



SECURITY POLICE

ANNUAL REPORT 2014

The authors of the photos included in the annual report: Latvian Security Police and State Agency “Tēvijas sargs”

Annual report

about the activities of the Security Police in 2014

Riga, July 2015

Dear reader!

Latvian Security Police (DP) has prepared and hereby brings the annual report to your attention telling you about the activities of the service in 2014. It provides the assessment regarding the most important events from our point of view, which affected the national security of Latvia last year, as well as an insight of the contribution of DP in guaranteeing our common security.



Last year DP received a vast volume of information of various kind from the residents of Latvia, which we have not experienced to that extend so far. Support provided by society is very crucial for security and intelligence service of any country therefore we very highly appreciate and are grateful to every resident of Latvia, who has addressed to DP.

Public awareness and understanding of situation in national security plays especially crucial role under the current geopolitical conditions, affected by the aggression of the Russian Federation (hereinafter referred to as – Russia) in Ukraine. Last year separate Russian compatriot policy activists of Latvia attempted to use concerns caused by the annexation of Crimea and illegitimate seizing of territories of Ukraine. However, these attempts were unsuccessful, since majority of society did not expose itself to the provocative actions and rhetoric. On the contrary, vast majority of the residents of Latvia have clearly distanced themselves from the attempts to divide society of Latvia and endanger the stability of our country. However, residents of Latvia and public institutions must be ready also for further systematic challenging of our sense of belonging to and faith in Latvia by discrediting Russian propaganda and supporters thereof.

Russian unacceptable behaviour in Ukraine has caused to reassess attitude towards the national security issues not only in Latvia, but also in other member states of the EU and NATO. While there was a dominating opinion in Europe before the conflict in Ukraine that no military conflicts are possible in our continent, currently this assurance has significantly decreased.

Unpredictable action of Russia currently is indisputably the main factor affecting security of our country. Larger number of the residents of Latvia fights in Ukraine than in Syria, and such a situation is one of the rare ones, if not the only one in the EU. At the same time, there would be no reason to ascertain that national security interests of Latvia are affected by the conflict in Ukraine only. Unfortunately, concerns that tendencies of terrorism threats in Europe can affect also our national security earlier or later, became more grounded last year.

Carrying out DP's exclusive tasks, our service has performed counterintelligence and operational measures during the reference period resulting in acquisition of information, which enabled to identify and prevent potential risks posed to the national security interests. We have reported the detected risks to the government officials and responsible institutions, thus supporting the process of decision making. Information provided by DP has served as grounds for application of refusal of entry to more than 30 foreigners whose activities were aimed against national security interests of our country.

During the reference period, DP actively cooperated with other two security and intelligence services – the Constitution Protection Bureau (SAB) and the Defence Intelligence and Security Service (MIDD), as well as with other institutions directly or indirectly responsible for national security. It should be mentioned that the close cooperation with our regional and strategic international partner services is also of highest significance.

In 2014, DP celebrated the 20th anniversary since its foundation, therefore I would like to take the opportunity and thank all the former and current DP officers for their contribution in foundation and development of the service. On the border of the next decade our service will be faced by new security challenges, the overcoming of which will require even higher professionalism, dedication and decisiveness. I am certain that with the support of society and in cooperation with national and international partners we will keep providing significant contribution in guaranteeing security of our country.

*Yours respectfully,
Director General*

Normunds Mežviets

1 Counterintelligence

Counterintelligence is one of the main responsibilities of DP in preventing threats to the national security. Counterintelligence measures implemented by DP consist of various measures stipulated by the Investigatory Operations Law, protection of classified information, reports to officials regarding counterintelligence risks and other activities. In order to prevent the counterintelligence risks caused by hostile foreign security and intelligence services, DP closely cooperates with both Latvian and international partner services.

1.1 Activities of foreign security and intelligence services

Foreign security and intelligence services constantly keep organizing activities aimed against Latvia in order to obtain sensitive or classified information on political and economic situation of Latvia, as well as its national security system. In 2014 the interests of foreign security and intelligence services included the preparations of Latvia for the Presidency of the Council of the EU, the European Parliament (EP) and Parliamentary elections, as well as other significant issues and ongoing processes regarding internal and foreign policy and economic developments.

The information obtained by DP during counterintelligence operations indicates that among all the foreign security and intelligence services the most significant intelligence activity conducted against the Republic of Latvia by Russian security and intelligence services in 2014 – the Federal Security Service (FSB), the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) and the Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR). Although this tendency remains for many years, last year the activities of Russian security and intelligence services aimed against Latvia became more aggressive and larger in scope. In the opinion of DP, intensification of the activities of Russian security and intelligence services was primarily related to the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the EU and escalation of the Ukrainian conflict.



SVR logotype



GRU logotype



FSB logotype

Russian security and intelligence services kept concentrating on collecting sensitive information, recruiting agents of influence and conducting informational operations against Latvia. Similarly, as in the previous reference periods, Russian security and intelligence services were also involved in coordination of Russian compatriot policy.

Intelligence available to DP shows that at the beginning of 2014, in reaction to the escalation of the conflict in Ukraine, Russian security and intelligence services expanded their activities in the Latvian – Russian border area. Russian security and intelligence services also carried out measures to collect information by questioning the residents of Latvia on their visits to Russia. Simultaneously, Russian security and intelligence services kept showing interest in collecting information and recruiting agents of influence among purposefully selected groups of the residents of Latvia. Increased interest by Russian security and intelligence services concerned:

- government and municipal officials (especially interested in the officers of state security and intelligence services and law enforcement institutions, as well as mid-level and top ranking officials);
- Latvian entrepreneurs (especially those whose business activities are related to Russia and CIS countries);
- persons involved in Latvian – Russian cross-border projects (the information at the disposal of DP shows that Russian security and intelligence services have special interest in these projects);
- the residents of Latvia, who visit Russia on a regular basis for the purchase of excise goods or organization of smuggling thereof (employees of Russian security and intelligence services have interest in these persons not only in relation to a wish regarding collection of relevant information, but also for the purpose of personal benefit, i.e., profit from smuggling activities).

It should be noted that Latvian youth attending Russian educational institutions are also exposed to increased counterintelligence risks. Although during their studies the youth have no access to the information which Russian security and intelligence services are interested in, they can commence successful professional career after the graduation, and this can provide opportunity to access sensitive information, which Russian security and intelligence services are interested in or to affect decision-making processes according to the interests of Russia.

Informational operations against Latvian security and intelligence services- including DP - by Russian security and intelligence services grew significantly in scope during 2014. At the end of the last year, the programme *Čerezvečainoje proižšestvije* (Extraordinary event) aired by the Russian TV channel NTV presented a story involving alleged unmasking of a “DP agent”, wrongful assertions on activities of Latvian security and intelligence services and distribution of the traditional myths about Latvia. Careful selection of messages, disinformation and “experts” in this story confirms this was an informational operation planned by Russian security and intelligence services in order to discredit DP and the other two Latvian security and intelligence services. Whereas, two weeks later air time for

discrediting of Latvian security and intelligence services was also assigned in the Russian radio station *Sputnik* in the programme *Vojennopolitičeskij analiz* (*Military political analysis*). It must be noted that the involvement of Russian security and intelligence services in the informational operations against Latvia can be detected not only in the programmes aired by the largest Russian mass media, but also in less popular information resources.



It can be predicted that the intensity of the activities of Russian security and intelligence services aimed against our country will continue increasing in 2015. This will result from both the conflict in Ukraine (and impact thereof on deterioration of relations between Russia and Western countries), and by the growth of role of Russian security and intelligence services in achieving geopolitical objectives set by Moscow.

1.2 Protection of state secrets

Upon the extension of the activities of foreign security and intelligence services, the importance of efficient and comprehensive information protection measures increasingly grows. The protection of state secrets is a complex of measures implemented by state security and intelligence services aimed at prevention of unauthorized disclosure of classified information and illegitimate access to such information. In order to provide the measures to protect state secrets, DP closely cooperates with other two state security and intelligence services (SAB and MIDD).

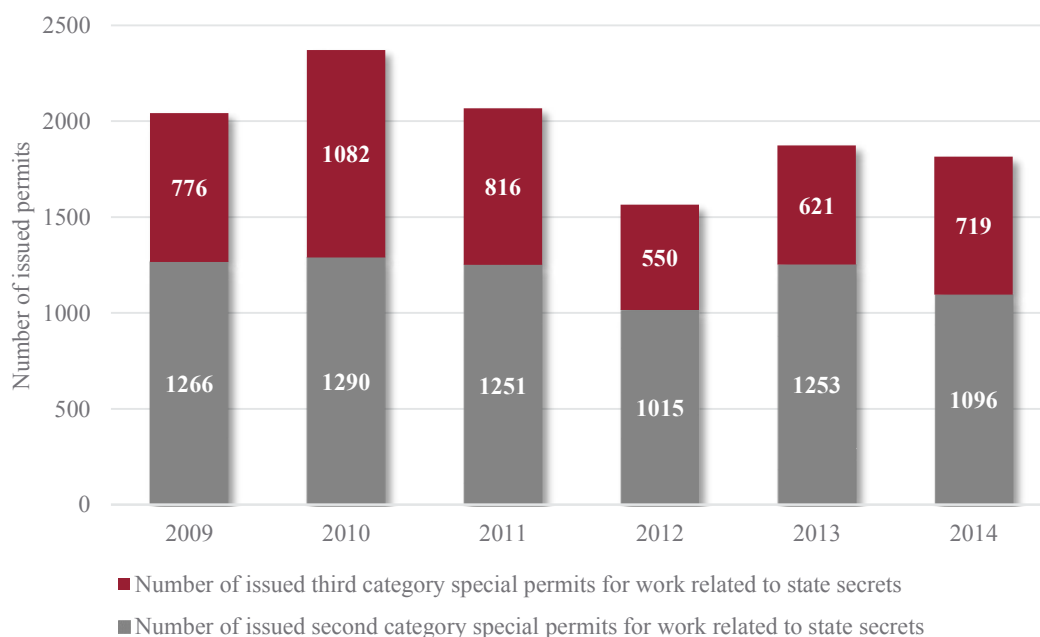
Pursuant to the applicable legal framework, DP issues special permit (security clearance) of second (up to SECRET) and third (up to CONFIDENTIAL) category for work with the objects of state secret (hereinafter referred to as – special permit). In case of necessity, DP carries out vetting for the receipt of special permit of the first category (up to the level TOP SECRET) (issued by SAB).

DP issued 1815 special permits in 2014 (1096 – of the second category and 719 of the third category). Pursuant to the criteria stipulated by law, DP denied special permit to 23 persons. Mostly access to state secret was denied due to the facts that:

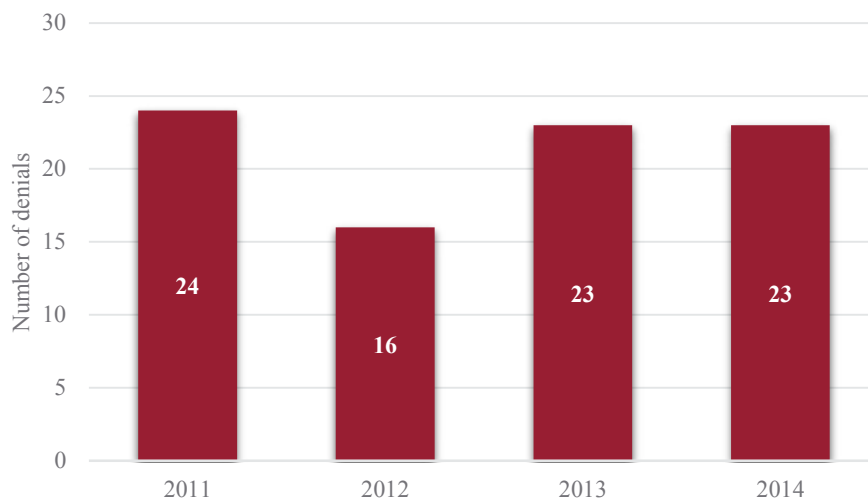
- the relevant person had been held criminally liable, convicted of an intentional criminal offence or disclosing of an state secret through negligence conducted during the vetting;
- give a reason to cast doubt on the person's reliability and ability to keep state secret.

Whereas, in relation to the Latvian presidency of the Council of the EU last year DP additionally carried out vetting on 1156 persons, who were involved in the events of Presidency.

NUMBER OF THE SPECIAL PERMITS ISSUED BY DP



DYNAMICS OF DP DENIALS TO ISSUE SPECIAL PERMITS



Along with the persons' vetting DP inspects and assesses the compliance of entities with receipt of an industrial security certificate (IDS) (decision regarding the issuance of IDS is adopted by SAB). DP carried out checks of compliance of 18 entities for the receipt of IDS in 2014, in the result of which one decision to initiate to deny the issuance of IDS was made. Additionally in 26 cases, DP provided consultations regarding IDS issuance and extension or use.

In 2014, DP organized 60 checks of compliance with the requirements of the circulation of classified information in the supervised state institutions. Additionally, DP provided 28 consultations regarding provision of state secret protection and circulation procedure.

1.3 Conclusions and outlook

- Security and intelligence services of several countries expand their activity against Latvia, but the highest risks are still associated with activities conducted by Russian security and intelligence services performing not only the classical intelligence activities, but also information operations aimed at discrediting the Republic of Latvia and state security and intelligence services.
- In the course of tensions in relations between Western countries and Russia in regard of the conflict in Ukraine, the intensity level of the activities of Russian security and intelligence services aimed against Latvia will remain high. It can be predicted that also in 2015 Latvian officials, entrepreneurs, as well as residents, who visit Russia on a regular basis, will be exposed to high recruitment risks by security and intelligence services of this country.
- Upon increase of activities of Russian intelligence and security services, efficient implementation of the protection system for classified information is especially important. Enhancement of measures for classified information protection is an adequate reaction to the growing counterintelligence risks. Stricter assessment of compliance with regulations by individuals who have clearance for classified information is one of the measures for ensuring that the information vital to the national security remains protected.
- The objective of classified information protection system is reduction of unauthorized disclosure or illegitimate use of information as much as possible; therefore attenuation of this system (especially under conditions of geopolitical tension) is inadmissible and endangers not only national but also transatlantic security interests.

2 Protection of constitutional order

Protection of national independence, sovereignty, constitutional order and territorial integrity of the Republic of Latvia is one of the main tasks of DP. For the purposes of implementation of the above mentioned, DP carries out measures of intelligence operations aimed at obtaining pre-emptive information on activities causing risks to the state constitutional order. Whereas, for the purposes of prevention of these risks DP implements preventive measures, gives briefings to government officials of identified risks on a regular basis, as well as prepares proposals in the field of policy planning and development of legislative acts. Public awareness on processes and activities causing risks to the security of the state constitutional order also plays crucial role.

2.1 Russia's compatriot policy

In 2014, as in the previous years, the most significant risks to the security of the state constitutional order were caused by the Russia's compatriot policy. Declared objectives of this policy include protection of rights of the compatriots residing abroad, strengthening the role of Russian language and promotion of Russian culture. However, in practice, behind these objectives, Russia exploits compatriot policy and its activists as a foreign policy and manipulation tool in order to achieve its geopolitical interests in foreign countries (Latvia including). This means achievement of situation, when Latvia and other neighbouring countries are under the political and economic influence of Russia in order to ensure that their activities correspond to the interests of Russia.

During the year 2014, the role of compatriot policy continued to increase within Russia's foreign policy. It was caused by the escalation of the conflict in Ukraine creating necessity for support to the Russia's policy in Ukraine. While governments of Western countries condemned Russian aggression in Ukraine and introduced sanctions against several Russian officials and companies, Russian political elite found it important to show both to domestic and foreign audience that Russia's position is supported in the West. Activists of compatriot policy served for this objective trying to object to introduction of sanctions and promoting Russian narratives on the course of the conflict in Ukraine.

The issue of the protection of the rights of compatriots was of high importance in Russia's rhetoric because of the events in Ukraine. Russian politicians and foreign office kept distributing ungrounded reproaches regarding violations of human rights and discrimination of national minorities, as well as maintaining myth about alleged "glorification of fascism" in the Baltic States. By doing so Russia was sending message that compatriots residing in foreign countries, including Latvia, are being "protected", in exchange demanding loyalty to Russia and its geopolitical objectives regardless of their citizenship.

2.2 Characterization of Russia's compatriot policy

The intensity of the activities conducted by Russia's compatriot policy supporters¹ remained high during the reference period. The activities of increased intensity were observed at the beginning of the year 2014, when activists of Russia's compatriot policy in Latvia attempted to obtain wider support among national minorities in Latvia by manipulating with issues concerning education and non-citizens within the context of the conflict in Ukraine.

Support to the activists of the Russian compatriot policy remains insignificant among the residents of Latvia, despite the intensive efforts to divide society. It was confirmed by their unsuccessful results in last year's European Parliament (EP) election and Parliamentary election, as well as the low attendance of the events organized by the activists of compatriot policy. Attempts to gain recognition and voters' support by using various provocative public events did not succeed, and none of the most active supporters of compatriot policy got elected either in the EP, or in the Saeima [the Parliament of the Republic of Latvia]. The only exception was re-election of *Tatjana Ždanoka* in the EP, while *Elizabete Krivcova*, *Aleksandrs Mirskis*, *Viktors Guščins*, *Jeļena Bačinskā*, *Einārs Graudiņš* and other supporters of compatriot policy did not gain support of Latvian voters.



E.Krivcova

During the reference period, the main activities and rhetoric of the supporters of Russia's compatriot policy in Latvia kept reflecting Russian political, legal and ideological vision regarding situation in Latvia, Ukraine and elsewhere in the world. Activists of compatriot policy expressed uncritical support to the annexation of Crimea and Russian aggression in Ukraine, simultaneously promoting the Russia-produced myths about the "brutal crackdown against the nation" by the Ukrainian

¹ In this review the term "Supporters/activists of Russian compatriot policy" is being used in relation to persons, who support the activities, the declared and/or real objectives of compatriot policy implemented by Russia.

authorities. A number of radical activists of compatriot policy expressed their support or even promoted leaving of the residents of Latvia for Ukraine with the purpose to join the illegal militias fighting against Ukrainian authorities. However – those, who actively supported or advised all the above mentioned, opted for “fighting” for the fictional idea of *Novorossiya* while staying safe in Latvia.

Several supporters of compatriot policy were active in objecting publicly measures for strengthening state defence capabilities, including cooperation within NATO. This position was based on concerns about deterioration of relations with Russia and accorded with Moscow’s assertions that no improvements in the security situation of Latvia will be gained.

In addition, in 2014 supporters of Russia’s compatriot policy continued to actively engage in discreditation campaigns against Latvia by distributing tendentious and misrepresented information regarding the situation in our country in the international institutions and foreign mass media. Biased and fictitious statements about discrimination of national minorities or Latvia’s abstention from turning against alleged “rebirth of fascism” fully accorded with the official Russian rhetoric about the situation in our country.

During the reference period activists of compatriot policy kept promoting the interpretation of history professed by Russia attempting to stress the positive role of Russia in the history of Latvia using selected and misinterpreted historical facts and to glorify the USSR period simultaneously ignoring the fact of occupation and crimes committed by the USSR against the Latvian nation, including national minorities. Supporters of compatriot policy also kept distributing literature of such kind in Latvian schools, thus turning against integrity of society, united historical understanding and strengthening belonging of residents of all nationalities to Latvia.

Despite the correspondence of action and rhetoric of supporters of compatriot policy with the Russian political interests and objectives, majority of them opt not to emphasize their links to Russia or even try to conceal them. One of the main reproaches from supporters of compatriot policy to our country is the alleged “deficit of democracy”; at the same time, it can be observed that compatriot policy activists are not willing to openly discuss financing provided by Russia and use of this funding. In addition, a tendency of increasing concealment of contacts with Russian institutions and organizations has been identified; in several cases explicitly secret activity has been established regarding the organization of trips to Russia. While the attempts to conceal the funding provided by Russia may be related not only to the wish not to be publicly associated to the neighbouring country, but also to use the acquired funds for selfish reasons, then concealment of contacts and destination causes grounded suspicions in regard of the actual objectives of these activists.

Activists of compatriot policy in Latvia are united by similar ideological opinions and support to Russia’s policy in virtually every sphere. At the same time also during this reference period, the uniting ideological element was overshadowed by

mutual disagreements, personal ambitions, fight for the funding provided by Russia, which is decreasing as a result of economic sanctions, and difference in opinions regarding tactics of activity. It must be noted that a part of them try to use as moderate rhetoric as possible in public, while the other part prefers as radical, provocative and aggressive expression as possible.

Similarly as in the previous years, also in 2014 activists of compatriot policy received various, including material, support from the Russian embassy and consulates. In case of necessity embassy also coordinated the cooperation of activists of compatriot policy and provided practical advice.

2.3 Subjects of compatriot policy in Latvia

The number of members of the Latvian organizations supporting Russia’s compatriot policy and the level of their activity is very different; therefore this overview will not include all the organizations and activists supporting compatriot policy. At the same time, DP sees it as its duty to provide assessment in regard of activity of some organizations and activists in order to promote public understanding about expressions of Russia’s compatriot policy in Latvia.

- **Latvian Council of Non-governmental Organizations (LSOP)**

LSOP is an unregistered organization, which aims to coordinate activity of various Russia’s compatriot organisations, however, in practice LSOP serves as a forum for discussions instead of being a coordinating structure. Formally, tens of organizations have involved in the LSOP, however, just a minor part is active.



V. Guščins (from left) and E. Graudiņš

LSOP mainly has symbolic meaning, since it serves as a confirmation for Russia of existence of coordination structure of supporters of Russia’s compatriot policy (although the coordination is imaginary). Symbolic meaning of the LSOP is confirmed also by the fact that Russian officials attend it during their visits to Latvia, while the leader of the LSOP *Viktors Guščins* is being positioned as a leader of the movement of supporters of compatriot policy. In practice *V. Guščins* is a representative in the

World Congress of Russian Compatriots and can be considered the closest person to the Russian embassy and the institutions coordinating Russian compatriot policy from the community of activists of compatriot policy, however, he cannot be considered the real leader of compatriot organizations. Close links of *V.Guščins* with the embassy guarantees him certain influence, but he has little authority among the other activists of compatriot policy, furthermore, *V.Guščins* is being criticized for his inefficient work (his critics include also persons, who wish to obtain the status of trustee of *V.Guščins*).

- **Non-citizens congress (NC)**

The non-registered formation NC expanded its activities at the first half of 2014, however, failing to obtain public support, at the second half of the last year several leading representatives of NC engaged in its activities less and less. All this resulted in significant shrinking of the activities of NC.

NC was formed with the aim to “fight” for the rights of non-citizens, however, in practice NC also attempted to activate other matters according to Russian reproaches against Latvia. During the first months of 2014, NC was involved in protests against educational policy which stipulates the use of Latvian language in the study process in all comprehensive schools in Latvia. However, the provocative attempts found no support in the society, and the involvement of the NC activists in protests gradually decreased.

The NC’s attempt to raise alleged problems regarding human rights in Latvia by establishing so-called *public ombudsman*, which was meant to become a parallel ombudsman institution in Latvia, was also unsuccessful. In January 2014, this duty was assigned to *Jeļena Bačinska*, however, the attempts to enforce interpretation of “problems of human rights” in Latvia in a manner desirable to Russia were episodic and unsuccessful.



J.Bačinska

Simultaneously, attempt to organize a concert “We want change” in April 2014 can be considered a demonstrative example of the NC’s attempts to increase a strain in society. One of the radical activists of compatriot policy *Aleksandrs Gaponenko* declared this even as the “local Maidan” and, although the rest

of the NC activists tried to dissociate themselves from these expressions, the course of this event was not agreed on. Whereas, after the unsuccessful run in Parliamentary elections leading representatives of the non-registered structure, including one of the leading activists *Elizabete Krivcova*, involved in activity thereof less and less. Furthermore, NC faced financial and organizing difficulties, which intensified along with the suspension of activity of the non-official coordinator of this formation *Aleksandrs Vasiļjevs*.

Although activists of NC publicly dissociated themselves from the provocative expressions about the “local Maidan” by *A.Gaponenko* and such a comment intensified reduction of public support to the activities of NC, it is *A.Gaponenko*, who has currently become a leader of this non-registered formation. However, the initial actions of *A.Gaponenko* in the “position” of leader of NC rather displays interest in its use for the improvement of personal status and qualification for the funds to be assigned by Russia for the support of compatriots, instead of renewal of activities of this non-registered formation.



A.Gaponenko

It must be noted that the rhetoric of *A.Gaponenko* became more provocative and radical during the reference year, which was confirmed by his comment on “plans to use army for the suppression of protests of national minorities”. However, inability to justify his opinion with arguments never hindered *A.Gaponenko* to distribute also disinformation of other kind or provide provocative comments (especially in Russian mass media).

- **So-called anti-fascist organizations**

Similarly as in the previous years, also in 2014 the so-called anti-fascist organizations and activists actively attempted to promote Russian assertions about alleged ongoing “glorification of fascism in Latvia”. Taking into consideration the specifics of these organizations and low number of supporters, their activity was episodic and adjusted to certain dates; however, the so-called anti-fascists joined also the protest events, which were dedicated to other “problem issues” in Latvia defined by Russia.

The main activity of so-called anti-fascists during the reference period was organizing of protest events in regard of the procession dedicated to the memory of legionaries on 16 March (*Legionary commemoration day* devoted to Latvian legionnaires, who were forced to serve in Nazi army during WWII). These counteractions included both round-table discussion about the “problems related to rebirth of fascism” organized by the so-called antifascists under the leadership of *Josifs Korens*, and organization of protest events during the procession. The same as in previous years, foreign visitors, who share similar ideological opinions and are ready to support the myth about “glorification of fascism ideas” in Latvia maintained by the organizers of the protests and Russia were invited to these events. Despite the efforts of organizers, just a small number of participants was present in the protest events in 2014, thus clearly showing that residents of Latvia do not obey manipulation with artificially created and maintained stereotypes.

Participation of the so-called Latvian anti-fascists in round-table discussion organized by the organization *World Without Nazism* (PBN) in Kiev in February 2014 should be noted among other activities of the so-called anti-fascists implemented in the reference period. Participants of this event expressed their support to the regime of Victor Yanukovich and condemned the protesters, whose activities allegedly included “signs of revival of fascism”. It must be noted that this position accorded with the Russian official rhetoric admitting activities of V.Yanukovich legitimate, while the protesters were assigned a status of “fascists”. Organization of conference in order to express opinion desirable to Russia just confirms the close link of its organizers with the Russia’s foreign policy.

*J.Korens
(from left) and
Eduards Gončarovs
during the protest
campaign against
the show “Cukurs.
Herberts Cukurs”*



It must be noted that another so-called anti-fascist organization – society *Latvijas Antinacistiskā komiteja* [*Latvian Anti-nazi Committee*] was formed during the reference period. However – foundation of this society is not related to joining of new activists to the so-called anti-fascists, but with the conflict of long-term so-called anti-fascists *J.Korens* and *Jānis Kuzins* over the use of funds assigned to the so-called anti-fascists. Foundation of a new organization also complies with attempts to create artificial delusion of growing number of supporters of the so-called anti-fascists.

• **Russkaya Zarya [Russian Dawn] (RZ)**

In January 2014 *Ilarions Girss* and *Jevgēnijs Osipovs*, who stand out against the background of other activists of compatriot policy with the most provocative and radical rhetoric, founded organization RZ, which was based in Liepāja. Foundation of RZ has not enhanced popularity of *I.Girss* and *J.Osipovs* either in Liepāja, or in Latvia, where it is still very low, however, recognition of the leaders of RZ grew in Russia. Earlier on representatives of RZ had published their articles in less popular Russian internet resources, but last year attention to their activity was paid also by the most recognizable Russian mass media. Activists of RZ participated also in Russian youth camps of “Ladoga” and “Seliger 2014”.



I.Girss

Activists of RZ tried to justify the favour shown by the representatives of Russian institutions and sociopolitical organizations by expressing active support to the policy implemented in Ukraine by Russia and annexation of Crimea, turning against limitation in regard of retranslation of the TV channel *Rossija RTR*, protesting against the presence of allied forces in Latvia, as well as other activities corresponding to interests of Russia. RZ is the most active of all the activists of Russia’s compatriot policy in promotion of ideas, which have activated along with the escalation of the conflict in Ukraine, and stresses the special role and unique rights of the Russian nation.



J.Osipovs

Concluding the overview regarding expressions of Russia's compatriot policy in Latvia it must be noted that other supporting organizations also operate in Kurzeme region, for example, *Liepājas Krievu kopiena* [*Liepāja Russian Community*] and *Ventspils Krievu biedrība* [*Ventspils Russian Society*], but their activities are mainly at a regional scale. In their turn *Jelgavas Krievu kultūras biedrība Veče* [*Jelgavas Russian Culture Society Veče*] and *Jēkabpils Krievu kopiena* [*Jēkabpils Russian Society*] are the most active organizations of compatriot policy in Zemgale region. Despite the concerns regarding certain risks in Latgale there is the least number of compatriot policy support organizations expanding their activities in this region.

2.4 Supporters of far-right and far-left-wing ideology

Supporters of far-right and far-left-wing ideology also kept conducting their activities during the reference period. Supporters of these ideologies operate in numerically small organizations or separate groups of persons, and during the reference period they refrained from involvement in ideologically motivated

violent activities. Similarly as before, also during this reference period the threat to the security of state constitutional order caused by supporters of far right and far-left-wing ideology was comparatively low.

It can be explained with the low number of their supporters, as well as with the lack of powerful and charismatic leaders, who would be able to unite the followers of these ideologies, who have currently been divided into small organizations and groups of interests. As a result, the activities of supporters of far-right and far-left-wing ideology are mostly confined with various activities in social networks and participation in public events.

Despite the low number of supporters of far-right and far-left-wing ideology in Latvia and the fact that their current activities cause no significant risks, there is still a possibility of violent incidents, especially among so-called *skinheads*. Potential risk factor of individual skinheads is their interest for various martial arts. This in turn within the context of the information promoting radicalization and the wide contact possibilities available on the internet with like-minded individuals abroad may lead separate persons to ideologically motivated violence.

2.5 Conclusions and outlook

- Supporters of Russia's compatriot policy kept causing the most significant risks to the security of the state constitutional order during the reference period; their activities accorded with Russian rhetoric and complied with its geopolitical interests in Latvia. It is predictable that further on activists of compatriot policy will keep causing the most significant risks to the security of the state constitutional order.
- Although activists of compatriot policy are united by wish to strengthen Russian political and ideological influence in Latvia, they are of various opinions regarding the most efficient directions of activity for the achievement of this goal. Part of them tries to implement their requirements closely corresponding to Russian position by manipulating with the opportunities provided by democracy, simultaneously refraining from openly confronting position. Others in their turn use the wide rights of the freedom of speech to provoke society with challenging comments.
- Radicalization of rhetoric of separate activists of compatriot policy can be observed under the influence of the conflict in Ukraine. There is a risk that this tendency could continue, because along with decrease of material support provided by Russia competition for these resources will grow stronger. Therefore, separate activists of compatriot policy may become more aggressive in their rhetoric and activities to confirm their loyalty for the receipt of provided financial support.
- The activity level of supporters of far right and far-left-wing ideology was low during the reference period. Currently there is no reason to consider that supporters of far-right and far-left-wing ideology could cause significant risks to the security of the state constitutional order in the nearest future.

3 Latvian supporters of Russian aggression in Ukraine

Russian aggression in Ukraine caused wide international response and was one of the most topical issues in the Latvian society during the reference period. Majority of the residents of Latvia condemned Russian aggression, however, a small part of society did not perceive the annexation of Crimea and the violent seizing of the territories of Ukraine in a critical manner or even supported it. Activists of compatriot policy and the most radical defenders of ideas of the so-called “Russian world” were also among the Latvian supporters of Russian aggression in Ukraine. Their support mainly translated at the level of public communication; however, separate residents of Latvia commenced collection of humanitarian aid for the Ukrainian regions under the control of illegal militias or even directly engaged in the armed conflict.

3.1 Public support

Facing condemnation of Western countries regarding the annexation of Crimea and support of the armed conflict in Ukraine, Russian political elite had to mobilize support for their activities. Supporters of Russia’s compatriot policy from foreign countries, including Latvia, were of great use for this purpose, since they were ready to engage in various information activities according to Russian interests. Due to this reason, one of the main directions of actions for the activists of Russia’s compatriot policy was public justification of Russia’s aggression in Ukraine.



T. Ždanoka

Latvian supporters of Russian compatriot policy were used both as an instrument in the information activities organized by Russia, as well as organized public events supporting the position of Russia themselves and distributed messages regarding the conflict in Ukraine desirable for Russia in Latvia. One of the most useful resources for the support of the annexation of Crimea and aggression in Ukraine was *T.Ždanoka*. Being a Member of the EP *T.Ždanoka* was efficient resource both in Russian TV programmes, and various public events in Brussels and Latvia, where a strict support to the Russian position regarding the conflict in Ukraine was expressed. *T.Ždanoka* and her assistant *Miroslavs Mitrofanovs* were the persons, who were invited to participate as “observers” in the so-called referendum of accession of Crimea to Russia (later on another member of the party *Latvijas Krievu savienība* [Latvian Association of Russians] (LKS) and Member of Daugavpils City Council *Jurijs Zaicevs*

also went to Crimea). In its turn LKS in August 2014 signed an agreement with the sociopolitical movement “Unity of Russians”, which is based in Crimea and banned in Ukraine. It must be noted that the former member of the EP *Aleksandrs Mirskis* was also episodically involved in reflection of the conflict in Ukraine in a manner desirable for Russia.



J. Zaicevs

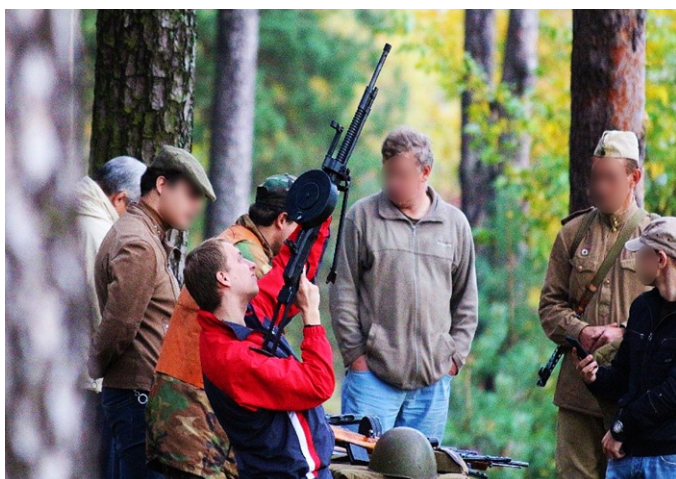
Einārs Graudiņš, who visited the territories seized by illegal militias in autumn of 2014, has also become a mouthpiece for the purposes of Russian information activities within the context of the conflict in Ukraine. After this visit he was positioned as an “OSCE expert” in Russian mass media, although this organization denied any link to *E.Graudiņš*. After the reports regarding “Barbarities of Ukrainian forces” and the “Destructive role of the USA in the conflict in Ukraine” in Russian mass media he became a regular guest in Russian TV programmes and continued distribution of myths on situation in Ukraine, which were produced by Russian propaganda. It must be noted that *E.Graudiņš* is a useful resource for Russian propaganda, because, unlike other activists of compatriot policy in Latvia, who are avid supporters of Russian aggression in Ukraine, he is Latvian.



E.Graudiņš (from right)

3.2 Collection of donations

In 2014 also in Latvia several supporters of Russia's aggression in Ukraine commenced a fund-raising for the support of regions seized by illegitimate militias. For such a purpose the organization *GVD Baltija* was established with the following persons playing an important role: *Stanislavs Bukains*, *Dmitrijs Prokopenko* and *Artēmijs Jakovļevs*. The activists organized various public fund-raising campaigns, however, due to the low public support and internal conflicts among the leaders of *GVD Baltija*, they did not manage to expand wider activities. Furthermore, *GVD Baltija* was continuously unable to organize transfer of raised donations, which were delivered to Russia only after commencement of cooperation with the Estonian organization *Dobrosvet*. It must be noted that the transfer of humanitarian aid to unknown persons instead of internationally recognized charity organizations causes a risk that the funds donated for civilians may end up being at the disposal of illegal rebels instead of victims of the conflict. Thus, the support is being provided not to the victims of military activities, but to initiators and maintainers of the conflict.



S. Bukains

Collecting humanitarian aid for the support of victims of armed conflict is legitimate and supportable activity, however, in case of *GVD Baltija* there is a certain doubt that illegitimate activities were also committed under the cover of the previously declared objectives. It is important to note that, unlike traditional

charity organizations, *GVD Baltija* was never trying to conceal its support to one of the conflicting parties (i.e., illegal armed groups) and correspondingly collected donations only for support of the regions under the control of illegal armed groups.

3.3 Joining the illegal armed groups in Ukraine

While justification of Russian aggression, as well as fund-raising for support of the regions controlled by the illegal armed groups causes concerns regarding the actual goals of the persons, the engagement of the residents of Latvia in violent activities causes direct risks to the interests of Latvian national security.

DP considers that joining the illegal armed groups fighting against Ukrainian authorities cause the same risks as travelling to Syria/Iraq to join the terrorist groups located there. Previous experience of the European countries shows that during their stay in the conflict region, persons radicalize even more, acquire skills necessary for organization of attacks, as well as establish contacts with other radical persons. Therefore, after returning to their homeland these people are more radical and have acquired specific skills in order to commit ideologically motivated violent acts. Although persons travel to Iraq/Syria and Ukraine guided by various ideologies and motives, risks caused by them are similar after their return. Possibly, these risks are even greater within the context of the conflict in Ukraine, because the experienced persons related to Russian security and intelligence services and armed forces stay in the territories seized by illegal armed groups, and they are able to provide more advanced training and coordination of further activity than the representatives of terrorist groups in Syria/Iraq. Therefore these persons are able to cause significant counterintelligence and sabotage risks in Latvia as soon as they return from the conflict in Ukraine.

Several residents of Latvia have travelled to Ukraine in order to join the illegal armed groups. It has been publicly speculated about five people so far, but the information at the disposal of DP indicates that the number of the residents of Latvia who have joined the armed groups is bigger. DP has initiated criminal proceedings against five residents of Latvia regarding their possible illegitimate participation in the conflict of Ukraine. All five persons are also wanted by DP. If you have any information regarding the location of the persons depicted below, we call you to notify DP immediately by phone + 37167208964 around the clock. DP guarantees confidentiality of the information source.



Vjačeslavs Visockis



Valentīns Miļutins



Grigorijs Kosņikovskis



Beness Aijo



Anatolijs Matjukovskis

DP assessment indicates that the residents of Latvia have travelled to Ukraine in order to join the illegal armed groups turning against the territorial integrity of Ukraine due to various reasons. Some of them (for example followers of the National Bolshevik ideas) have rather involved themselves in the conflict due to ideological motives, while others have been motivated by the illusion of an easy profit. Among the persons within the illegal armed groups are Latvian residents, who have fled to Ukraine in order to avoid being held criminally liable for crimes committed in Latvia. In this respect *Radions Kušnirs*, the resident of Latvia, who was killed in Ukraine at the beginning of 2015 and whose death is still being used by various supporters of Russian aggression in Ukraine in their own interests, also had a criminal record.

Differences can be observed not only in the motivation of Latvian residents regarding their wish to involve in the conflict in Ukraine, but also in the way, how they reach the territories controlled by the illegal armed groups. A part of them have travelled there at their own initiative, while others possibly have been intentionally radicalized and recruited. DP intelligence suspects that Vladimirs Lindermans, who possibly agitated and

motivated his loyal confreres to join the illegal armed groups, played a crucial role for some residents of Latvia to travel to Ukraine. DP also verifies the information that several residents of Latvia went to Moscow through his possible assistance, where they were further assisted by representatives of the organization *Drugaja Rossija* [Other Russia] supporting the National Bolshevik ideas.



V.Lindermans

3.4 Conclusions and outlook

- Justification of Russian aggression in Ukraine during the reference period was one of the main directions of action of the activists of compatriot policy in Latvia. Uncritical support in the Ukrainian issue explicitly confirms the close link of these activists with Russia and causes reasonable concerns regarding their attitude towards the use of violence for achievement of political objectives in other countries. These concerns are facilitated by the active protests of several supporters of Russia's compatriot policy against strengthening military defence of Latvia.
- Individual supporters of Russian aggression in Ukraine in parallel commenced also fund-raising for residents of the regions seized by the illegal armed groups, as well as provided support for these groups by helping new volunteers from Latvia to join them. Such activities have decreased after the amendments in the Criminal Law.
- DP is of the opinion that, potentially most significant risks to the interests of national security of Latvia are caused by the residents of Latvia, who have joined the illegal armed groups turning against the territorial integrity of Ukraine. Along with the participation in this conflict, it is most likely that the radicalization process continues, furthermore, they acquire skills in the use of firearms and combat in cities, as well as are able to establish contacts with the officers of Russian security and intelligence services. Thus, these persons can cause significant threat to security of our country after returning home.
- Although a part of Latvian society perceives Russian aggression in Ukraine ambiguously, several attempts to use the conflict in Ukraine in provocative manner to attract new supporters from national minorities in Latvia have been unsuccessful. This explicitly confirms resistance of Latvian society to politically motivated provocations and clear support to their country.

4 Security of information space

Under the influence of the conflict in Ukraine the intensity of Russian propaganda and attempts to affect attitude of both local and foreign, including Latvian, audiences towards issues and processes important for Russia with information activities also increased significantly during the reference period. For the purposes of persuasion of rightness of their position Russia actively used the existing information channels, as well as continued work on creation of new information platforms.

In 2014 Russian propaganda was subordinated to necessity to mobilize internal and external support for the Russian position regarding the conflict in Ukraine. Failing to gain support among Western countries, rhetoric aimed explicitly against West, especially the USA, commenced to dominate in the Russian propaganda along with the messages of “threats of revival of fascism in Ukraine”, “legitimacy of Crimean referendum” and “fight of local residents of Eastern Ukraine against the Kiev’s hunt”. Activists of compatriot policy in several countries, including Latvia, were actively involved in distribution and promotion of these messages. Thus, the Russian propaganda tried to show to both the local and foreign audience that Russian position is being supported also in the West and that there is no unified attitude towards the Ukrainian issue in the member states of the EU.

Meanwhile Russian information resources continued to produce the propaganda myths about Latvia created in the previous years. Messages about alleged “violations of human rights”, “revival and glorification of fascism”, “wrong interpretation of history” etc. in Latvia were distributed. In parallel Russian mass media propagated opinion that since Latvia is not in a political or economic union with Russia standard of living of the residents of Latvia has “significantly decreased”. Researchers close to the Russian political elite and activists of compatriot policy from Latvia are traditionally attracted to such stories in the capacity of “experts” and positioned as “political scientists”, “economists”, “human right activists” etc.

Objective of these information measures is discreditation of Latvia as hostile country among the residents of Russia and creation of delusion of Latvia as a “failed country” among the residents of Latvia. Authors of propaganda attempt to create demand for closer political and economic cooperation with Russia in our country thus creating illusion that this might improve quality of living of the residents of Latvia.

During the reference period stories aimed against Latvia were aired both in the major Russian mass media and less known resources with certain regularity. Experienced activists of compatriot policy (*T.Ždanoka*, *A.Gapovņenko*, *A.Mirskis*, *E.Graudiņš*) are mostly being invited to the programmes of the most popular Russian TV channels. In their turn activists of compatriot policy, who stand out with more radical rhetoric or new-generation supporters of compatriot policy are published in less popular resources. For example, *I.Girss* and *J.Osipovs* were published in the platforms related to *Modests Kolērovs*, but on

the website *Rubaltic.ru* were published *Andrejs Solopenko* and *Andrejs Starikovs*.



A.Mirskis (in the middle)

Unilateral and tendentious reflection of the conflict in Ukraine provided by mass media controlled by the Russian political elite, as well as propaganda discrediting our country expose also residents of Latvia, who obtain information from these resources (mainly TV and radio) on regular basis. However, possibility to obtain information from various resources, including those working in accordance with democratic standards, provides opportunity for the residents of Latvia to familiarize themselves with alternative opinions and assess the obtained information critically.

Along with the intensive flow of propaganda in the information resources based in Russia in 2014 several attempts of Russia to establish new information platforms abroad, including Latvia, were observed. The most significant of the planned projects in Latvia was the project *Sputnik* run by the Russian information agency *Rossija Segodnja*, which was intended for distribution of news favourable to Russia in the information space of Latvia via radio and internet news portal. Information at the disposal of DP shows, that *A. Mirskis* proceeds the *Sputnik* radio project in Latvia; radio station *Avto radio* owned by *A.Mirskis*, already re-broadcasts evening and night programme of “*Golos Rossiji*” [“*Voice of Russia*”] (included in the programme of *Sputnik*). Despite the fact that separate programmes produced in Russia are already being re-broadcasted in Latvia, establishment of permanent presence would significantly expand opportunities for distribution of messages desirable to Russia in the informational space of Latvia.

In parallel internet resource *baltnews.lv* coordinated by *Andrejs Jakovļevs* started its activity in the reference period. Although the name of *A.Jakovļevs* is not widely known to general public, previously he has worked as a journalist (in the capacity of Latvian correspondent for the Russian TV channel *RTR*), and acted among the activists of compatriot policy (as an assistant

of T.Ždanoka, head of the organizations “D.V.I.N.A” and “Amber Bridge Baltic funds”). *Baltnews.lv* is positioning itself as an informatively entertaining portal; however, it distributes messages in accordance with the official opinion of Russia. Unlike the resources based in Russia *Baltnews.lv* distributes the information supporting Russia in comparatively inconspicuous and unobtrusive manner, in order to avoid of suspicions of it being a part of Russian informational activities in Latvia. It must be noted that portals with identical name operate also in Estonia and Lithuania.



Meanwhile, the existing information platforms also continued their operation in the reference period. One of them was media club *Format A3*, which continued invitation of guests from Russia, who provided view at situation in Ukraine desirable to Russia, promoted Russian interpretation of history, criticized the current situation in Latvia and the EU, as well as the USA policy. It is interesting that *Format A3* positions itself as a platform for dialogue and discussions between journalists of Latvia and Russia and experts of various sectors, however, in practice only guests providing opinion desirable to the Russian political elite are

being invited to the *Format A3* events. Thus, “discussion” on the conflict in Ukraine, situation in Latvia and topical international policy issues consisted on only one opinion, which is typical for propaganda format instead of discussion. It must be noted that at the second half of 2014, when several invited guests started to face problems related to entry in our country, *Format A3* changed its tactics and started inviting to the events mainly cultural professionals. Furthermore, *Format A3* coordinators in Latvia *Margarita Troškina*, *Ksenija Zagorovska* and *Olga Borisova* established a new platform with a name of humanitarian trend “Culture line” in the reference period. It cannot be ruled out that further on this foundation could take over functions of *Format A3*, in order to avoid any suspicions regarding links with informational activities of Russia.



In 2014, distribution of messages favourable for Russia was continued also by the portal *imhoclub.lv*, which has become a permanent platform for supporters of Russian compatriot policy. In addition, *Sergejs Malahovskis*, head of the society “Latvijas Antifašistiskā fronte” [“Latvian Anti-fascist front”] continued distribution of messages supporting Russia during the reference period; in parallel he unsuccessfully attempted to attract supporters for the activity of his own portal *www.baltijalv.lv*.

Conclusions and outlook

- Intensity of Russian propaganda grew during the reference period, which was largely influenced by the conflict in Ukraine and deterioration of relationship with the West. Necessity to mobilize support for the policy implemented by the Russian political elite in Ukraine determined the situation that information resources loyal to it intensified the propaganda aimed against the Western countries. It can be foreseen that upon continuation of the conflict in Ukraine intensity of Russian propaganda will not decrease.
- Simultaneously with criticism aimed at Western position regarding to the conflict in Ukraine Russian information resources kept distributing the myths produced about Latvia during the previous years. Significant support in the effort of Russian propaganda to position Latvia as a country, which is allegedly hostile to Russia and “failed”, was provided also by the compatriot policy activists, who are still being used in the Russian information resources as the main “opinion leaders” regarding situation in Latvia.
- Availability of information resources and comparatively wide number of users thereof in Latvia increases risk that also the

residents of our country may end up in being under constant influence of Russian propaganda. At the same time, access of the residents of Latvia to alternative opinions in both the information space and social environment restricts possibilities to manipulate with the opinion of Latvian society.

- Russia kept developing new information platforms of various kinds during the reference period. Main task of these platforms was to enhance support for Russia and promote the achievement of Russian geopolitical objectives abroad. Due to this reason, impact of separate information projects in Latvia planned by Russia in the information space of our country and security of this space must be carefully assessed. There is still a risk that the planned projects may be used for hidden and low-profiled distribution of information corresponding to Russian interests under the cover of democracy and freedom of speech, thus trying to create support to Russian objectives in the Latvian society in long term. Permanent and discrete distribution of Russian messages in the information space of Latvia in the long term can cause greater risks than direct propaganda activities expanded by the information resources based in Russia.

5 Economic security

The protection of the national economic sovereignty is one of the responsibilities of DP, which is constantly under intensified attention by the service. DP carries out counterintelligence and operational measures for acquisition of pre-emptive information on potential risks to economic security. DP reports the identified risks to the government officials and responsible institutions on a regular basis.

In 2014, economic processes both at global and national level were unfavourably affected by the escalation of the conflict in Ukraine. This resulted in aggravation of relationship between the Western countries and Russia leading to introduction of mutual sanctions. Tense geopolitical situation and shrinking trade activities between the EU and Russia affected economic processes also in Latvia. On the one hand, Latvian companies were denied to sell their products and services in Russian market. On the other hand, unpredictable action of Russia activated the necessity to strengthen common energy security of Latvia and the EU, reduce dependence of sectors important for the national economy of Latvia on one cooperation partner and reassess the impact of separate investment projects and programmes on economic and national security of the country.

Russian aggression in Ukraine further activated energy security issues both at national and the EU level. This resulted in greater attention to the measures aimed at reduction of energy dependency of the Member States of the EU from a single supplier. Simultaneously, a Declaration on security of energy supplies of the Baltic States was developed and signed in January 2015. In order to liberalize gas markets at a national level, processes related to development of the necessary policy planning documents continued in the energy sector of Latvia.

Aggravation of relationship between Western countries and Russia during the reference period caused concerns also regarding further development of transit sector crucial to the national economy of Latvia. However, the pessimistic forecasts regarding immediate impact of this conflict on transit sector have not come true so far. On the contrary, in 2014 ports of Riga and Liepāja transhipped larger cargo volumes than a year ago. At the same time there is still risk of this tendency not being a long-term, because tension in relations with Western countries can stimulate Russian plans to re-orientate their cargos to its own ports (such a rhetoric was used by Russia for several years, however, it has intensified recently). Implementation of this intention requires significant investments for the development of infrastructure, and

this may lead to contradiction of economic interests of Russian companies, as well as the recently observed Russian attempts to strengthen its economic influence in the neighbouring countries. It should be noted that Russian companies kept strengthening its presence in the Latvian transit sector in the reference period, and this indicates on a wish of the entities of this country to use Latvian transit corridor also in the future.



Illustrative photograph

Along with the transit sector, capital of Russian origin played a significant role on Latvian real estate market. Issuance of temporary residence permits (TUA) in exchange for purchase of real estate aroused the greatest interest among Russian citizens in the reference period. The strong interest from the citizens of this country on acquirement of TUA in Latvia is one of the most striking confirmations that assertions about “suppression of national minorities” or “glorification of fascism” in Latvia is a myth created by Russian propaganda, contrary to facts.

In 2014 TUA for the purchase of real estate were issued to 5218 foreigners, majority of whom were citizens of Russia (followed by citizens of China and Ukraine). The interest regarding receipt of TUA for the purchase of real estate significantly grew last year. In 2013 TUA for the purchase of real estate were issued to 3433 foreigners. Increased interest in this programme was related to amendments in the Immigration Law, which came into force on 1 September 2014 and stipulated significantly higher volume of investments for the purchase of real estate. At the same time, the interest in receipt of TUA on the grounds of investments in entrepreneurship or financial investments did not change significantly in 2014.

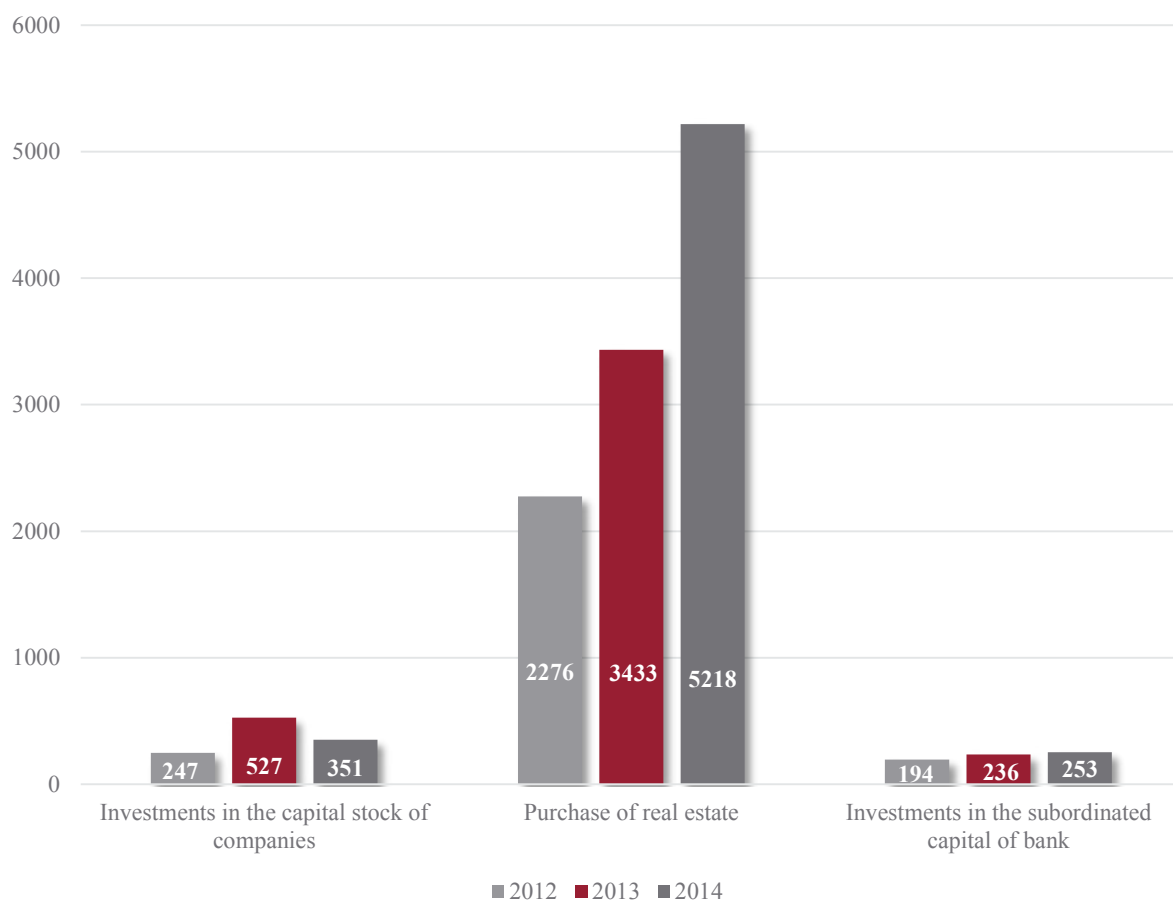
Rapid growth in applicants of residence permits in 2014 increased the possibility of previously identified potential national security risks. Namely, there is a risk that this procedure for the purpose of acquirement of rights for residence in Latvia and the Schengen zone can be used by:

- officers of foreign special services or persons related thereto;
- foreigners, who are disloyal to Latvia and may involve in or support activities turned against the interests of our country;
- persons related to terrorist groups or organized crime.

Possibility of such risk is confirmed by the events identified by DP, when residence permits were claimed by foreigners, who can cause risks to national security, are related to organized crime, involved in fraud schemes and money laundering, as well as have committed felony.

Risks, which can be caused by operation of a company related to foreign authorities in Latvia, were confirmed by the foreign company's attempt (which was prevented by DP) to distribute in Latvia software for unauthorized collection of information about software user without his/ her consent. Information at the disposal of DP shows that representatives of this company were possibly related to Russian security and intelligence services and that the data obtained during the control of users' computers could have ended up at the disposal of Russian security and intelligence services. The abovementioned company never advertised the offered services and tried to avoid publicity, instead showing interest in specific clients including several public institutions, law enforcement authorities and institutions holding comprehensive information about data of the residents of the Republic of Latvia.

TUA DEMAND DYNAMICS AND DISTRIBUTION BY TYPES OF INVESTMENTS



Conclusions and outlook

- Unpredictable action of Russia once again confirmed necessity to strengthen common energy security of Latvia and the EU and diversify supply channels of energy resources important for the national economy. In case of continuous long-term dependence on a single supplier of energy resources, there is a risk that this condition can be used to influence domestic and foreign policy according to the interests of supplier or owner.
- Regardless of the tension in political and economic relations between the West and Russia, no significant changes in flow of transit cargos of Russian origin to Latvian ports have been observed so far. Although necessity to divert cargos to Russian ports is still under discussion in Russia, companies of this country keep investing in Latvian transit sector, which is a confirmation of their wish to use Latvian corridor for cargo transit also in the future.
- Number of claims for residence permits significantly increased during the first nine months of last year, however, after the amendments in the Immigration Law interest of foreigners in acquirement of residence permits in exchange for purchase of real estate decreased. Along with the amendments in the Immigration Law and strengthening of DP capacity, risk of this procedure being used against the security interests of Latvia and our allied countries, has decreased. Reduction of the volume of investments necessary for the receipt of residence permits may increase these risks again.
- In the future, risks to the economic security of Latvia can also be caused by the attempts to gain control over companies of strategically important sectors of national economy and to use it for implementation of political and economic interests of other countries later on. These risks do not arise out of a capital of origin of particular countries, but from certain projects closely related to governments of these foreign countries, who wish to gain political and economic influence in Latvia, in order to use it for implementation of its geopolitical interests.

6 Counterterrorism

In 2014 terrorism remained as one of the main sources of threat to the security of Europe, therefore prevention of terrorism threats and strengthening of national counterterrorism system was one of the prime fields of activities for DP as an institution which coordinates implementation of counterterrorism measures in Latvia. DP performs investigatory operations in order to obtain pre-emptive information on possible terrorism risks, provides recommendations on implementation of preventive security measures in the objects of critical infrastructure and soft targets, as well as coordinates cooperation of institutions involved in implementation of counterterrorism measures. DP also closely cooperates with foreign partnerservices in the field of counterterrorism.

6.1 Terrorism threat tendencies in Europe

Terrorism incidents, which took place during the period of review in several European countries, confirm that significant terrorism threats to the security of the continent are still caused by Islamist terrorists. In May 2014, a Jewish museum in Brussels was attacked, and this attack was supposedly perpetrated by a French Islamist, who had previously participated in the military conflict in Syria. This terrorist act confirmed the concerns previously raised by the security and intelligence services of European countries regarding the significant risks caused by the active travelling of European Islamists to Syria in order to join the Islamist terrorist groups, in particular *Islamic State* (IS) and *Al-Nusra Front*. It is important to note that significant number of Islamists from various European countries kept travelling to Syria and Iraq during the period of review. This process was facilitated by the IS' announcement on establishment of the Caliphate in the territories of Syria and Iraq controlled by this terrorist group, as well as extensive propaganda activities, especially in social networks. This tendency causes significant long-term terrorism risks in the continent. Attack in Brussels, as well as the terrorist acts prevented in France in March 2014 confirm that after returning from Syria/Iraq European Islamists can engage in terrorist activities in their countries of residence or other European countries.

Along with the returnees from Syria/Iraq and at lesser extent from other conflict regions (Afghanistan/Pakistan, Somalia, Yemen etc.) significant risks to the security of Europe are caused also by homegrown Islamists, who do not travel to these abovementioned regions, but support the ideology preached by foreign Islamist terrorist groups. This is proved by the prevented terrorist acts in Great Britain and Austria, which were planned by Islamists inspired by the violent ideology of Islamic terrorist groups. Threats caused by homegrown Islamist terrorist groups were clearly confirmed by the terrorist acts, which took place in Paris in January 2015.

The diversity of methodology and targets of terrorist acts is significantly influenced by the extensive activities of Islamist terrorists on the internet, aimed not only at distribution

of information necessary for perpetration of attacks, but also at facilitation of radicalization of European Muslims and recruitment of new followers. Volume of information currently available in the virtual environment causes risk that a person can radicalize, establish contacts with terrorist groups, receive instructions from them and obtain the information necessary for perpetration of terrorist act without any support in the real life environment. Due to this reason free access to information facilitating terrorism (propaganda of terrorists, instructions for the perpetration of attacks and other materials) on the internet is one of the main risk factors of radicalization and terrorism in Europe.

6.2 Situation with terrorism threats in Latvia²

Although terrorism currently causes one of the most significant threats to the European security, the level of terrorism threats remained comparatively low also during this period of review in Latvia. There is no significant support to radical religious interpretations within the religious communities of Latvia; however, involvement of individual representatives of Latvian Muslim community in religiously motivated violent activities abroad has been identified. Such activities cause long-term risks to the security of Latvia.

Similarly as in the previous periods of review, there was no significant support to the radical interpretation of Islam which legitimizes religiously motivated violence within Latvian Muslim community during the last period of review. However, armed conflicts in the Islamic countries, as well as contacts with foreign supporters of the radical interpretation of Islam have affected radicalization of individual Latvian Muslims.

The information in possession of DP indicates that two residents of Latvia have travelled to Syria in order to join the fight against the regime's forces. Furthermore, there are reasonable suspicions that both representatives of Latvian Muslim community have joined the Islamist militant groups involved in the Syrian conflict. This causes risks to the security of Latvia, since the attack, which took place in Brussels during the period of review, confirmed that Islamists involved in the Syrian conflict can continue terrorist activities also after their return. It is important to note that after the IS' announcement on establishment of the Caliphate other Latvian Muslims have also expressed interest in the Syrian conflict. Therefore, there is a risk that additional representatives of Latvian Muslim community could try to travel to Syria/Iraq in order to engage in the armed conflict.

The analysis of terrorism tendencies indicates that radicalization process of persons can be facilitated not only by armed conflicts in Islamic states, but also by contacts with persons or religious organizations, which, although refrain from

² Risks caused by the supporters of far-right and far-left wing ideology are examined in the Constitutional order chapter, therefore this chapter provides assessment on risks caused by defenders of radical religious opinions.

expressing public support to religiously motivated violence, preach interpretation of Islam, which contradicts with the values of democracy. Regular visits of foreign missionaries in Latvia took place during the period of review. Such visits have not caused direct threats to the security of our country so far, however, contacts with missionaries, who are against the principles of democracy may facilitate initial radicalization of persons and their alienation from the rest of society. Radicalized and isolated persons become more vulnerable to the ideology preached by the Islamist terrorist groups, therefore there is an increasing risk that these persons due to radicalization process can engage in religiously motivated violent activities.

There was another change of leadership of *Latvijas Islāma kultūras centrs* [Islamic Cultural Centre in Latvia] (LIKC) during the period of review. *Arbi Indorbajevs* resigned after internal conflicts and *Oļegs Petrovs* became his replacement. Unlike his predecessor, *O. Petrovs* is a convert (converted to Islam from other religion during his lifetime) and prior to returning to Latvia he studied Islam and Arabic in Saudi Arabia for several years. Acquired knowledge provides to *O. Petrovs* religious authority within the Muslim community, and along with assuming the leader's position in LIKC he has also become a religious leader of the community. This was also confirmed by the fact that after assuming the leader's position in LIKC, *O. Petrovs* paid significant attention to promotion of Islam in the society. It is noteworthy that he actively involves other converts in these activities as well.

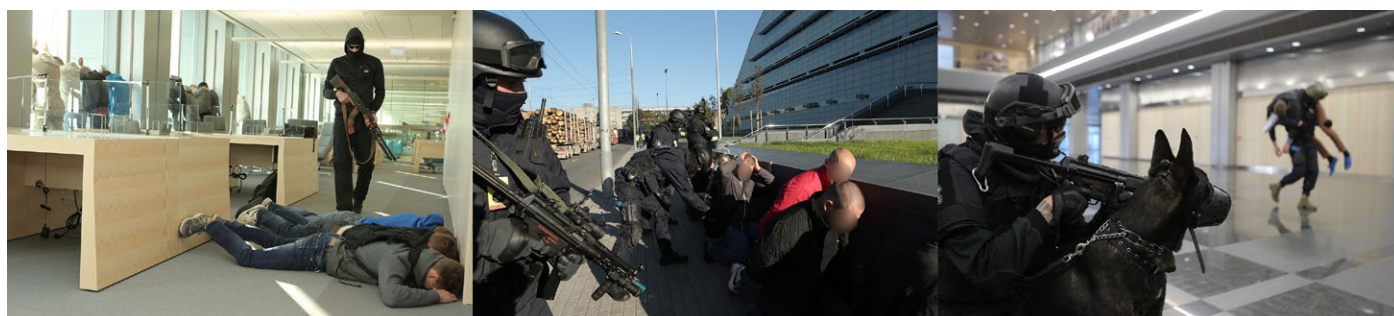
It is important to note that several Latvian converts currently continue their Islamic studies abroad. Besides, it was determined during the period of review that persons, who have converted to Islam while residing in other member states of the EU, have returned to Latvia. Thus, there is a real possibility that the perspective positions of converts could grow stronger in Latvian Muslim community, along with simultaneous expansion of contacts with foreign Muslim organizations, including organizations, whose preached interpretation of Islam contradicts the values of democracy.

The situation of terrorism threats in Latvia can be affected not only by radicalization of representatives of the local Muslim community, but also entry of foreigners who are radically oriented or connected to terrorist groups. Due to this reason DP carries out intensified inspections of requests for visas from citizens of countries, where there is significant presence of terrorist groups.

In 2014, Latvian visas were requested by 1099 citizens of these countries, and decision to deny to issue a visa was adopted in 103 cases. In none of these cases the denial was related to terrorism risks. No significant terrorism risks were identified among the potential asylum seekers in Latvia during the period of review. In comparison with the previous years, number of asylum seekers grew more than two times (from 162 to 352 persons) in 2014, furthermore, proportion of asylum seekers from Syria increased significantly (32 persons). Although the majority of Syrians, who adopt decision in favour of leaving their country, do this due to the consequences of the prolonged conflict, there is a real risk that persons who are connected to terrorist groups or are travelling to Europe by their direction can infiltrate among the asylum seekers. It must be noted that last year among asylum seekers one person was identified, who might have possible connection with the Syrian rebel groups (this person later recalled its request for asylum).

Risk factors identified during the period of review, which may have adverse effects on terrorism threats in our country in the future, clearly confirm necessity to strengthen the national counterterrorism system. One of the most important elements of this system is prevention including the sum of various measures aimed at increasing awareness on the character of terrorism threats and strengthening of physical security measures in the objects of critical infrastructure and soft targets. During the period of review, DP carried out 37 inspections of the objects of critical infrastructure, prepared 20 recommendations and provided methodological support for improvement of security measures for 16 objects. Besides, DP also organized trainings on counterterrorism issues to officials of 13 various institutions.

In addition, during the last year DP continued to strengthen the counterterrorism response capabilities. A significant part of this element was the exercise *Kurbads 2014*, which was organized in 2014 and was one of the most significant counterterrorism exercises in Latvia. Representatives of National Armed Forces, State Police, State Border Guard, State Fire and Rescue Service, State Emergency Medical Service and other institutions participated in this exercise, as well as considerable amount of technical resources were involved. Additionally, *Kurbads 2014* had an important role in preparations for the Latvian presidency of the Council of the EU, due to the fact that this exercise took place in the National Library of Latvia, which is the central location of the presidency events.



Counterterrorism exercise *Kurbads 2014*

6.3 Conclusions and outlook

- Terrorism remains as one of the main sources of threats to the security of Europe. The tragic incidents, which took place in 2014 and at the beginning of this year in several European countries, confirm the diverse character of terrorism threats. Upon continuation of the conflict in Syria and radicalization tendencies among the European Muslims threat caused by terrorists in our continent, most likely, will remain high.
- Although Latvia and its citizens should not be considered as the prime target of terrorist attacks, there is still a risk that residents of our country may become accidental victims of terrorist attacks in other countries. It is important to note that terrorist groups located in various regions choose citizens of Western countries as their prime targets of attacks or hostage takings, therefore residents of Latvia must carefully examine the situation of terrorism threats in the particular country before travelling to their destination.
- The level of terrorism threats remained comparatively low in Latvia during the period of review, and the ideology preached by the terrorists had no support within Latvian Muslim community. At the same time separate risk factors have been identified, which may have adverse effects on security situation of Latvia in the future.
- Currently the most significant terrorism risk factor is the involvement of residents of Latvia in the Syrian conflict and the possibility that they have joined the Islamist terrorist groups based there. Such activities may directly affect security of Latvia, since there is a real risk that after their return from Syria residents of Latvia who have acquired combat experience may engage in different terrorist activities in our country.
- Adverse influence on situation within Latvian Muslim community may be caused by the increasing contacts with foreign organizations or separate individuals who support interpretation of Islam, which contradicts with the values and principles of democracy. Taking into consideration the growing influence of converts within the Latvian Muslim community, there is a risk that foreign contacts of the community will be strengthened as well, therefore increasing radicalization risks in the future can also be foreseen.
- The extensive availability of information facilitating terrorism on the internet is a significant risk factor affecting the security interests of the European countries. It must be noted that radicalization of both residents of Latvia, who have engaged in Syrian conflict was affected by processes in the virtual environment.

7 Pre-trial investigation

DP is the only one out of three security and intelligence services in Latvia, which is authorized to conduct pre-trial investigation. DP is competent to investigate criminal offences committed against national security.

In 2014, DP initiated 44 criminal proceedings, but additionally six cases were received from other institutions pursuant to the institutional jurisdiction. The majority of 50 criminal cases initiated by DP was related to incitement to racial hatred, illegal movement of goods of strategic significance across the border of the Republic of Latvia and hindrance of the exercise of the right to vote.

During the reference period 26 criminal proceedings were sent to the prosecutor's office for initiation of criminal prosecution. Criminal cases sent to the prosecutor's office contain requests to initiate criminal prosecution against 38 persons in total, including four officials. Persons, against whom initiation of criminal prosecution was requested for possible commitment of various criminal offences, includes also supporters of Russian compatriot policy in Latvia – *J.Osipovs, A.Beness, J.Zaicevs* and others.

NUMBER OF CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS INITIATED IN 2014

For incitement to national and racial hatred	13
For illegal movement of goods of strategic significance across the border of the Republic of Latvia	8
For hindrance of the exercise of the right to vote	7
Other	4
For disclosure of non-disclosable information	2
For terrorism threats	2
For disclosure of state secrets	2
For violation of regulations on circulation of goods of strategic significance	2
For bribery	1
For call to destroy independence of the Republic of Latvia	1
For financing of terrorism	1
For call to forcibly overthrow the state authority of the Republic of Latvia	1
For violation of sanctions imposed by international organizations	1
For intentional violation of the confidentiality of correspondence, information in the form of transmissions over a telecommunications network and other information	1
For forgery of documents and use of forged documents	1
For glorification of crimes against humanity	1
For storage of firearms and explosives without the relevant licence	1
For desecration of the national flag of the Republic of Latvia	1

NUMBER OF CASES SENT FOR THE INITIATION OF CRIMINAL PROSECUTION IN 2014

For illegal movement of goods of strategic significance across the border of the Republic of Latvia	9
For incitement to national and racial hatred	3
For disclosure of non-disclosable information, other than official secret	2
For production, realization and submission of forged documents	2
For support of giving bribes	1
For exceeding of official authority	1
For justification of crimes against humanity	1
For illegal circulation of firearms	1
For failure to act by a government official	1
For desecration of state symbols (national flag)	1
For call to forcibly overthrow the state authority, destroy independence of the Republic of Latvia as a state and destruction of the territorial integrity of the Republic of Latvia	1
For violation of the prohibition of the circulation of equipment, devices or instruments or the components thereof specially created or adapted for investigatory operational measures to be performed by a specific method	1
For bringing in excise goods by avoiding customs control or concealing such goods from such control (smuggling)	1
For hindrance of the person's exercise of the right to freely elect members of the parliament by the use of payoffs	1

DP officers were also involved in international investigation teams and carried out necessary actions within the request for legal assistance.

8 Dignitary protection

DP provides protection of the Speaker of the Parliament of the Republic of Latvia (the Saeima), the Prime Minister and the Minister of the Interior, while security of the President is being provided by the Military Police. DP is also responsible for the security of foreign dignitaries, the officials of the EU and international organizations during their visits in our country.

Protection measures of dignitaries include organization of security measures during various visits. In 2014, DP provided protection of dignitaries during 56 national visits and 54 foreign official business trips. DP was also responsible for implementation of security measures during visits of

56 foreign dignitaries in Latvia. Besides, DP officials protected the Latvian and foreign dignitaries during 16 events. No incidents, which would cause threats to the safety of the dignitaries occurred during these events.



Simultaneously, in 2014 DP commenced preparation for the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the EU. During the presidency DP is the institution responsible for security in more than twenty A-level meetings, therefore increased attention was paid to planning and preparation of security measures already in 2014. Work performed during the period of review allowed to guarantee safe course of the presidency events by balanced and reasonable security measures.

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