



# INCREASING THE RESILIENCE OF LITHUANIAN DIASPORA TO DISINFORMATION



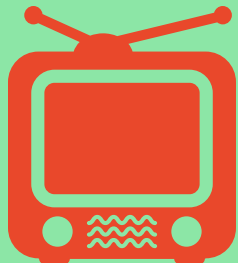
KRISTINA BELIKOVA & AURELIJA OLENDRAITĖ

# CONTEXT & CURRENT SITUATION

- According to Lithuanian intelligence services, in 2017 Russia implemented an active informational and ideological policy aimed at Lithuania
- The attention of Russian media to Lithuania has gone up
- By using social and traditional media Russia attempted spreading anti-Western views, undermine democratic institutions and values
- Particular issue of interest are the upcoming Presidential elections

# ARE LITHUANIANS RESILIENT?

- 49% of Lithuanians believe they can recognize propaganda in the media
- 38% argue they can spot fake news
- 68% of respondents say that if they would spot different interpretation of same facts in different outlets, they would just ignore it
- 16% of respondents say they read different media outlets and trust every source a little bit



# MOST USED PROPAGANDA TOPICS



- EU and NATO membership
- History
- Military/Defense capabilities
- Foreign Policy
- Interior policy
- National minorities
- Energy
- Culture
- Lithuanian-Polish relations

# EXAMPLES OF DISINFORMATION ATTEMPTS

German army battles 'fake news' of rape reports in Lithuania



Programišių ataka: įsilaužus į Lietuvos portalą apšmeižtas ministras Karoblis (309)

Vaidotas Beniušis, SNS

Įsilaužus į naujienų portalą tv3.lt, jame ketvirtadienio vakarą paskelbta išgalvota melaginga žinia apie krašto apsaugos ministrą Raimundą Karoblį.



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Naujas išpuolis prieš Lietuvos ministrą: kaltina pripažinus Krymą Rusijai (951)



Vaidas Šaldžiūnas  
Korrespondentas gynybos temomis  
2018 m. kovo 5 d. 11:58



Žiūrėkime tiesiai į akis – reikia pripažinti Krymą Rusijos dalimi. Tokius žodžius viešai prieš kamerą esą ištarė Lietuvos Krašto apsaugos ministras Raimundas Karoblis. Naivesni ir lietuviškai nemokantys gal net ir patikėtų tokia „sensacija“, nors tai tėra internete pastarosiomis dienomis plintanti melaginga naujiena.



© YouTube atp. kedras

Lithuania have b

# WHAT ABOUT THE DIASPORA?

- According to the official data, currently there are around 620 000 Lithuanians and persons of a Lithuanian decent living abroad
- Unofficially, a number of more than 1 million Lithuanians abroad is named
- There are 172 Lithuanian organizations abroad and 44 Lithuanian communities

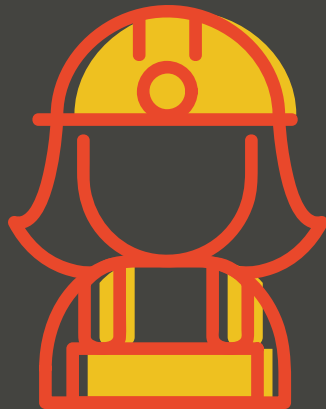


# LITHUANIANS IN THE UK

- According to the data from 2015, there are more than 123,000 Lithuanians living in the UK
- It is the largest diaspora group, accounting to almost 20% of a total number of Lithuanians abroad
- Survey aimed at figuring out what kind of media people consume and how it affects their understanding towards most propaganda-used topics
- Electronic survey and in-person interviews
- From London (Stratford, Beckton), Peterborough, King's Lynn and Boston

# PROFILE OF THE SURVEYED

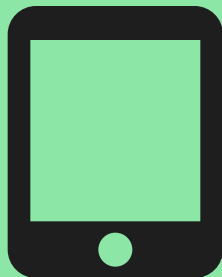
- Almost 700 respondents from 28 countries
- 252 respondents from UK electronically & in person
- 46% live in the UK for 10+ years, 33% for 5+ years
- 41% is between 26 and 35 years old, 36% between 35 and 50 years old
- 51% has a university degree
- 40% skilled workers, 25% unskilled workers





# NEWS CONSUMPTION

- 75 % of respondents read news in Lithuanian, 29% in English
- If not Lithuanian, second choice language to read news for 92% is English, for 19% Russian
- 82% get their news from social media, 63% from news portals, 56% from TV and 41% from family and relatives



# MOST POPULAR NEWS SOURCES

48% Delfi.lt

30% 15min.lt

23% lrytas.lt

10% tiesa.com

10% English news portals

40% TV3

32% LNK

28% LRT

11% English TV





# VIEWS TOWARDS MOST POPULAR DISINFORMATION NARRATIVES



# Lithuanian EU membership is harmful and fosters emigration

7% agree

19% partially agree

61% disagree

13% have no opinion



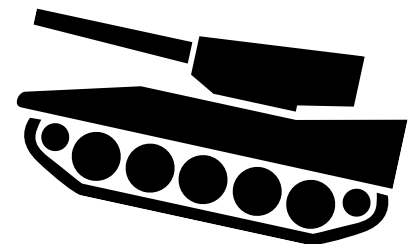
Pensioners, teachers and doctors will suffer from an increasing defense budget

35% agree

25% partially agree

23% disagree

17% have no opinion



# National minorities in Lithuania are oppressed

22% agree

22% partially agree

36% disagree

20% have no opinion



# Lithuanian politicians are to blame for bad relations with Russia



19% agree

25% partially agree

31% disagree

25% have no opinion

# Lithuania sees an increase of nationalism and neonacism



16% agree  
17% partially agree  
30% disagree  
37% have no opinion



# NATO presence in Lithuania on purpose provokes Russia

12% agree

17% partially agree

47% disagree

24% have no opinion



Lithuanian partisans collaborated with Nazis and should be called criminals

2% agree

6% partially agree

53% disagree

38% have no opinion

# INSIGHTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

- Lithuanians that live in the UK even for 10 years or longer remain in the Lithuanian information space
- Respondents have an image of Lithuania as it was when they left, so it's easy to manipulate their opinion on present events
- Respondents argue they receive a lot of negative information about Lithuania from the media and lack positive news
- Majority of respondents get their news about Lithuania from social media and don't follow any media outlet in particular
- There is no active communication by Lithuanian government towards the diaspora, which makes this group a potential disinformation target and gives an opportunity for third parties to intervene



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