

“The Kremlin’s Playbook”: Washington Views Russia-EU Cooperation, A Threat to US National Security

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Europe is dependent on financial and energy resources of Moscow, according to a [report](#) by the Washington Center for strategic and international studies.

On October 13 in Washington, a study was published, “The Kremlin’s Playbook: Understanding the Russian Influence in Eastern and Central Europe”, which on the example of five countries – Latvia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Slovakia and Serbia, explains the mechanisms of the workings of the Kremlin with the economies of European states.

The study notes that when the countries of Eastern and Central Europe joined NATO and the EU in 2004, the expectations of European and American politicians were aimed at the “continuation by regional states of positive democratic and economic transformation”. However, analysts believe that more than ten years later, “the region has experienced a steady decline in democratic standards, while its economic cooperation with Russia has expanded significantly”.

“Over the last 10 years the share of Russia in the global trading system increased by almost four times: from \$210 billion in 2003 to \$730 billion in 2014, and Russia’s trade relations with the European Union accounted for 44% of the total,” — said the preamble of the report.

According to analysts, the work of Russia in Latvia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Slovakia and Serbia, is aimed at consolidating around itself the sympathetic politicians, dominance on energy markets and providing the most favorable economic partnerships. *[How dare you Putin? – FR]*

“In some countries, Russian influence has reached such proportions that it jeopardized their pro-Western orientation and Euro-Atlantic stability, as such,” reads the report.

According to the study, Latvia has a high dependence on the Russian economy (higher only in Bulgaria). “Latvia is 100% dependent on the energy sector of the Russian Federation, which, moreover, is the third largest market of the republic, and 11% of Latvian GDP comes from the transport sector, where the main flow of transit is provided by Russia”, — analysts say.

The Kremlin Playbook

Understanding Russian Influence in Central and Eastern Europe

CHAPTER 1 | Introduction: A Model of Russian Influence in Central and Eastern Europe

CHAPTER 2 | Russian Political Influence: Eroding Democratic Institutions

CHAPTER 3 | Russian Economic Influence: Exploiting Capitalism's Weaknesses

CHAPTER 4 | The Unvirtuous Cycle of Corruption

CHAPTER 5 | Russian Influence: Intentional or Opportunistic?

CHAPTER 6 | Resisting Russian Influence and Policy Recommendations

The report states that entrepreneurs are dependent on the Russian economy and the normal functioning of relations with Russia. Measures to prevent Russian influence proposed by the researchers, are analysis of financial flows coming from Russia and improvement of assistance programs to Eastern European governments. *[More American/European taxpayer handouts! – FR]*

“The United States can no longer be indifferent to these negative processes. All members of NATO and the European Union must collectively recognize that Russia’s influence is not only internal challenge to control, but a threat to national security,” – point US analysts.

The report was prepared by the Center for Strategic and international studies (CSIS) in collaboration with the Center for the Study of Democracy in Sofia. CSIS was created in Washington in 1962 at the initiative of the director of the CIA with the aim of “finding ways to sustain American prominence and prosperity as a force for peace”. Today, CSIS conducts research on policy issues and strategic analysis of political and economic challenges, with a particular focus on issues concerning international relations, trade, technology, finance and energy.

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