

Disinformation Review Issue No 53 - 12 January 2017

Date	Language / Targeted Audience	Summary of the Disinformation	Link to the Disinformation	Disinforming outlet (s)	Disproof	Reported by
18.12.2016	RUS	The Vatican has officially recognized self proclaimed Luhansk and Donetsk Peoples Republics.	http://bit.ly/2i6tWMR	Whoswhos.org	No evidence of these claims and no reports of any such statements on the official website of the Vatican State or in any credible media outlets.	Oleksandr Nykonorov, journalist for Depo.ua, blogger, researcher
21.12.2016	LTU	EU is sending 140 million euros to Sudan. In exchange armed groups in Sudan will carry out a massacre of migrants in order to prevent migrant crisis in Europe.	http://bit.ly/2iJeULX	Versijos.lt	No evidence given for this conspiracy theory. The picture used in the article is a AFP-picture of crimes committed by IS in 2014. http://huff.to/2hXCYM4	East Stratcom Network
23.12.2016	RUS	The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine does not patrol the area of Debaltseve due to indifference.	http://bit.ly/2i8vVAg	Miastok	No evidence presented. The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine has a Forward Patrol Base in Debaltseve. In times of intense fighting the Mission has evacuated the base for security reasons but around the 23 December the reports show that the monitors were in the area of Debaltseve http://bit.ly/2izq4zW and that is also the case now http://bit.ly/2izj46o .	Oleksandr Nykonorov, journalist for Depo.ua, blogger, researcher
24.12.2016	CZE	Citizens of Ukraine-controlled city of Krasnohorivka burned three militants from nationalistic volunteer battalion while they rested in sauna, which proves that the locals hate the banderist thugs.	http://bit.ly/2ilqGqj	Sputnik CZ	The cause of fire (that occurred 21.12.) is unknown and it is being investigated. The involvement of local citizens was not proven: http://bit.ly/2j4EXuh // Repeating disinformation about "nazis governing Ukraine".	Collected by the Prague Security Studies Institute within the framework of the Centre for International Relations' project co-financed by the Visegrad Fund
26.12.2016	CZE	The tragedy of the Tu-54 with the Alexandrov choir might have been the American revenge for Russia's hacking of US elections Barack Obama was speaking about earlier.	http://bit.ly/2illF1j	Protiproud	No evidence for this conspiracy theory given.	Collected by the Prague Security Studies Institute within the framework of the Centre for International Relations' project co-financed by the Visegrad Fund
26.12.2016	RUS	The 9/11 terror attacks in the US were in fact organised by US intelligence agencies.	http://bit.ly/2jafCQe	REN TV on youtube (02:20)	Often used conspiracy theory disproven by e.g the independent bipartisan 9/11 Commission Report http://bit.ly/2j6K3JT , http://bit.ly/2iwak0Q .	Oleksandr Nykonorov, journalist for Depo.ua, blogger, researcher
27.12.2016	RUS	700,000 Germans have left the country because of Merkel.	http://bit.ly/2iH7siG	RIA Novosti	No evidence to support the claim. According to official German migration statistics, around 140 000 Germans migrate from the country every year, regardless of reason. http://bit.ly/1xB61FI	East Stratcom Network

28.12.2016	LTU	Russian media is being discriminated in the Baltic states as the freedom of speech is restricted.	http://bit.ly/2iLJ2og	Versijos.lt	The Radio and Television Commission of Lithuania suspended broadcasting of RTR Planeta for 3 months since they were found guilty of instigating war and national hatred, violating directive 2010/13/EU http://bit.ly/28PAfvX at least twice during a 12 month period. http://bit.ly/2iYmsly . That has nothing to do with "freedom of speech".	East Stratcom Network
28.12.2016	RUS	Ukrainian authorities have banned Santa Claus since he is associated with Putin, and are now encouraging satanic rituals instead.	http://bit.ly/2j94Ucl	Novorosinform.org	No evidence given for this conspiracy theory. The "satanic rituals" referred to are the Halloween celebrations in October.	Oleksandr Nykonorov, journalist for Depo.ua, blogger, researcher
28.12.2016	RUS	Daesh was created and trained by the US.	http://bit.ly/2iVhlt9	REN TV on youtube (07:00)	Often repeated disinformation. In 2014 the US created the Global Coalition to counter Daesh http://bit.ly/1ziAxlq . Western military action in Syria and Iraq has clearly targeted Daesh. Western support for the Syrian opposition's success in retaking Dabiq represented a major defeat for Daesh.	Oleksandr Nykonorov, journalist for Depo.ua, blogger, researcher
29.12.2016	LTU	US Senator John McCain is a supporter of Daesh.	http://bit.ly/2iPSPfa	Laivaslaikrastis.lt	No evidence presented for this conspiracy theory. US Senator John McCain among others visited Lithuania on 29 December 2016. On the same day disinformation about the senator was spread in order to compromise him in the eyes of the Lithuanian people.	East Stratcom Network
30.12.2016	RUS	A "Maidan" (overthrowing of the president) will take place in Belarus.	http://bit.ly/2iXmxwG	Politrussia.com	No evidence presented and no reports from credible sources concerning this.	Oleksandr Nykonorov, journalist for Depo.ua, blogger, researcher
01.01.2017	CZE	In the alleged fight against "fake news", Facebook has given third-party fact-checkers the access to private data and private messages.	http://bit.ly/2jtFcDI	ac24.cz	Untrue. Third-party fact-checkers will have the right to analyze only the shared content (i.e. not the private): http://bit.ly/2gO3OFX	Kremlin Watch (European Values think-tank), http://www.europeanvalues.net/kremlinwatch/
02.01.2017	BGR	The EU will impose a terror tax on Bulgaria and other member states, similar to the terror tax introduced in France.	http://bit.ly/2iIEgcX	The Bulgarian Times	There is no official indication whatsoever, that the EU or Bulgaria will adopt any such measure. More importantly, the EU does not have a direct role in raising taxes or setting tax rates. The amount of tax you pay in each member state is decided by the government in every member state, not the EU. http://bit.ly/2ij9kNm	PhD Candidate
02.01.2017	CZE	Women were sexually attacked during the New Year's Eve, e.g. in Cologne.	http://bit.ly/2hXjCqv	euportal.parlamentnilisty.cz	There were no incidents of that kind in Cologne due to strict police measures: http://bit.ly/2ilJD1t	Collected by the Prague Security Studies Institute within the framework of the Centre for International Relations' project co-financed by the Visegrad Fund

03.01.2017	ENG	A mob of 1,000 men who chanted "Allahu Akhbar" set fire to Germany's oldest church on New Years Eve in Dortmund.	http://bit.ly/2i6DaVf	Breitbart	The report was attributed to local news site Ruhr Nachrichten, which answered by accusing Breitbart of "using our online reports for fake news, hate and propaganda." In fact, St.Reinold is not Germany's oldest church - that would be the Cathedral of Trier - and a small fire had started on some netting on scaffolding around the church, not the roof, due to one firework. And while Breitbart states that the "fireworks were launched at" the church, there was no indication from local news outlets or from the fire services that the fire had been started intentionally. The fire was small and lasted 12 minutes before firefighters put it out, Ruhr Nachrichten reports. Police told local media that overall it was a quiet night. http://bit.ly/2iqqfjC	East Stratcom Network
03.01.2017	CZE	The Czech Center against terrorism and hybrid threats (CTHT) aims at creating and distributing the only permitted truth and the only allowed opinion.	http://bit.ly/2jjRppP	parlamentnilisty.cz	The CTHT will publish statements when a potentially harmful disinformation appears: http://bit.ly/2iUrVma . Setting the record straight when a disinformation, i.e. a factually wrong message, appears has nothing to do with "opinion".	Kremlin Watch (European Values think-tank), http://www.europeanvalues.net/kremlinwatch/
03.01.2017	CZE	The Czech Center against terrorism and hybrid threats (CTHT) will enable prosecution of people for having a different opinion.	http://bit.ly/2iuuHn	aeronet.cz	The CTHT will publish statements when a potentially harmful disinformation appears: http://bit.ly/2iUrVma . Setting the record straight when a disinformation, i.e. a factually wrong message, appears has nothing to do with "opinion".	Kremlin Watch (European Values think-tank), http://www.europeanvalues.net/kremlinwatch/
03.01.2017	RUS	The Ukrainian Armed Forces are decimated by the current flu epidemic and the spread of SARS.	http://bit.ly/2iuAelC	Zvezda	No evidence given for the claims. Whereas it is indeed a flu season in Ukraine (as in many other European countries), around 69% of those affected were children. http://bit.ly/2j90G4X . There are no reports of the Ukrainian Armed Forces being decimated, nor of the spread of SARS.	Oleksandr Nykonorov, journalist for Depo.ua, blogger, researcher
04.01.2017	RUS	The West is to blame for the plane crash in Kaliningrad Airport on the 4th of January, as well as for the lack of emergency preparedness at the airport.	http://bit.ly/2hWiDVQ	Regnum.ru	No evidence or explanation given for the claims. Actually, Kaliningrad's acting governor, Anton Alikhanov has stated that he takes responsibility for the problems at the airport after the crash. http://bit.ly/2j7KX5g	East Stratcom Network

04.01.2017	CZE	The Centre Against Terrorism and Hybrid Threats (CTHT), which was recently established under the Ministry of Interior, will carry out the censorship of the Internet. The CTHT is similar to the censorship functions of the communist dictatorship.	http://bit.ly/2iPxQJs	czechfreepress.cz	The aim of the Centre against terrorism and hybrid threats in this field is to monitor the development of disinformation campaigns, to propose legislative or field countermeasures and to spread awareness of the public and expert society (http://bit.ly/2eeP1Bn).	Collected by the Prague Security Studies Institute within the framework of the Centre for International Relations' project co-financed by the Visegrad Fund
05.01.2017	RUS	The EU is losing interest in Moldova and Moldova should therefore turn towards the Eurasian Union.	http://bit.ly/2hYru68	Sputnik Moldova	No evidence given. The EU's imports from Moldova increased by 5% from €1.16 billion to €1.22 billion in 2015. The European Union is Moldova's biggest trade partner. Around 62% of its exports are sent to the EU, followed by Russia (12%). The Association Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Moldova was signed in June 2014 and has only been in full effect since July 2016. http://bit.ly/2fq1Euh	East Stratcom Network
06.01.2017	CZE	Barrack Obama intends to start a war bigger than all the other wars he is already involved in, to declare martial law, remain in power and stop Donald Trump. Obama is also responsible for the creation of Daesh.	http://bit.ly/2iUAUDEF	parlamentnilisty.cz	Conspiracy theories with no evidence given.	Kremlin Watch (European Values think-tank), http://www.europeanvalues.net/kremlinwatch/
06.01.2017	CZE	A young member of the Democratic Party (US) was killed for providing secret documents to Julian Assange. It was not Russia who hacked the DNC.	http://bit.ly/2i5jg0P	protiproud.parlamentnilisty.cz	Conspiracy theories with no evidence given. The American intelligence community concludes the DNC hacks were performed by Russia: http://bit.ly/2iRbS9b	Kremlin Watch (European Values think-tank), http://www.europeanvalues.net/kremlinwatch/
06.01.2017	RUS	A well-known chocolate brand uses child labour in Romania.	http://bit.ly/2i5fhBF	Rossiia 1 Vesti (25:55)	The story first appeared in British tabloid The Sun in November 2016 http://bit.ly/2fmuStk and was disproven as fake a couple of days later by Deutsche Welle http://bit.ly/2i885jl . On the Romanian television channel Digi24, the children's mother denied the British tabloid's story. She said it had been staged, and that she'd been told the British journalists were filming an advert for Kinder Surprise. She hadn't understood everything that was said to her in English.	East StratCom Network
07.01.2017	RUS	Estonian President refused to congratulate Orthodox Christians on Christmas.	http://bit.ly/2jv8MYS	Baltnews.lv	The Estonian President always makes one greeting that goes out to everyone. http://bit.ly/2i9tbxZ The previous President of Estonia was accused of the same thing last year http://bit.ly/2iby61a .	Biedriba Novosti

08.01.2017	CZE	European politicians and officials cooperate with the migration wave organizers. Mainstream media are silent about it.	http://bit.ly/2i5tWwv	parlamentnilisty.cz	Conspiracy theory with no evidence given.	Kremlin Watch (European Values think-tank), http://www.europeanvalues.net/kremlinwatch/
08.01.2017	RUS	Law enforcement authorities in the EU member states do not protect victims of criminal migrants.	http://bit.ly/2iXl5ds	REN TV on youtube (11:40)	No evidence presented for these claims. All EU countries are governed by the rule of law, where everyone should be treated equally before the law.	Oleksandr Nykonorov, journalist for Depo.ua, blogger, researcher
DISCLAIMER: The Disinformation Review is a compilation of reports received from members of the EEAS East Stratcom mythbusting network, which comprises of over 400 experts, journalists, officials, NGOs and Think Tanks in over 30 countries. Please note that opinions and judgements expressed here do not represent official EU positions.						