



Baltic Engagement
Centre for Combating
Information Disorders

HOT REPORT

DISINFORMATION FUELS RESISTANCE TO WIND ENERGY IN LATVIA

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EESTI EKSPRESS (DELFI MEEDIA) **“COFFINS,
CONSPIRACIES AND KREMLIN NARRATIVES: THE FIGHT
AGAINST WIND ENERGY IN LATVIA”** BY EVITA PURIŅA,
PUBLISHED BY RE:BALTICA / RE:CHECK.

WHAT'S HOT?

Activist groups in Latvia opposing wind energy are increasingly using conspiracy theories, Kremlin-aligned narratives, and targeted disinformation to sway public opinion. These groups, often supported by disinformation platforms, spread exaggerated health claims, misinformation about policy, and anti-Western rhetoric to oppose renewable energy projects – especially wind farms.

What Do We See?

- **Conspiracy Theories at Public Events:** Local meetings hosted by municipalities and activists feature speakers claiming wind energy is part of a global control agenda, likening the Green Deal to terrorism, and alleging that infrasound from turbines causes death and illness – despite no scientific evidence.
- **Disinformation Media Involvement:** Events are amplified by Latvijas Tautas kanāls, a well-known Kremlin-friendly outlet that promotes anti-EU and anti-Ukrainian messages. The platform repackages activist content into misleading “documentaries”.
- **Social Media Campaigns:** Groups like Pretvējš (Against the Wind) spend heavily on Meta platforms to spread alarmist content, using anonymous pages and Kremlin-affiliated media to legitimise their messaging.
- **Coffins and Protests:** At public hearings, activists have used theatrical props like coffins and wreaths to intimidate presenters. These tactics mirror protest strategies seen in anti-EU or anti-science campaigns elsewhere.
- **Political Amplification:** Populist politicians and political parties such as Latvia First and Sovereign Power use anti-wind narratives for political gain – often recycling language from Russian propaganda (“traitors,” “industrial colony,” etc.).

Why Does It Work?

- **Exploiting Gaps in Communication:** The lack of coordinated state-level information campaigns allows conspiracies to fill the void and dominate local narratives.
- **Emotional Appeal & Fear Tactics:** Graphic imagery, exaggerated health claims, and nostalgia for lost industries evoke strong emotions, overshadowing factual discourse.
- **Mimicking Grassroots Movements:** Activists pose as concerned residents, but many have political or ideological affiliations, creating a false sense of widespread public opposition.
- **Platform Dynamics:** Social media algorithms favour provocative, emotional content, giving disinformation channels greater reach than evidence-based information.

RISK ASSESSMENT: HIGH

- **Undermining Energy Transition:** Disinformation could delay or block renewable energy projects crucial for Latvia's climate goals and energy independence.
- **Polarising Society:** The use of anti-government and anti-EU rhetoric mirrors tactics used in other Kremlin-backed campaigns, increasing distrust in institutions.
- **Manipulating Local Governance:** Municipalities face pressure to platform misinformation, creating legitimacy for unscientific claims and Kremlin narratives.
- **Eroding Media Literacy:** Disinformation disguised as local activism blurs the line between civic participation and coordinated influence operations.

How to Respond?

For the general public:

- Be critical of alarmist claims, especially on social media. Check the credibility of sources. Don't assume that those who present themselves as "local experts" or "concerned citizens" are unbiased.

For (media literacy) educators:

- Use this case to demonstrate how environmental topics can be weaponised with emotional misinformation. Teach students how to identify manipulative language, false experts, and unverified health claims.

For policymakers and officials:

- Invest in proactive public information campaigns about renewable energy projects. Encourage municipalities to apply fact-based standards at public events. Monitor foreign influence in local activism. Provide clear communication about policy decisions and scientific evidence.

FURTHER READING

- Davis political Review [“Green is the New Red: Russia’s Nascent Environmental Movement”](#)
- Central European University [“The Grand Russian Disinformation Strategy in Environmental Politics”](#)
- NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence [“Russia’s Information Influence Operations in the Nordic-Baltic Region”](#)

What is BECID?

BECID – the Baltic Engagement Centre for Combating Information Disorders – brings together expertise in fact-checking, media literacy, and journalism across the Baltics. We conduct fact-checks in collaboration with Delfi/Delfi Meedia, monitor disinformation narratives and campaigns under the leadership of investigative journalism organisation Re:Baltica, and promote media literacy through the Baltic Centre for Media Literacy (BCME). We also develop methodologies to effectively counter disinformation. Learn more: becid.ut.ee