Mechanisms of Influence of the Russian Federation into Internal Affairs of the Czech Republic

Jakub Janda
Head of Kremlin Watch Program
Deputy Director of European Values Think Tank

Ondřej Kundra
Investigation reporter and head of Political Desk at Czech weekly Respekt
Author of the book Putinovi agenti (Putin’s agents)
Summary of the current state of influence of the Russian Federation in the Czech Republic:

- We identify three primary interests of the Russian Federation in the Czech Republic as:
  
  1. Strengthening of Kremlin’s political allies and use of these Trojan horses to disrupt the EU and NATO; even to cause a foreign-policy turn towards more submissiveness to actions of Russia
  
  2. Undermining public trust towards democratic politicians and institutions, legitimizing extremists and disinformation projects, and to cause the targeted state to be practically defenceless against those threats
  
  3. Undermining public support for EU and NATO membership; culminating in Czech exit from the EU in the long run.

- Key job for interests of the Russian Federation is done by the political allies of Kremlin and the Czech disinformation entities. Other tools (non-governmental allies of the Kremlin, economic operations with political goals, or extremists supporting the RF) only play a supportive role for these two main groups which spearhead it.

- Prominent political allies of Kremlin interest in the Czech Republic are: President of the Czech Republic Miloš Zeman; most of the representatives of the KSČM (Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia); some representatives of ČSSD (Czech Social Democratic Party) such as: members of the parliament S. Huml, V. Jandák, J. Foldyna, and Governor M. Hašek; and some representatives of the far right, such as MP T. Okamura. Generally we can notice (most of) following characteristics among them:
  
  - They accept and publicly defend Kremlin interpretation of events in Ukraine (denying or belittling of the Russian intervention, extensive use of „fascist” argument, and that the “West is responsible for the current situation in Ukraine”)

---

1 This Executive Summary is a document based on a complete study in Czech language, available here: www.evropskehodnoty.cz/vyzkum/schema-fungovani-vlivu-ruske-federace-v-ceske-republice/
- They accept and publicly defend the Kremlin interpretation regarding actions of the USA or NATO such as “encirclement of Russia” or “humiliation of Russia”
- They accept and publicly defend Kremlin call to lift sanctions against aggressive actions of the Russian Federation
- They attend events which are intended to legitimize the Putin regime and its actions
- Through various ways, they challenge Czech membership in the EU or NATO
- They spread or directly cooperate with the disinformation projects
- They do not protest against being used by the Putin regime for domestic legitimization

- The most significant threat to the Czech national interests, as defined by the Security Strategy of the Czech Republic (2015), are the attempts of allies of Kremlin to create a demand for the Czech exit from the EU. In July 2016, President Miloš Zeman announced that he will do all he can to initiate a referendum on the Czech exit from the EU and NATO. We estimate that this is the direction in which the efforts of Kremlin allies will continue to lead. These entities name the EU as the main cause for the current (Islamic) migration moves and related domestic security risks; which as a phenomenon, the Czech people see as a major threat. We expect that this debate will take a similar path as the British one has regarding Brexit; where the topic of exit referendum was initially brought up on the political agenda by actors from the edge of the political spectrum and the mainstream politicians could not successfully argument against holding such exit referendum. The promise of allegedly avoiding migration and Islamic threat is the main argument for exiting the EU.

- With the upcoming presidential elections in the Czech Republic (January 2018) we expect an enormous increase in disinformation, influence, and media activities of the Russian Federation and its proxies & allies. We expect that the Kremlin will try to push their political ally into his second presidential term (2018 – 2023) with all available means; and the current disinformation infrastructure will function as a base for an enormous increase of activities in accordance with the interests of the Russian Federation. Scale of Kremlin involvement will be decided in relation to the resistance it will face from the Czech security community.

- Compared to the neighbouring states, the Czech disinformation scene is disproportionally large and well developed. We expect that the majority of it is made up of key individuals who combine personal economic interests with minimal patriotic responsibility (such as entities surrounding company OUR MEDIA) and individuals “seeking alternatives” to the system (entities surrounding the projects such as...
AC24), and individuals who ideologically oppose the Western democratic order and foreign policy and thus they adore Putin’s Russia (projects such as Aeronet).

- There is an urging need to investigate and uncover the activities of the disproportionate diplomatic representation of the Russian Federation in Czech Republic (currently over 140 diplomatic staff); and Kremlin-related business/political activities of individuals positioned near President Miloš Zeman - especially Martin Nejedlý and Zdeněk Zbytek.

- Among non-governmental allies and defenders of the Russian Federation, there are two visible and active entities: “Institute of Slavic Strategic Studies” (ISSTRAS) and former Czech President Václav Klaus.

- Some entities operating on the Czech extremist scene have ideological and material ties to the entities in the Russian Federation; however at the moment they do not have extensive and systematic operations. Activities connected to several more active projects, such as “Národní domoobrana” (National Militia), which is connected to the extremist “Národní demokracie” (National Democracy) pose a substantial security risk.

- Within the Russian community living in the Czech Republic we can see the polarization of the individuals who support the Putin regime and his steps, compared the rest of the community. The main leaders of this phenomenon are the “Institute of Slavic Strategic Studies” (ISSTRAS) and Artěk. According to official reports and unofficial information, situation gets worse each year since 2014.

**Possible developments: 2016 – 2019**

From Moscow’s perspective, the Czech presidential elections in January 2018 are of major importance as Kremlin can gain an important and influential position for its proven ally at relatively minimal costs.

If abovementioned threats are underestimated, in the next three years (2016-2019), following situations could materialize:

1. Due to the intensity of political pressure, the public broadcasting media (Czech Television Czech Radio) may be silenced and to a degree get controlled by the ruling political interest. As a result they would cease to play the watchdog role which is relatively free and independent of the political parties and the government. On the current fragmented media market, which is effectively divided between oligarchs, this would be a game-changer with deep implication for the democratic system.
2. Disinformation projects may gain higher degree of public trust (currently at around 25% Czechs state that they trust disinformation projects). It could have a systematic impact on first-time voters who could largely cease to trust more serious and established news networks. Instead they would put more trust to conspiracy narratives and shift their support to the extremist groups (an example of this is the dominance of Jobbik among first-time voters in Hungary, or the extremist LSNS among first-time voters in Slovakia). Such a successful far right group has not yet emerged in the Czech Republic, but it may only be a matter of time before it does.

3. Along with KSČM (Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia), other major political parties and individuals may become more submissive to pro-Kremlin narratives and through various means begin to support Russia’s interests in the Czech Republic. Some voters and members of political parties are already showing support for aggressive actions of Russia. Currently, the existing leadership of ČSSD (Czech Social Democratic Party), ODS (Civic Democratic Party), and KDU-ČSL (Christian and Democratic Union – Czech People's Party) stand firm to support pro-Atlantic orientation, this however could change fast. In regards to TOP 09 (Tradition Responsibility Prosperity), such a trend among members is currently not noticeable, and in regards to ANO (Action of Dissatisfied Citizens) such a change would be based solely on the opinion of their Chairman since it is a business-style run party.

4. Specific bodies of Czech state may get penetrated by influence of the Russian Federation. Currently, it is a situation of the Office of the President of the Czech Republic. Such an infiltration of interests and influence into the government may potentially paralyze specific state policy, such as if individuals with Kremlin interests in mind would get into certain positions of power. A typical example would be the minister of defence, foreign affairs, or interior from the communist party; possibly even a secret arrangement between president Zeman and the future government. It doesn't need to be public and direct, while proxies of specific actors can have a lot of influence in specific state bodies without an official support.

5. Large disinformation projects, such as the broadcasting of the RT channel in the Czech language or influential projects such as children’s magazines may begin to operate on the Czech media market. An example could be the so far unsuccessful Slovak pilot magazine for kids Atramentový bojovník. The state must have a strategy to counter such phenomenon.

---

2 Data is based on an extensive poll run by STEM agency in June 2016, see more at: www.mediaguru.cz/2016/07/dezinformacnim-webum-veri-uz-25-cechu/
Comparison of Czechia – Slovakia – Hungary

- We can consider the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic to be the main frontline battlefield for geopolitical orientation. We expect Kremlin to significantly increase its attention and resources towards these states. There is a sufficiently prepared infrastructure along with other socio-political precursors for a massive increase of Kremlin influence & disinformation operations.

- Among Kremlin political allies in these states, the Czech president Miloš Zeman is used the most by the domestic Russian propaganda for the legitimation of the Putin regime. President Zeman is also the most open and active supporter of Kremlin; compared to his regional colleagues.

- Compared to that neighbouring states, the Czech disinformation scene is disproportionately large and developed. Such extensive infrastructure of the disinformation publishing industry cannot be found in either Slovakia or Hungary. Explanation for this may be the higher demand for these products and the conformity of the economic interests of specific individuals who have created a well-functioning business model.

- The main purpose of disinformation and Kremlin’s allies is to challenge the Czech membership in the EU, and the Slovak membership in NATO respectively.

- The social prerequisites needed to create a large social movement which would promote and accept positive Russian interests and values is absent in the Czech Republic. In Slovakia however, there already is a larger movement based on conservative religious values, which rejects a particular form of European liberalism. This movement may be used as a base for long-term build-up of support of myths claiming Russia to be the defender of traditional conservative values; which in the Czech Republic is only a marginal possibility due to socio-historical factors.

- Compared to the Slovak extremists, the connection between Czech extremists and Russia is less developed so far. The Slovak pro-Kremlin paramilitary group Slovenští branci, which is focused on training, has a large connection to state armed forces, and the involvement of Russian instructors have been noted. The Czech extremist paramilitary group Národní domoobrana has connection to Donetsk Kremlin-run entities, but so far on basis of a very few individuals.

- Disinformation projects are sometimes interconnected with Slovak- Czech links. A Slovakian author of a propaganda project Zem & Vek moved into the Czech disinformation project Vědomí (Consciousness); which is published by AC24.
1. The working principles of the influence of the Russian Federation

1.1. About

The following text intends to introduce existing knowledge on influence of the Russian Federation and its allies on political and security situation in the Czech Republic. Considering the absence of the coherent methodology in the international expert literature, the text does not intend to contribute to the academic arena. Mission of this text is to introduce the empirical knowledge divided into the seven basic areas of the foreign influence, in this case limited to the Russian Federation. This actor was selected by the authors based on the existing knowledge that indicates that the interests and activities of the Russian Federation on the Czech territory are an immense threat to the Czech Republic's interests as defined in the strategic documents of the Czech state. The stated knowledge is nor thorough nor complete. The authors are presenting the findings they consider the most relevant to get the big picture.

1.2. Threat Conceptualisation

The Russian Federation leads a systematic disinformation campaign that Kremlin considers to be one of the instruments of the hybrid (or non-linear) efforts. Its intention is to disintegrate the both EU and NATO's unity, to ruin the trust of citizen to the democratic institutions and to increase the support of the antisystem radical and extremist forces that are in positive relation to the Russian Federation. They actually try to bring the rival to act in the way it would benefit the aggressor. The chief of the general staff of the armed forces of the Russian Federation describes these efforts as “the informative confrontation aiming to decrease the fighting potential of the enemy.” The Minister of defence of the Russian Federation Sergei Šojgu has stated in the year 2015: „The time has come that we all admit, that the words, camera, photography, internet and the information has generally become another type of weapon, another kind of the armed forces.“ This is the way the political system of the Russian Federation perceives information (Kremlin for a more simple use).

---

3The following text is based on the Czech chapter of the study published in the July 2016 by a Hungarian think-thank Political Capitol titled: „The Weaponization of Culture: Kremlin’s traditional agenda and the export of values to Central Europe“. WWW: http://www.politicalcapital.hu/wp-content/uploads/PC_reactionary_values_CEE_20160727.pdf.
One may say that these efforts aim to ruin at least two concrete interests of the Czech Republic as defined in the valid [Czech Security strategy]:

- to secure the sovereignty and political independence (Czech vital interest)
- to strengthen both NATO and EU's coherence and effectiveness and keeping the working and trustful transatlantic relation (Czech strategic interest)

We identify the primary interests of the Russian Federation as:

1. To strengthen the position of the political allies of the Kremlin and using these Troy horses to internal discords in both EU and NATO and even turn in the Czech policy regarding Russia
2. To ruin the trust of the citizens in the democratic politicians and institutions, that enables to strengthen the legitimacy of the extremists and disinformation projects and the defencelessness of the state in general.
3. In the long run, to help cause Czech exit from the EU

The aggressive action of the Russian Federation reflect the updated strategic documents of the Czech state.

- „Some states are aiming for a revised international ordering and to reach their power targets they are ready to use the methods of the hybrid war mixing both conventional and non-conventional military tools using the non-military instruments (propaganda using the classic and new media, reporting disinformation action, cybernetic attacks, political and economic pressure, broadcasting the unmarked members of the armed forces)“, states the [Security Strategy of Czech Republic].

- „Russia is currently destabilizing the European security architecture in a serious way“, states the [Czech Foreign Policy Conception]
## Tool Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Intelligence &amp; influence operations</td>
<td>The Russian Federation is using intelligence capabilities on the territory of the Czech Republic to fulfill its foreign policy goals. It is carried out by specific agencies (especially FSB, SVR, GRU) and other (proxy) entities, which are acting in its interest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Disinformation operations</td>
<td>The Russian Federation runs its operations to spread disinformation and specific information, which corresponds with its current political stance and goals. Except Russian government granted quasi-news projects (RT, Sputnik), there are many other subjects and individuals which directly or indirectly cooperate with the Kremlin interests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Relevant political allies of Kremlin</td>
<td>On the European political map we can find politicians who defend the actions of the Russian Federation. They usually defend Kremlin interpretation of the events in Ukraine, their stance towards the USA, their stance towards the sanctions, and potentially they blame the West for the situation in Ukraine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Non-governmental allies of Kremlin</td>
<td>These subjects play the role of influential entities, which use legitimate means of democratic discussion to promote the interests of the Russian Federation, especially in the form of justifying the steps taken by the Kremlin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Support of radical and extremist groups</td>
<td>These are anti-system subjects which attack democratic institutions and (not necessarily always) support the interests of the Russian Federation. There is a high degree of ideological support, which also manifests itself through material means: these people are often invited to the Russian Federation, or to support Kremlin interests in the occupied territories in Ukraine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Exploitation of part of the Russian minority</td>
<td>Ethnic Russians living in European states are seen by the Russian Federation as a foreland, which can be used for military and foreign policy goals. Some individuals within the Russian communities are used for intelligence &amp; influence operations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Economic operations with political goals</td>
<td>Companies close to Kremlin use business means for political influence in the targeted state. Usually they try to infiltrate strategic branches connected with energy. Kremlin then imposes its political and geopolitical interests through these organizations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

We divide these activities of an aggressive foreign power and its allies into seven groups, which we can identify within the European context. The list consists of characteristic and typical examples; but it is not exhausting. Its purpose is to help shape understanding of this complex phenomenon.
## Mechanisms of Influence of the Russian Federation into Internal Affairs of the Czech Republic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Projected Motivation of the Tool</strong></td>
<td>In regards to people cooperating with the Russian intelligence agencies in the targeted states, reasons for cooperation may be the combination between political (dissatisfaction with democratic political system or foreign-policy orientation), economic (personal benefit), psychological (the feeling of inferiority of lack of appreciation, which the intelligence agencies can exploit), and personal factors (blackmail).</td>
<td>In the case of Czech domestic disinformation subjects without a connection to the Kremlin, their purpose is usually stated to be supposed to “objectively inform”, in their words “against censorship of political correctness” or “against American or Brussels propaganda” which they attribute to the “official” (traditional) media. In many cases the cause may be a personal psychological motivation to fight the system (for example AC24, Protiproud, NWOO.org) or motivation based on economic benefit (OUR MEDIA).</td>
<td>Usually there is a combination of ideological motivations against an opponent (the EU, or the USA), shared authoritarian tendencies, or pragmatic motivation seeking financial and media support. These allies of Kremlin are often pictured by Kremlin &amp; its allies as “sovereign politicians”, which “reject the dominance of the EU or USA”.</td>
<td>We know of organizations in the European context which play the role of allies and supporters of the Russian Federation and financially benefit from it. In the case of the Czech Republic, it is mainly based on the ideological affinity of the given subjects who benefit from supporting the Russian Federation because they personally agree with it in many regards.</td>
<td>The extremists are challenging the democratic state and its foreign policies. They attempt to create the impression that the Czech political and media establishment acts against the Czech citizens; which goes parallel to the interests of the Russian Federation. The extremists may also join anti-system and paramilitary groups, which train and equip themselves with the motivation to fight against the migrants. Their inner declared motivation is the fight against the enemy, which, according to them, is not being fought against enough by the state.</td>
<td>People who live in the Czech Republic for a long period of time and defend the interests and steps of the Russian Federation tend to do so due to both their personal connection with their state of origin, and possible financial benefits.</td>
<td>Usually the motivation is the personal benefit of the workers and possible profit even for Kremlin’s political allies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## European Values Think-Tank Study

**04.09.2016**

**Mechanisms of Influence of the Russian Federation into Internal Affairs of the Czech Republic**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To Which Interests of the Russian Federation Usually Serve</td>
<td>1. The interest of the Russian Federation is to know the weaknesses of the target state and its leaders for future use in decision making.</td>
<td>1. The interest of the Russian Federation is to manipulate the public opinion of the target state in parallel with its own interests. In the case of the Czech Republic, it is especially challenging the Czech membership in the EU and to lower the public trust towards democratic politicians.</td>
<td>1. In the long run, the subject defends the interests of the Russian Federation: the weakening of the transatlantic ties and the weakening of the EU and NATO from the inside.</td>
<td>1. The defence and justification of the steps which the Russian Federation takes in the domestic political debate.</td>
<td>1. The radical and extremist forces directly support and help the disinformation projects to grow; thus they create a symbiosis. They openly take the role of defenders of some of Kremlin’s political allies.</td>
<td>1. The Russian Federation may use some individuals from the Russian community in the target state for media service operations.</td>
<td>1. It is possible to use of economic operations with a political goal to gain influence over key branches in the target state to make it dependent on the Russian Federation; through which it may then gain influence over the foreign policies of the target state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. The interest of the Russian Federation is to influence the actions of key figures and the target state in such a manner that the target state acts friendly towards the Russian Federation and be uncooperative against its allies.</td>
<td>2. The subject will spread the Kremlin’s interpretation of the world events and thus promote it and legitimize it, both domestically and on the union level.</td>
<td>2. The subject is used by the Kremlin for domestic legitimation, and also to create the impression that the leader of the Russian Federation is not being isolated by the rest of the world; but in fact has many allies.</td>
<td>2. The defence and justification of the steps which the Russian Federation takes in the domestic political debate.</td>
<td>2. The Russian Federation and its puppet subjects use the radical and extremist forces for domestic and international legitimation of its actions.</td>
<td>2. The Russian Federation may use the Russian community in the target state to justify its actions and foreign policy steps.</td>
<td>2. With the use of controlled economic operation with political goals it is possible to successfully, directly support the relevant political allies of the Russian Federation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
European Values Think-Tank Study

Mechanisms of Influence of the Russian Federation into Internal Affairs of the Czech Republic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Empirical Examples</strong></td>
<td>The case of agent Rachardžo</td>
<td>Sputnik, RT.</td>
<td>Miloš Zeman</td>
<td>Institute of Slavic Strategic Studies</td>
<td>National Democracy – National militia</td>
<td>Activities of the magazine Arték.</td>
<td>The political activities of Martin Nejedlý, or Zdeněk Zbytek.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The activities of the embassy of the Russian Federation in the Czech Republic.</td>
<td>39 Czech disinformation projects.</td>
<td>Most representatives of KSČM (Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia)</td>
<td>Václav Klaus</td>
<td>Czechoslovak active reserve soldiers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>An example of a disinformation operation: Czech case Hnědá bunda⁵ (Brown Jacket).</td>
<td>Some representatives of ČSSD (Czech Social Democratic Party)</td>
<td>Jiří Vyvadil – Friends of Russia in the Czech Republic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Some representatives of the far right-wing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The primary interests of the Russian Federation in the Czech Republic are:

1. Strengthening position of Kremlin’s political allies and use of these trojans to internal splits in the EU and NATO, as well as turnover in the Czech policy towards Russia

2. Undermining citizens’ trust towards politicians and democratic institutions, which will strengthen legitimacy of extremists groups and disinformation projects as well as overall defencelessness of state against these threats

3. Reducing of citizens’ support for membership in EU and NATO, in the long term perspective withdrawing of the Czech Republic from the EU.
2. Explaining the Relationship Between Individual Actors in the Scheme of Influence of the Russian Federation in the Czech Republic

1. Democracy is built on trust of citizen to the democratic regime and their willingness to vote for (various) democratic politicians.

2. Extremists challenge the democratic state and its foreign policy. They attempt to create the impression that political and media establishment acts against the citizens of the Czech Republic. They share this interest with Kremlin which likes the democratic politicians to be depicted this way.

3. Authors of disinformation make attempts to manipulate trust of citizens. They attempt to create the impression that the political and media establishment acts against the citizens of the Czech Republic. This is also the interest of the Russian Federation.

4. The far right and extremists often support politicians, which are often also submissive to towards Kremlin. Occasionally the support is mutual; for example the cooperation between President Zeman and far-right leader Martin Konvička on the 17th November 2015 at a public rally.

5. The far right and the extremists are supporting their efforts using the disinformation projects; which they see as reliable news outlets. These disinformation projects also offer them a platform on which to showcase themselves. More at Czech database: www.dezinformatori.cz.

6. The far right and extremists advocate for the policies of Kremlin and they often see a role model in the Russian Federation. Kremlin uses them to support their domestic legitimacy by inviting them as “observers” or visitors to Donbas or Crimea. It also gives the individuals them feeling of being important. Connection between Czech extremists and the Russian Federation is discussed in a Quarterly Report on State of Extremist Scene by the Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic, 2015.

7. Disinformation projects often defend and advocate for actions of the Russian Federation; directly or through a selective agenda. Kremlin’s communication channels such as RT or Sputnik are often the source of inspiration for other disinformation projects

8. Kremlin’s political allies often share and spread⁶ products of disinformation projects, they legitimize the disinformation projects, and on the contrary – disinformation projects often defend Kremlin’s allies.

9. Kremlin’s political allies share & spread Kremlin’s communication channel outlets (for example, the Spokesperson of President Miloš Zeman repeatedly shares Sputnik stories). On the other hand, Kremlin’s allies are portrayed by these communication channels as the allies of Vladimir Putin⁷, and

---

⁶ See more at: http://www.evropskehodnoty.cz/vyzkum/kreml_na_facebooku/
⁷ See more at: www.kremlinwatch.eu/data
therefore they are used for the domestic legitimation of Putin’s regime.

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

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

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

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

14. Kremlin’s political allies often cooperate with non-governmental actors who also act in accordance with the interests of the Kremlin; and they often legitimize it. A typical examples are seminars of the “Institute of Slavic Strategic Studies” in the Czech Parliament by the members of the parliament from KSČM and Úsvit. Chief Foreign Policy Advisor to the Czech President Hynek Kmoniček has attended those events as a speaker.

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

16. Selected parts of the Russian community living in the Czech Republic are being used by the Russian intelligence services. The case of agent Rachardžo is well known by the public, as he managed to extract large amounts of sensitive information from top military positions and subsequently escaped to Russia. Another well-known example is magazine project Artěk, which started to run hardline Russian propaganda after the annexation of Crimea.
17. Selected parts of the Russian community may work for non-governmental entities which act in accordance to the interests of the Kremlin. An example of this is the action of Russian-origin businessman Ivan Sokolov, who in his own words is part of the “Institute of Slavic Strategic Studies”.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Do you like what we do? Support us! Our work is possible due to individual donors such as yourself.

Use the form at: http://www.europeanvalues.net/o-nas/support-us/

Or send your donation directly to our transparent account: 2300405420/2010.

© Evropské hodnoty z.s. 2016
The European Values Think-Tank is a non-governmental policy institute defending liberal democracy.

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

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

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

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