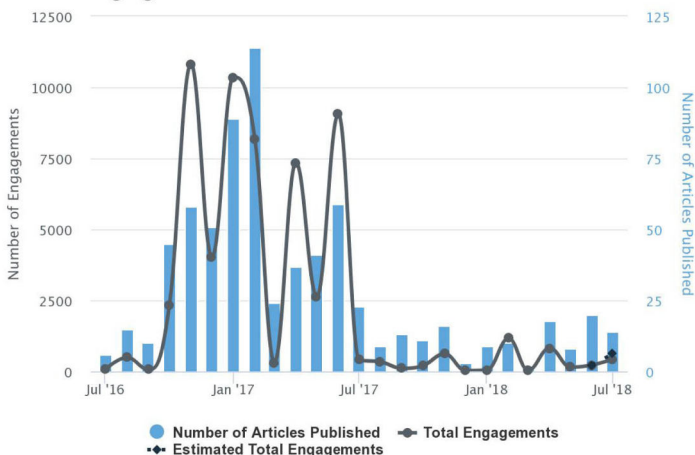
Save
View Backlinks
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Share



Source - "Buzzsumo"

With regards to the timeline, "NATO Lithuania" keywords had most articles published on February 2017. Large spikes of engagement stats were also visible around the same period of time.

Most Engaged With Media Content: 'NATO Lithuania'



Jul 21, 2016 - Jul 21, 2018

Source - "Buzzsumo"





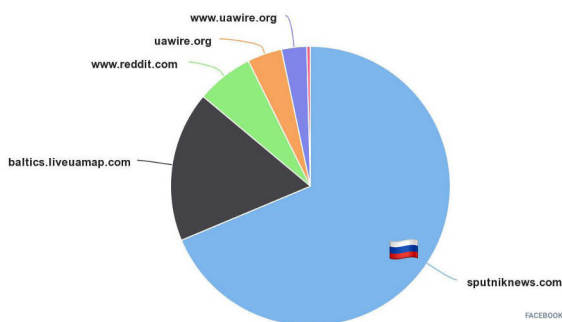
Baltic States

Finally, we have analyzed media content with regards to the Baltic States as a whole, using the keywords "NATO Baltic States". The situation was mostly similar to Estonia, where one outlet dominated over two-thirds of all the engagements.

In this case, the dominant outlet was the Russian state funded media outlet "Sputnik News". It had five times more engagements than the runner-up Baltics.livua-map.com.

Most Engaged With Media Content: 'NATO Baltic States'

Top Domains on All Networks



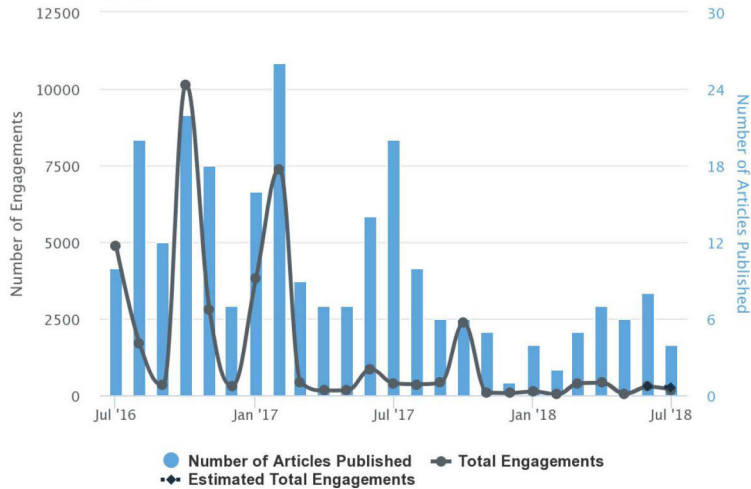
	FACEBOOK	TWITTER	PINTEREST	REDDIT	TOTAL ENGAGEMENTS ↓
 sputniknews.com	1,263	234	10	4	1,511
baltics.livua-map.com	64	296	0	23	383
reddit.com	4	21	0	120	145

Jul 21, 2016 - Jul 21, 2018

Source - "Buzzsumo"

The analysis of the timeline revealed a similar pattern to Lithuania's and Estonia's cases. A gradual build-up to February 2017 and a slow decline with occasional peaks. February 2017, again had the most articles published and one of the highest numbers of engagements.

Most Engaged With Media Content: 'NATO Baltic States'





Jul 21, 2016 - Jul 21, 2018

Source - "Buzzsumo"




As of most engaged with media content, February 2017 had the most popular Russian media article, written by RT. This article was more than five times more popular than the "CBS News" run-ner-up. As in Lithuania's case, March had no highly engaged with articles and none of them were of Russian origin.

Most Engaged With Media Content: 'NATO Baltic States'

Most Engaged Articles for NATO Baltic States (February 1st, 2017 - February 28th, 2017) Export

	Facebook Engagements	Twitter Shares	Pinterest Shares	Reddit Engagements	Number of Links	Evergreen Score	Total Engagements
 It's NATO - not Russia - that has deployed tanks to Poland & Baltic States' - George Galloway By RT - Feb 4, 2017 rt.com	4,762	182	2	0	15	4	5,7K
 Baltic states, ex-NATO commander Breedlove worry Putin may send 100k Russian troops to Belarus for Zapad drill By Tucker Reels - Feb 10, 2017 cbsnews.com	940	169	7	10	43	6	1,1K
 Baltic states seek more NATO help ahead of Russian exercise By Andrius Sytas - Feb 9, 2017 reuters.com	169	144	0	10	36	4	320

Most Engaged Articles for NATO Baltic States (March 1st, 2017 - March 31st, 2017) Export

	Facebook Engagements	Twitter Shares	Pinterest Shares	Reddit Engagements	Number of Links	Evergreen Score	Total Engagements
 Rising Tensions Between Russia and NATO in the Baltic States The Complete Series Mar 4, 2017 youtube.com	223	4	0	0	0	1	232
 Deterring Russian Aggression in the Baltic States: What it Takes to Win By David A. - Mar 1, 2017 rand.org	14	97	0	1	5	0	112
 U.S.: Secretary Of State To Discuss Strengthening NATO In Baltic Meeting Mar 21, 2017 starfor.com	2	25	0	0	0	0	27

Source - "Buzzsumo"

Findings

As we can see from the analysis, all of the keywords concerning NATO in the Baltic countries had exceptionally high Russian media influence. Not only was the engagement unnaturally high, but also the content was critical of NATO. We can also observe a gradual build-up, reaching a peak in February of 2017, when the first EFP soldiers were deployed in the Baltics, followed by a slow decline in the reporting and engagement. This pattern also suggests of a possible well thought-through informational operation with clear preparation and systematic execution.

Out of the four different keyword searches, Latvia stood out as the least dominated by the Russian media articles. Various reasons could have caused this effect, varying from possible higher efforts to work in Russian language to influence the local Russian speaking community, or even the efforts of communication of the hosted EFP troops. As we can see, a number of most engaged with articles in Latvia were of Canadian media outlets. We did not see the same effect in other keyword searches that we used.

Another important observation worth mentioning is that none of the most engaged with outlets were of local Baltic countries origin. This shows that the countries hosting the EFP troops are not involved in forming the public opinions in the most used NATO language. Even more analysis could be done focusing on the Russian language or the local Baltic States languages. What is more, it would be interesting to see the patterns in the languages of the hosted EFP troops, as "RT" and "Sputnik News" have popular media outlets in French and especially in German language.

To have a better understanding of what were the narratives before and after

EFP troops were deployed, it would require for a more thorough investigation. Knowing the nature of information that Russian state funded media, such as RT and "Sputnik News" are providing, these findings raise concerns.

Conclusion

Social listening tools have more use than just observing marketing trends. "Buzzsumo" gives us a chance to take a closer look at the information warfare trends and to see who is setting the narratives in the wider scale. As we can see from the graphs, Russian state funded media outlets are playing an exceptionally big role in forming public opinions in English speaking digital space. Typically, vast majority of all articles written by these outlets on NATO topics are usually highly negative. Keeping in mind the fact that this analysis concerns the English speaking environment, we can suspect an effort to manipulate public opinions towards NATO in the Baltic region, especially with regards to the deployment of NATO EFP troops. This is especially worrisome as in some cases ("NATO Estonia" and "NATO Baltic States") Russian media outlets garnered over two-thirds of the total engagements over two years.

There is little question that the information narratives about NATO are dominated by Kremlin outlets in Russian language, but it is worrisome to learn that in some cases the narratives are also dominated in English language.

Disinformation in the Russian-Ukrainian Conflict: Lessons Learnt



MAJORAS TOMAS BALKUS
Defense Staff of the Lithuanian
Armed Forces

The Russian-Ukraine conflict that started in 2013 reveals how the weakness of the society's resistance to disinformation and the informational influence from outside and inside the country can lead to a difficult struggle for the country's territorial integrity. The ability of the state to respond to aggression depends directly on the ability of its citizens, especially those who make strategic decisions, to distinguish false information and to take the necessary measures in time to protect themselves from negative hostile influence. If the troops from a different country safely crossed the border without facing any resistance, despite the fact that they were not wearing insignia, it means that the state's self-defense function did not work. Furthermore, it was potentially affected way in advance as the foreign soldiers rushed through the borders.

The Law on the Provision of Information to the Public of the Republic of Lithuania states what disinformation is. According to the law, it is a deliberately disseminating false information aimed at the wider public. During peacetime, the states that comply with international agreements would not allow themselves to disseminate

false information, but during a military conflict, the conflicting parties use misinformation not only to mislead military forces, but also to mislead strategic decision-makers of the rival states.

Ukraine had to face a complex hybrid Kremlin tactic, when disguised military action was combined with malicious manipulations of information and people's consciousness. Kremlin used and still uses mass media to disrupt and discredit Ukrainian authorities and Ukrainian Armed Forces. Attempts are made to suggest that the existing Ukrainian government is illegal, ineffective, stealing money from citizens and that nothing has changed in the country since 2013. Both the government and the soldiers who defended their homeland, with a particular focus on the formerly very active Ukrainian volunteer battalions, were and still are compared with the Nazis and portrayed with the corresponding symbolism. Such Kremlin tactics aims to influence Ukrainians' trust in their country or even to turn Ukrainians against it.

At the beginning of the conflict, the international media received well-prepared reports from the Kremlin-controlled media out of the front line that were filled with hostile anti-Ukrainian narrative. In the first months of war, Ukrainian Armed

Forces were lacking able military journalists and media professionals who could help to secure dominance in their information space.

A variety of fake stories appeared in the first months of the conflict. Some of the famous fake stories argued that Ukrainian soldiers allegedly crucified a Ukrainian boy, or that Ukrainian forces downed the Malaysian airplane (flight MH-17). These stories that might have looked convincing at first, now look like self-evident lies. Only due to enormous efforts of the Ukrainian volunteers, and later on the efforts of the international community, these stories were debunked and evidence of Kremlin's lies were gathered.

However, Ukraine had to learn its lessons and do its homework already by actively defending the territorial integrity of the country. In 2014, the Ukrainian Crisis Media Center was set up, where representatives of the armed forces delivered presentations on the latest developments that are happening at the front lines. The roles of Press Secretaries were created

in the Ukrainian Armed Forces and military journalists were rapidly trained to professionally report on what is really happening at the front lines. The formal and informal information forces began to operate in the country, which began to resist the informational influence of the Kremlin. Ukrainian society has gradually learned how to distinguish lies and to be more critical of the information that it is available on public information channels. However, military operations in the eastern part of Ukraine have not ended yet and the Crimean peninsula is still annexed by Russia. It seems that a long and debilitating information confrontation is imminent.

↑ <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.280580>



ABC of Propaganda



DR. NERIJUS MALIUKEVIČUS
Researcher at Vilnius University In-
stitute of International Relations and
Political Science.

In the modern age of (dis)information, we are constantly bombarded with informational messages, news, calls for protest and to sign petitions. The communication skills and media literacy become vital for audiences who want to preserve a clear, undistorted view of the real world and to avoid manipulation and deception. The spread of media literacy, promoting public resistance to propaganda, must become a priority.

Psychologist Everett L. Shostrom in his book "Man The Manipulator" (1967) states that the best antidote to manipulation is the actualization: apathy can be over-

come by activity, control by freedom, cynicism by trust, and lies are overcome by openness and truth!

Alfred McClung Lee and Elizabeth Briant Lee, American sociologists, demonstrated well before the Second World War, a strategy of how openness can defeat lies. The period before the war was saturated with aggressive propaganda and manipulation. The American Institute for Propaganda Analysis (1937-1942) instructed these experts to reveal the most prominent propaganda techniques and bring them to the public. This is how the book "The Fine Art of Propaganda" (1939) appeared, in which seven propaganda techniques on how to manipulate people's hearts and minds were visualized.

In the global age of (dis)information, these seven propaganda techniques are relevant again:

1. Labeling - in order to discredit an idea or an argument, bad or damaging epithets are used.

According to Alfred and Elizabeth Lee, ugly epithets and insults have always played a pivotal role throughout the history. Reputation can be destroyed, human achievements can be humiliated, people can be even locked into prisons, or start waging wars. Such epithets can be directed against individuals, groups, communities, tribes, neighbours, states, regions, people and races.

During the Russian aggression in Ukraine, the following epithets were used: "ukrop", "chachol". State Kremlin TV called the new Ukrainian government "Kiev junta".

2. Glossy generalizations - when something is associated with "greater good". This technique is used to try and convince us of something we do not even verify.

The Fine Art of Propaganda states that we often believe in or fight for ideas that are coined as "greater good": for example "civilization", "Christianity", "righteousness", "democracy", "patriotism", "motherhood", "fatherhood", "science", "medicine", "health" or "love". For the purpose of propaganda analysis, we can label these as "glossy generalizations". These labels mean different things to different audiences and they are also often manipulated. It is not a critique of these ideas; on the contrary, it is a critique of how these ideas are manipulated by propagandists.

After Russia's aggression in Crimea, Russian politicians often use the arguments of "historical justice" to explain and justify this campaign.

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3. Transfer - this method provides authority, justification, and reputation for something respectful of the other so that the latter is acceptable; or vice versa - with the help of authority and reputation, the propagandist tries to force us to reject arguments.

Using this transfer technique symbols are constantly used. The American Institute for Propaganda Analysis warns:

"The propagandist using the cross transmits the holiness of the Christian religion to his program. A sign symbolizing patriotism for the nation, performs a similar function." These symbols create emotions. In our eyes, at the speed of light, this creates the whole spectrum of our feelings for faith or nation. "

Propagandists rarely use one symbol. Music, images, uniforms, rituals - all are combined and used.

This technique is particularly evident in the Kremlin's "St George Ribbon" campaign, which illustrates the idea of belonging to the united "Russian world". Separatists fighting in Donbas, are using the same ribbons.

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4. Certificate - when respected or hated people say that a certain idea, program, product or person is good or bad.

"CNN showed ...", "The boss said ...", "My doctor claims ..." or "Our minister approves ...". Alfred and Elizabeth Lee point out that some of these testimonies may focus more on what they say rather than the content of their own arguments and ideas. This creates the illusion that "such or such bad person supports such or such idea, therefore, the idea itself is bad," or "such or such good person, supports such or such idea, and therefore the idea is good."

In the context of the Putin campaign in Crimea, there were famous authors or texts that seemed to prove Russia's historical rights to the Crimea.

5. From the Nation - this is the way a speaker tries to convince his audience that he and his ideas are good, because they are "ordinary people."

Politicians, leaders of the public often find favor in saying that they are the same people as "all of us". They publicly demonstrate their commitment to small children, ordinary human beings and habits. They invite journalists to their homes, unexpectedly discover and serve a homemade apple pie in the kitchen. In short, these politicians win our hearts and minds by demonstrating how simple they are, just like all of us.

This technology has been mastered by the Russian President Vladimir Putin and his team of experts: he likes to take pictures not only with puppies, but also with dangerous wildlife animals. It demonstrates to the public his courage and masculinity.

6. Deck of Cards - This is a technique whereby facts or information, images, logical and illogical statements are mixed like cards to create the best effect.

What can be called "deck of cards technique" is the depiction of everything in black or white, good or evil, without any shadows or nuances. The authors of "The Fine Art of Propaganda" agreed with a thesis from the September 1, 1937, The New York Times article: "What's really dangerous is not the propaganda itself, but the monopoly of it."

A good example of this technique is how all the Ukrainian Euromaidan groups are presented in the Russian state media as "extremists" or even "neo-Nazis".

7. Join the Bandwagon - "Everyone, or at least the majority, does it." With this technique, the propagandist tries to convince us that all the members of the group support the propagandist program, and therefore we must follow this crowd to "join the bandwagon".

Joining a bandwagon, according to Alfred and Elizabeth Lee, is a mean of making us follow the crowd and embracing the propagandist program as a whole without analyzing evidence, arguments for or against. In this line of arguments this thesis dominates: "Everyone does it. Why don't you join?" A certain appeal to a crowd, group, faith, race, gender, nation.

This technique was especially important for Soviet communist propaganda, which was focused on the masses. Fearing that the crowd will reject them for a different personal opinion, people support official ideologies, political agendas and dominant narratives.

Do not rush!

Beware of your preconceptions!

Stay away from the decisions until you have evaluated all the information!

Analyze!

European security and defence policy: an agenda for 2019-2024



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Day by day, the May 2019 European elections are getting closer. In these elections, citizens from across the EU will elect the MEPs who will represent them in Brussels and in Strasbourg during the next European Parliament's five-year mandate. One of the main concerns that voters are likely to have in their mind when casting their ballots next year is security. An opinion survey from autumn 2017, for example, found that the number of Europeans who think the EU is a secure place to live in has fallen significantly – from 79% in 2015 to 68% in 2017 – in the space of just two years.¹ This means that one of the EU's top priorities after the elections needs to be the reversal of this negative trend. Europeans across the Union should be able to feel safe and secure, wherever they might live.

One way in which the EU can contribute towards boosting European citizens' sense of security is by having an ambitious agenda and delivering concrete results in security and defence. After all, this is an area where EU level cooperation enjoys significant public support: 75% all of

EU citizens support a common security and defence policy in the EU.² Much has already been achieved in this area, especially since 2017. Yet, a lot more can and should be done, and the EU has both the ability and the means to protect Europe and European citizens from the various threats they are currently facing. The EU's aims in the area of security and defence for the next five-year period could be divided into four main categories: (1) responding to cyber threats and Artificial Intelligence (AI)-related challenges, (2) further developing the EU's existing institutional structures, (3) improving the EU's political readiness to address crises in its neighbourhood, and (4) strengthening the EU's partnerships with third-countries.

An agenda

First, the EU needs to follow actively and respond to the unfolding revolution in military technology, which is bringing AI-powered weapons systems to the battlefield. The world is currently experiencing an AI arms race, which is fuelled by increased great power competition between Russia, China and the US; new scientific breakthroughs and new business opportunities, brought about by those breakthroughs. An Economist spe-

cial report from January 2018 warned that autonomous weapons systems pose 'daunting ethical, legal, policy and practical problems, potentially creating dangers of an entirely new and, some think, existential kind'.³

The EU should therefore build on the European Commission's April 2018 communication titled Artificial Intelligence for Europe and develop its first-ever AI Security Strategy. Given that the 2016 Global Strategy, the most recent document outlining the EU's overall foreign and security policy vision, contains only one passing reference to AI (i.e. in the context of emphasising the importance of global rules), the AI Security Strategy would (1) provide a comprehensive analysis of the security and defence-related challenges that AI is likely to pose for Europe, (2) provide an overview of the EU's capabilities in this area and identify critical shortfalls, (3) and explain how those capabilities could be used to tackle AI-related challenges.

Second, the EU needs to further develop its existing institutional structures in the field of security and defence. The first priority is to maintain the current momentum to transform the EU into a more credible and capable international actor, which has been driven by instability in the Union's neighbourhood, the UK's

Brexit referendum, and the 2016 US Presidential elections. This momentum has already led to the establishment of Permanent Structured Cooperation and the launch of the European Defence Fund, for example. However, both initiatives are in their infancy, and their success will depend on effective direction and the political leaders' willingness to invest both time and financial resources in their fine tuning.

EU member states also need to be pushed to increase their defence spending to ensure that Europe will have sufficient financial resources to develop and adopt new technologies and to protect and defend its citizens. In 2016, they spent only 1.3% of total EU GDP in defence.⁴ NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has noted several times that, after the UK has left the EU, 80% NATO's total defence spending will come from non-EU NATO allies.⁵ This is unsustainable if the EU wants to be a credible and capable international actor and take steps towards strategic autonomy. By making the effort to spend 2% of GDP in defence, the EU would make clear that it wants to continue to be a security provider rather than slowly but surely transform into a mere security consumer. This would also increase the Union's appeal as a partner on the world stage. The EU should also



develop its mutual assistance clause (i.e. Article 42(7) TEU), which was invoked for the first time after the 2015 Paris terrorist attacks. More precisely, there should be a better understanding of the scenarios, in which the article could be invoked, and the assistance that an attacked member state could expect from its EU partners.

Third, the EU needs to improve its political readiness to address autonomously low- to medium-intensity crises in its southern neighbourhood in the Middle East and North Africa Region. In addition, the Union needs to become more prepared to address high-intensity crises and crises in its eastern neighbourhood (i.e. ones involving Russia) in cooperation with its international partners, especially the US.

The EU's security and defence policy has existed for 15 years now, and more than 30 military and civilian operations have been launched in its framework, primarily in the Balkans and Africa. Yet, the Union continues to struggle when it is expected to intervene even in relatively low intensity crises. In 2014, for example, it took the EU three months and five force generation conferences to launch a modest 750-strong operation to the Central African Republic to contribute to the provision of a safe and secure environment in the conflict-ridden country. Another symptom of the EU's intervention wariness is that the Union has still never used its Battlegroups, even though the first ones became operational in 2005. Thus, although France's new European Intervention Initiative is not an EU instrument, it is a step to the right direction, because it seeks to increase the participating countries' readiness to intervene in crises by facilitating the development of a common strategic culture.

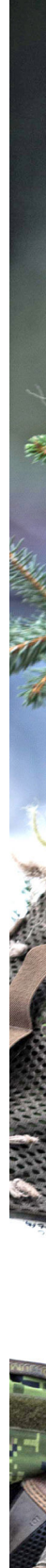
Fourth, the EU needs to develop new partnerships in the field of security and defence and enhance the existing ones. Most urgently, the EU needs to develop a partnership with the UK.

Although the UK will continue to be in-

involved in Europe's security architecture after it has left the EU by the end of March 2019, it is important that the Union develops a new and ambitious partnership with London when it comes to security and defence as soon as possible after Brexit. The reason for this is that the UK has many highly positive attributes that make it an indispensable partner for the Union: it has one of Europe's largest military budgets, it maintains a full-spectrum capability that allows to intervene in low-intensity crises and fight conventional wars, it has a highly developed and competitive defence industry, and it does not hesitate to stand up against Europe's adversaries. Thus, the EU should seek to involve the UK in its security and defence policy and in initiatives such as Permanent Structured Cooperation as far as is politically possible for post-Brexit British governments. The EU should also consider opening the European Defence Fund for British companies on a case-by-case basis, especially when they are co-operating with EU-based defence companies.

Conclusion

This is by no means a complete security and defence agenda for the EU for 2019-2024. The Union will also have to deal with many other issues that were not mentioned in this brief paper such as the on-going war in Ukraine's Donbas region, the civil war in Syria and the forthcoming reconstruction of the country, as well as hybrid warfare. However, the agenda outlined above provides the EU with a set of concrete deliverables, which, if delivered and communicated effectively to European citizens, could help boost Europeans' sense of security wherever they might live in the Union.



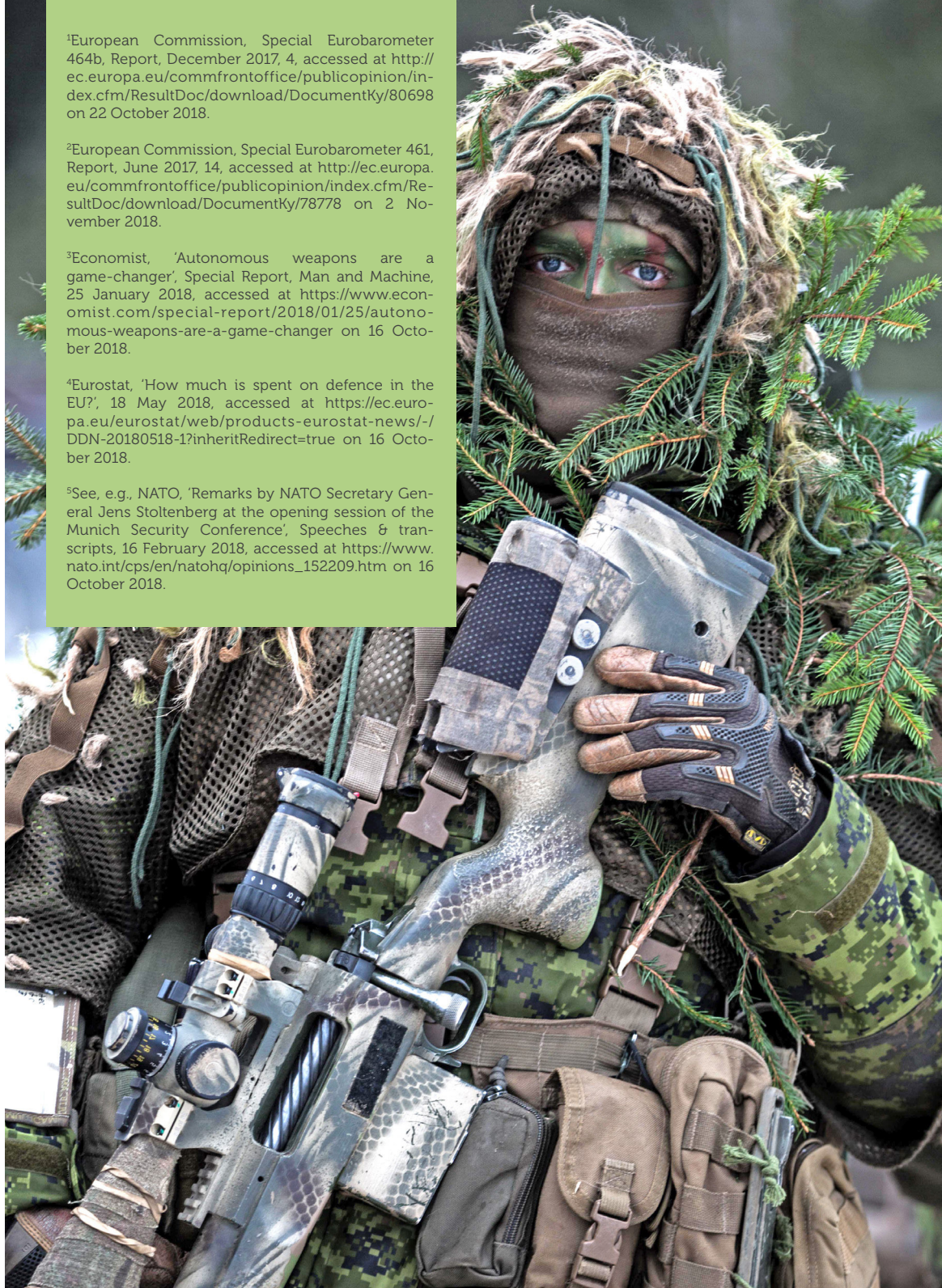
¹European Commission, Special Eurobarometer 464b, Report, December 2017, 4, accessed at <http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/ResultDoc/download/DocumentKy/80698> on 22 October 2018.

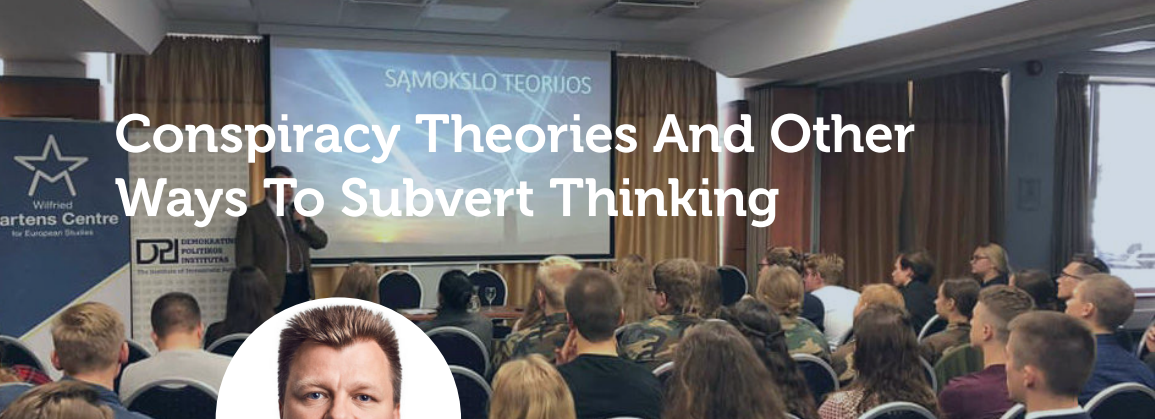
²European Commission, Special Eurobarometer 461, Report, June 2017, 14, accessed at <http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/ResultDoc/download/DocumentKy/78778> on 2 November 2018.

³Economist, 'Autonomous weapons are a game-changer', Special Report, Man and Machine, 25 January 2018, accessed at <https://www.economist.com/special-report/2018/01/25/autonomous-weapons-are-a-game-changer> on 16 October 2018.

⁴Eurostat, 'How much is spent on defence in the EU?', 18 May 2018, accessed at <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/DDN-20180518-1?inheritRedirect=true> on 16 October 2018.

⁵See, e.g., NATO, 'Remarks by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at the opening session of the Munich Security Conference', Speeches & transcripts, 16 February 2018, accessed at https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_152209.htm on 16 October 2018.





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What are The Conspiracy Theories?

Well-known Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines the "conspiracy theory" very simply: it is "a theory that explains an event or a set of circumstances as a consequence of a secret conspiracy, usually of powerful conspirators." However, this explanation seems too simplistic, as it does not cover the width, depth, and nuance of the phenomena of the conspiracy theories. Daniel Pipes, who wrote about the theories of the Middle East for the CIA, describes them as follows: "The conspiracy theories give rise to their own discourse, are complete in themselves and possess almost complete immunity to rational arguments. The conspiracy theorists can be distinguished from the more conventional models of thinking using five assumptions: appearances are deceptive, history is run by conspiracies, nothing is accidental, the enemy always succeeds, everything is explained by power, glory, money and sex."

This laconic description quite accurately captures the characteristics of national

conspiracy theories: never rejecting or questioning belief in the theory that links all seemingly even completely unrelated facts and details, interpreting them as part of a global, all-encompassing plan, in which nothing is accidental, and nothing is what it seems. But everything is connected into the evil masterplan of the hostile forces, the purpose of which is to master, exploit, and destroy. And only the extraordinary insight of the creator of the conspiracy theory - or sheer luck which provided him with previously unknown facts - allows him or her to peer



through the curtain of deception, or what ordinary mortals call "reality", and to see the true essence of things. (Kęstutis Urba who has created a completely distinctive poetics of conspiracy theory, is often distributing leaflets next to the entrance to the Lithuanian Parliament. He linked the anthrax samples sent to American Embassies in Lithuania and Peru right after the September 11, with the American Amtrak accident in the United States.)

If until recently the conspiracy theories were prevalent mostly amongst the relatively low educated and highly eccentric people, they now found an unexpected ally in that part of the academic community that recognizes the critical theory, various forms of postmodernism and utilizes contemporary social and humanitarian disciplines in its arsenal. At the very least, the famous French sociologist Bruno Latour argues that the prevalence and popularity of conspiracy theories in mass-culture could be partly due to the embedding of Marxist-inspired critical theory and similar ideas in the academic community since the 1980s. On the

one hand, critical theory deconstructs the social, cultural and political reality and its "facts" (e.g. religion, art, morality, parliamentary democracy) as a projection of power of a particular group. On the other hand, it argues that individuals are often controlled by external forces (such as socio-economic status, sex, etc.) often without them being aware of it. In this way, current social theories create the preconditions for interpreting everything through global, one-person or even societal power structures that act secretly and tend to conceal the traces of their actions or even their own existence (for example, the united and coordinated global capitalist network).

In this way, by analyzing the classic authors and by repeating the ideas of the Frankfurt School of Marxists' critical theory, the academia is giving some intellectual respectability to the conspiracy theory mindset.

In the academic field, conspiracy theories are manifested in such pseudo-scientific phenomena as the historical reconstructions by Jūratė Statkutė-Rosales or Česlovas Gedgaudas, from superficially uncritical analyses of similarities (Belarussians (Gudai) and Goths, Galindians and Galicia), and the use of grandiose historical theories that contradict the whole accepted modern historical narrative of the last several hundred years. When asked why, if these theories are so "obvious", no one proposed them before, responses emerge about a scientific establishment, the "hidden" truth that is kept away from the people, or about political motives behind concealing the actual truth. It is not surprising that pseudo-scientific conspiracy theories often overlap with analogous thinking in the political sphere - the most susceptible listeners of Statkutė-Rosales are precisely the ethnocentric nationalists.



The Mentality of The Conspiracy Theories

Conspiracy theories also exist in countries with solid long-established democracies, but they remain at the margins of the political field. In Lithuania, some of these theories surfaced and started to dominate the political thinking and even imposed topics on the public discourse. What does this say about our mentality as a political community?

Roger Cohen, in a "New York Times" column, has rightly noticed that "subjugated minds [...] are resorting to conspiracy theories, because it is the last resort for the helpless. If you cannot change your life, then the world must be controlled by some more powerful force."

Conspiracy theories in Lithuania can be regarded as a collective mental disorder in the face of a complex reality of democracy and independence – exercising sovereignty in a global, unprotected political space. This is the result and a form of expression of a post-Soviet trauma.

Conspiracy theories arise from real unsolved social problems – no one will deny either the legitimate hunger for justice in our country or the threat that massive emigration and the brain drain pose, or the lack of solidarity in the Lithuanian society. But the interpretation of real problems which conspiracy theories provide differs from their interpretation in the framework of common sense as much as Ahmadinejad's diagnosis of Western decline differs from its diagnosis by Pope Benedict XVI. In both cases, problems are diagnosed, nevertheless, in one case it is done with malevolence and the intent to destroy, in the other case – with compassion and the desire to help and cure.

Finally, conspiracy theories can be used

as a window into the mental processes of their creators. As Daniel Pipes writes, "the principle of mirroring the design of one's own motives and behavior to others shows the reflections and intentions of the speaker himself." Pipes gives an example: shortly after Mehmet Ali Ağca's attempt to kill Pope John Paul II in May 1981, the Soviet Union (another fruitful producer of conspiracy theories) spread rumors that the United States had arranged this assault of John Paul, because of his position on the Palestine question. The reality transpired to be exactly the opposite: the Kremlin organized the attempt to murder the Pope, fearing his influence in Polish affairs.

What are Conspiracy Theories Doing to Us?

What are the consequences of conspiracy theories for the political community? First of all, they introduce the idea that "We are being conspired against, we are the victims." Conspiracy theories deny the meaning of the genuine self-rule of democratic citizens, instilling them with the conviction that it is impossible to achieve change using legitimate democratic mechanisms. Alienation from the state, cynicism and anti-state spirit are likewise deepened. Finally, conspiracy theories of one form or another – the extreme left or the extreme right – weaken our sense of belonging to Europe and the Western civilization, responsibility for its destiny, and encourage isolationist sentiment. And isolation now, just as it was two and a half hundred years ago, is only advantageous for Russia.

Consequently, conspiracy theories are useful only to those who do not want anything good for this country and want to destroy it, or at least severely, irreversibly weaken it.



Meeting with troops of NATO's EFP battalion

A field trip to NATO's military base in Rukla was organized on the last day of the event. During this trip the participants had the opportunity to meet the EFP troops from Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg. The mission of EFP troops in Lithuania is to strengthen the North East part of the Alliance and therefore demonstrate its power, determination and preparation to defend. The troops introduced the participants with their daily routine, prepared various exercises for them, invited them to a lunch in their local cafeteria and demonstrated their military equipment and vehicles, which they have brought from their home countries.

In order to express their gratitude, the participants prepared a one pager with suggestions that would help EFP troops become a part of the local Lithuanian community and contribute to the well being of our country.

Suggestions of the participants

1.

Organizing meetings with Lithuanian students outside major cities. The meetings could consist of lectures and seminars, during which students would be taught about NATO's mission and provided information on the Alliance. Organising visits and overnight stays at military bases is also recommended as the students would be more motivated if theoretical lectures were followed by practical activities such as learning about everyday life of NATO troops, their tasks and equipment.

2.

Forests have a special meaning to every Lithuanian. During the development of NATO's military bases in Lithuania, some parts of the woods had to be cut down. Most Lithuanian tabloids had spread this news and it caused a concern among Lithuanians. If NATO troops started a tradition of planting trees after every major military exercise, a symbolic gesture would be created that would show respect towards one of the most important Lithuanian symbols.

3.

The NATO's mission in Lithuania should have its own official "Facebook" and "Instagram" accounts. These accounts would share information on and photographs about the everyday life of NATO's troops, leisure and social activities. After their mission in Lithuanian is over, the troops could become representatives of our country in their homelands by sharing their experiences from Lithuania.





4.

Smaller Lithuanian towns lack cultural events. This means that national holiday celebrations become their main source of local entertainment that bring together the entire community. If NATO troops joined these festivities and participated in some of the activities organized during them, they would find an effective way to share information on NATO's mission and improve their own image.

5.

Social risk groups and ethnic minorities are most sensitive to propaganda in Lithuania. Therefore, NATO troops should focus on establishing joint activities with these communities. Volunteering and helping these groups would help improve their image and show that their aim is to protect and help Lithuania. We recommend organizing such activities together with local non-governmental youth organizations, which could help NATO troops

communicate with locals.

6.

Although NATO troops spend only a few months in Lithuania, the best way to integrate to the local community would be to learn about the local culture and pursue popular Lithuanian leisure activities together with local residents. For example, regular basketball tournaments could be organized, where NATO troops would compete against local teams. Also, NATO troops could learn to cook some of the most popular Lithuanian dishes, such as the great potato dumplings or the cold beetroot soup. Such activities could be shared on the official internet platform of NATO's mission in Lithuania to help share the activities of the troops to a wider audience.