




The Swedish
Security Service

2024
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A black and white photograph of Charlotte von Essen, Head of the Swedish Security Service. She is standing outdoors, wearing a long, dark, double-breasted coat over a dark turtleneck and dark trousers. Her hands are in her coat pockets. She has blonde, wavy hair and is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a blurred landscape with a body of water and distant buildings.

Charlotte von Essen,
Head of the Swedish
Security Service



Charlotte von Essen:

Working together to strengthen Sweden's national security

The troubled international situation continues to affect Sweden's national security. There is a risk that the serious security situation could deteriorate further, and that this could happen in a way that is difficult to predict. Therefore, it is important that we follow developments, assess individual incidents and are attentive to any gradual deteriorations.

Together, we will continue to strengthen security and resilience, cooperating both nationally and internationally.

To strengthen Sweden's national security, we must have a solid understanding of the significance of global developments, the impact of national and international events on the threat to Sweden, and we must work together to strengthen Sweden's national security. National security and core democratic values are being challenged in a troubled international environment and deteriorated security situation. Foreign powers are using hybrid activities to destabilise Sweden, and Europe in general. Even though democracy in Sweden is strong, we must be vigilant regarding developments of wide-spread anti-government narrative and conspiracy theories that, in the long run and worst case, could develop into subversive activities.

It is important that we do not normalise the new situation. The development in Sweden, and globally, shows just how complex and difficult it is to assess these threats and how they increasingly overlap and intertwine. In the past few years, we have seen that large-scale political events and conflicts between other countries have also been manifested in Sweden. Foreign powers use our open society to divide, create turmoil, or carry out acts of violence that do not always target Sweden as a country, but other countries' interests in Sweden. Sweden's accession to NATO increases our security, but may also entail a changed and increased intelligence interest in Sweden, mainly from Russia.

In the past few years, various incidents have occurred, such as cyber attacks, data breaches, drone incursions, and the high-profile incidents of cable damage in the Baltic Sea. It is important that we are attentive to what is happening and that we are prepared to act when necessary. At the same time, we need to remain calm and, as far as possible, try to find out the facts. Jumping to conclusions will risk benefiting the forces that want to harm Sweden.

A deteriorated situation increases the pressure on the Swedish Security Service and the Swedish Police Authority, which are the government agencies with the authority to act in peace-time. Therefore, we are pleased that an inquiry leader will soon present a report outlining how the Swedish Armed Forces might

be able to assist law-enforcement agencies to a greater extent than is possible today. Since August 2023, the terrorist threat level in Sweden has been high, at level four on a five-level scale. In January of this year, I took the decision that this level would remain unchanged. Although the propaganda of international terrorist organisations does not focus on Sweden as a prioritised target for attacks to the same extent any longer, the threat remains complex. The Swedish Security Service has noted tendencies of a diversified terrorist threat which partly concern the ideologically motivated threat from violent Islamists and violent right-wing extremists and partly concern young people who have been radicalised online and who are mainly fascinated by acts of violence.

The diversified terrorist threat also involves activities in Sweden and Europe where countries such as Russia and Iran are the instigators behind this, and induce individuals, often young people, to carry out acts of violence that can be classified as terrorism or, in a European context, sabotage. In some cases, this is a matter of disposable agents who are recruited and instructed through social platforms to carry out single acts or missions. Often nobody cares what happens

»Developments in Sweden, and worldwide, show how complex and difficult it is to assess these threats and how they increasingly overlap and intertwine.»

with them once the job has been done. A similar modus is being used by serious organised crime operations in Sweden.

Threats to Sweden may also concern access to research, innovation, and natural resources. In our globalised world, international cooperation and exchange are important and necessary, also for developing Sweden's capabilities and welfare. However, this must happen in a balanced way and with a well-developed security awareness.

Sweden's know-how must not be used to increase foreign powers' capability, e.g., for military purposes. An important part of our work as a national security service is engaging in dialogue with others to raise their awareness and knowledge of threats and vulnerabilities, so that they will be able to take adequate measures. We therefore engage in continual efforts to reach out to Swedish higher education institutions, industries and businesses.

The serious security situation increases the need for protection. Sweden's accession to NATO and the building up of total defence are important steps towards increased security and resilience in Sweden. That said, we know that there have been previous shortcomings in protective security and that strengthening total defence may entail new vulnerabilities and interdependencies. Therefore, we must continue to focus on security work. Our work in this regard is mainly focused on security-sensitive activities. However, the threats concern all critical infrastructure. Everyone must prioritise protective security for us to be able to build resilience.

Technological development and digitalisation create huge opportunities that Sweden, of course, must embrace. However, building security and resilience also requires an awareness of the threats and vulnerabilities that technological developments and digitalisation entail.

Cyber attacks are an important tool for foreign powers. They are used to target individuals, but they are also used to build anonymisation networks to conduct attacks that are difficult or impossible to attribute to the actors behind them.

Relevant legislation is essential for us to be able to carry out our work as a national security service in the best way possible. In the past few years, some legislation concerning protective security, for instance, has been developed and improved. Another example is the new act on foreign direct investment. As a result, we have increased our capability to reduce vulnerabilities and to handle the threats directed at Sweden.

However, legislation has not kept up with technological developments. This means, for instance, that


"Today, violent extremism is increasingly influenced by international developments instead of clear ideological motivations," says Charlotte von Essen, Head of the Swedish Security Service.



the Swedish Security Service is not able to handle information in a way that is required to cope with the current threat. This spring, an ongoing inquiry will present a proposal for how the Swedish Security Service could, in the future, collect, process and retain information in a manner more suited to the purpose.

In serious times, the need for cooperation is even more important. Strong cooperation with national and like-minded international partners is essential to create an accurate situational assessment, and to be able to act when necessary. With an increasingly complex threat, existing cooperation must be strengthened and new forms of cooperation have to be established.

Work at the Swedish Security Service is marked by the serious security situation and the importance of our remit. Every day, our staff faces difficult questions and has to take decisions despite incomplete information. Many things must be handled promptly, while other matters require patience and persistence. Also internally, we have to work in new ways to cope with the increasingly complex threat. Together, we will rise to the challenge, using all the knowledge and experience brought together at the Swedish Security Service. ■

A black and white portrait of Fredrik Hallström, a middle-aged man with short, light-colored hair, wearing dark-rimmed glasses, a dark suit, a white shirt, and a dark tie. He is standing with his arms crossed, looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The background is dark and out of focus.

Fredrik Hallström,
Head of Operations
at the Swedish
Security Service

International conflicts create threats in Sweden

In the past few years, several security-related developments in the world have affected Sweden's security in a way that has not been seen for a long time. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and the conflict in the Middle East are also affecting the threat to Sweden and Swedish interests in various ways. The Swedish Security Service sees a concrete risk that the security situation will deteriorate further.

The Swedish Security Service needs to continuously adapt to changes that are taking place in the world. External and internal threats to Sweden overlap considerably, thus becoming intertwined and creating a threat that is difficult to assess.

“The threat from foreign powers and violent extremists is linked to conflicts in the world, where Sweden is used as an arena,” says Fredrik Hallström, Head of Operations, Swedish Security Service.

The Swedish Security Service assesses that Sweden needs to continue having the capability to adapt to a world that is increasingly marked by confrontation between superpowers. States such as Russia, China, and Iran are collaborating and trying to affect the rule-based world order. At the same time, vulnerabilities in Sweden could be exploited and challenged if the security situation deteriorates further.

“The security situation is serious, and there is a risk of further negative development. Conflicts could have a ripple effect, spreading faster and faster, and the effect could also reach Sweden as the number of conflicts in the world increases,” says Fredrik Hallström.

Sweden’s geographic location, sought-after natural resources, and an infrastructure that is shared with

»Conflicts could have a ripple effect, spreading faster and faster, and the effect could also reach Sweden as the number of conflicts in the world increases.»

other countries could have an impact on security-threatening activities carried out by foreign powers in Sweden.

“Sweden is part of the West and NATO, which contributes to increased security. However, the critical assets located in Sweden, which are important for us

and our allies, also pique the interest of foreign powers, increasing their interest in obtaining intelligence. This could be a matter of procuring technology, making strategic acquisitions, or of pinpointing possible targets for sabotage. We have to be ready to act both fast and with due consideration,” says Fredrik Hallström.

»In the past year, many societal actors have taken security-enhancing measures, which reduce the risk of attacks.»

To counter security-threatening activities that target Sweden, the Swedish Security Service collaborates with national and international partners and authorities and also has a continuous dialogue with the research and business communities.

“It is important that we do not only focus on the threats; we must also reduce the vulnerabilities we have in Sweden. This means protecting critical assets while also identifying and countering threat actors. This will make Sweden both more secure and more difficult to attack. In the past year, many societal actors have taken various security-enhancing measures, which helps to reduce the risk of attacks. Continuing these efforts with full vigour is a critical success factor,” says Fredrik Hallström.

Russia is the greatest threat

Russia remains as the dimensioning threat to Sweden. Russian security-threatening activities conducted against Sweden risk pose a threat to a number of critical assets with a bearing on national security, including those linked to Sweden’s territorial integrity and political sovereignty. Since the start of the invasion of Ukraine, Russia’s willingness to take risks has increased as well as its acceptance of taking action that implies a risk to life and health.



➔ An important part of Russia's security-threatening activities against the West are hybrid activities that Russia carries out in order to destabilise, mislead, create turmoil and shift focus.

"It is important not to jump to conclusions based on individual incidents. A spontaneous or impulsive reaction to an incident could very well be exactly what foreign powers hope for. In order to understand what is actually happening and who is behind an incident, we must have the capability to act fast, but not rashly. The importance of national and international collaboration to ensure reliable assessments after incidents cannot be overestimated," says Fredrik Hallström.

When foreign powers increase their capability due to their regimes' cooperation, this affects the threat to Sweden. The use of proxies to conduct attacks against targets in Sweden has also had a clear impact on the threat. Throughout the year, the Swedish Security Service has worked to counter various security threats in order to limit both foreign powers' and violent extremists' scope of action and their ability to act in Sweden.

"It is important that we take charge of the future and make it difficult for threat actors to operate in and against Sweden. Although there are several initiatives for new legislation that will help us take action against security threats, it is unfortunately difficult for us to take sufficiently impactful action against some aspects of such threats. Part of the legislation concerning our remit areas, such as access to encrypted information online, needs to be adapted, because the situation in the world and the threats have changed," says Fredrik Hallström.

A multi-faceted threat

Terrorist groups use digital platforms and gaming environments to reach out to younger target groups. Violent rhetoric online is often designed to attract young individuals. Young people are radicalised and mobilised when rhetoric, which is often similar to that of violent computer games or action movies, videos, music and


memes, is spread in places where young people tend to spend time. The Swedish Security Service handles cases concerning children who have not yet reached their teens.

"Often, young people are drawn to violence as an ideology. The process of radicalisation has also become increasingly rapid. In addition to the online problem, Active Clubs are a growing phenomenon within violent right-wing extremism in Europe, which mainly attract young people," says Fredrik Hallström.

»In order to understand what is actually happening and who is behind an incident, we must have the capability to act fast, but not rashly.«

The Swedish Security Service also notes that, because of overlaps between violent extremism, anti-establishment movements and conspiracy theories, ideologically motivated violence against ideological opponents could eventually increase. An increased polarisation in Sweden could lead to an increased acceptance of threats, hate and violence, which could serve as a breeding ground for violent extremism.

"Strong antagonism between ideological opponents could lead to polarisation and, consequently, to a vulnerability that threat actors could take advantage of. We deem that there is a risk of violent extremism increasing if vulnerabilities in Sweden are exploited for the purpose of conducting security-threatening activities. Here, we also have to be vigilant of how international developments within violent right-wing extremism may affect the violent environments in Sweden," says Fredrik Hallström. ■



Carolina Björnsdotter Paasikivi,
Head of the Security Department
at the Swedish Security Service

Protection in changing times

As the world changes, protective security also needs to be adjusted and adapted. Resilience to threat actors can be increased by continuously adapting protective security.



The security situation in Sweden and its surroundings has deteriorated over the last few years, and it is difficult to assess how the situation will change internationally. The changes to the protective security legislation that entered into force in 2021 have led to improved protective security within several security-sensitive areas. To some extent, these changes have also helped to decrease existing vulnerabilities. That said, foreign powers are always looking for new vulnerabilities to exploit in their security-threatening activities in and against Sweden.

“It is primarily Russia, China, and Iran who exploit vulnerabilities in security-sensitive organisations related to information security, personnel security and physical security. They act both opportunistically and with long-term agendas. Therefore, it is important that the

»Many organisations today are not fully equipped to take on or prioritise protective security.«

protective security work is continual, rather than carried out in separate one-off operations, since the need for protection is constantly changing,” says Carolina Björnsdotter Paasikivi, Head of the Security Department at the Swedish Security Service.

A need for new expertise

The factors that have an impact on Sweden’s security change somewhat over time. For example, with the Swedish NATO membership, it follows that an increasing number of organisations in Sweden will need to interpret and address new critical assets and regulatory frameworks. Additional factors that can lead to changes for

the existing security-sensitive organisations and create new critical assets are the expansions of Sweden’s total defence and the implementation of new preparedness sectors. The Swedish Security Service notes that there has been a positive development in protective security work over the last few years, but also notes that organisations face new challenges. In many cases, it can be challenging to assess if the work being conducted is of significance to Sweden’s national security, and which aspects of the organisation should be considered critical. This is particularly true if critical assets are shared between several different organisations and suppliers with joint dependencies. There is a lack of expertise within the field of protective security, which also affects the protection. This lack of expertise poses a risk to the protective security work as a whole; from the identification of critical assets to the implementation of protective security measures.

“In order to understand what is critical, and be able to act on the threats and vulnerabilities that exist, it is fundamental to have relevant expertise. Many organisations today are not fully equipped to address or prioritise protective security. This is a challenge both in the short and the long term. Through analyses and proper planning, organisations can establish effective protective security. The Swedish Security Service’s guidelines are available as support in this work,” says Carolina Björnsdotter Paasikivi.

There is a great demand for expertise within the field of protective security. The Swedish Security Service and the Swedish Armed Forces have, in cooperation with the Swedish Defence University, developed basic and advanced protective security training programs.

Security at higher education institutions

Sweden carries out cutting-edge research in several

different fields. A lot of work is being conducted through international collaboration, and the exchange of knowledge between universities is often essential to the success of research. The Swedish Security Service notes that foreign powers have a great interest in Swedish research, and that countries like Russia,

»This is not a question of discrimination or limiting academic freedom, but of an increased security awareness.»

China and Iran acquire knowledge and technology through collaboration, and by attempting to recruit and influence researchers in Sweden. Along with this, there are shortcomings in the protective security work that is being conducted at Swedish higher education institutions.

“The greatest vulnerability is the lack of knowledge about the threat posed by these states. There is therefore a need to identify critical assets in this area, with a focus on research security. It is not a question of discrimination or a limitation of academic freedom, but of increased security awareness,” says Carolina Björnsdotter Paasikivi.

In June 2023, the government commissioned the Swedish Council for Higher Education, the Swedish Research Council, and Vinnova with promoting responsible internationalisation in educational, research and innovation cooperative efforts. The key is to find a way for universities to collaborate internationally while safeguarding Swedish national security.

“Awareness about the threat that foreign powers pose to Swedish universities has risen overall. However, we do see a need for clear guidelines to

ensure that international research collaboration can be carried out securely. We therefore would like to create a framework for this for our higher education institutions,” says Carolina Björnsdotter Paasikivi.

Global developments affect personal protection

International developments over the last few years have also affected the Swedish Security Service’s diplomatic protection work and the protection of the Central Government. For a number of major events that took place in Sweden in 2024, including the European Parliament elections and the Eurovision Song Contest, the requirements for well-adapted and appropriate protective measures were high. Going forward, the Swedish Security Service will continue to handle cases of threats to, harassment of, and physical approaches of members of the Central Government. Travel to active war zones, like Ukraine and some parts of the Middle

»International developments over the last few years have also had an impact on our Service’s dignitary protection work and its work to protect the Central Government.»

East, have been challenging for the Dignitary Protection Team. To some degree, Sweden’s NATO membership changes the Russian intelligence interest in Swedish politicians.

“In order to secure the protection of dignitaries, both here in Sweden and abroad, we are continuously striving to improve and develop our working methods,” says Carolina Björnsdotter Paasikivi. ■

Threats and vulnerabilities

A serious situation

Sweden's security is affected by the troubled international environment and the serious security situation could deteriorate further. This is a matter of the actions of foreign powers and the still elevated terrorist threat, as well as shortcomings in the protection of critical assets, shortcomings that are exploited by threat actors. ■

Infrastructure-related incidents

In the past year, there have been several incidents, sometimes referred to as hybrid threats, that have received a lot of media attention. For example, there have been cyber attacks, drone incidents, and incidents of cable damage in the Baltic Sea. Through national and international collaboration, the Swedish Security Service carries out extensive work to assess and investigate these incidents. ■

A greater risk-taking tendency by Russia

In the past year, Russian security and intelligence services have taken an increasingly offensive stance against European countries, which affects the security situation in Sweden. Russia is trying to find ways to abate the European determination to support Ukraine, circumvent the sanctions directed at them, and find new methods of intelligence gathering when most countries in Europe have expelled Russian intelligence officers. ■

Cyber threats as a tool

Through targeted cyber attacks, countries like China, Iran, and Russia are able to gain access to information related to Swedish security, political decision-making, and the activities of dissidents. This information, in turn, can be used to gather information about vulnerabilities or in attempts to exert influence. Foreign powers are also interested in devices owned by private individuals, such as mobile phones and computers, that could be used in order to carry out targeted intelligence gathering or to build anonymisation networks for the purpose of continuing attacks or influence campaigns. ■

A changed terrorist threat

The terrorist threat to Sweden is still assessed to be elevated. The ideologically motivated threat from violent Islamist extremism and violent right-wing extremism remains. There are also tendencies towards a more diversified terrorist threat where new actors, driven by international developments or by a fascination for violence, could become perpetrators. The Swedish Security Service also notes state-sponsored attacks and attacks in which Sweden is used as an arena in a conflict that is taking place elsewhere in the world. ■

A continuous adaptation of protection

The Swedish NATO membership and the expansion of Sweden's total defence entail a more robust national protection, but also new critical assets and new potential vulnerabilities. The factors related to Sweden's protection needs change over time. Resilience to threat actors can be increased by continuously adapting protective security. ■

High demand for expertise

Within the field of security-sensitive activities, there is a high demand for personnel with suitable training. The need for expertise within protective security will increase due to technological advances and international developments. A lack of expertise may cause security-sensitive activities to become exposed and vulnerable. ■

Increased polarisation

The Swedish Security Service notes a continued subversive threat to Sweden, where Swedish democracy is at risk of being challenged and weakened by, for example, anti-government movements. These types of actors are trying to create division in Sweden, through both lawful and unlawful means. In today's security situation, small incidents can flare up in ways that are difficult to predict. When this happens, it is important to evaluate sources of information and not spread misleading information. ■

Protection from the threat

Sweden is being used as an arena for conflicts taking place elsewhere in the world. The threat posed by foreign powers and violent extremism is tangible. Protection against this threat is crucial in order to reduce vulnerabilities in Sweden.

The threat of terrorism has changed

The terrorist threat to Sweden is still high. Tendencies towards a diversified terrorist threat have also been noted.

In 2023, the threat to Sweden gradually changed and the threat of attack from violent Islamism increased. The situation was assessed as being so grave that the Head of the Swedish Security Service decided to raise the terrorist threat level from elevated to high in August 2023. Since then, the Swedish Security Service has observed tendencies towards a more diversified terrorist threat, in terms of a continued threat from ideologically motivated actors, from young people with a general fascination for violence and threats where foreign powers are the underlying cause. Sweden was mentioned specifically as a target in the propaganda from international Islamist terrorist organisations in 2023, partly because of the Qur'an burnings, which received considerable

»In February 2025, a man was convicted of gross participation in a terrorist organisation, which is the first time that an individual has been convicted for this type of crime since the act regarding this crime came into force in 2023.«

media attention, and the disinformation campaign that depicted Sweden as anti-Islamic.

The Swedish Security Service handled a huge number of attack threats. In 2024, Sweden once again

reverted to being viewed a legitimate target for terrorist attacks, similar to many other Western countries, and the focus for international terrorist organisations has shifted to the war between Israel and Hamas. The Swedish Security Service assesses, as before, that the attack threat to Sweden mainly relates to lone actors or small groups that are inspired by violent Islamist or violent right-wing extremist ideology and who act using relatively simple means against easily-accessible targets.

Furthermore, the Swedish Security Service has investigated several cases linked to terrorism during 2024. In February 2025, a man was convicted of gross participation in a terrorist organisation, which is the first time that an individual has been convicted for this type of crime since the act regarding this crime came into force in 2023. In another case, four individuals were arrested on suspicion of gross weapons offence, preparation to commit a terrorist offence, and participation in a terrorist organisation. The investigation concerns both suspicions of international links to the Islamic State (IS) terrorist organisation and organised crime in Sweden. The individuals were convicted of participation in a terrorist organisation, but were acquitted of the charge of preparation to commit a terrorist offence. Three of them were also convicted of gross weapons offence. The final verdict has not yet been handed over in this case.

Threat-inducing factors around the world

Developments in other countries have had an impact on the attack threat to Sweden for a long time. When actors exploit concern and tensions in Sweden for their



→ own purposes, this has an impact on Sweden's national security. There is a risk, when violent propaganda becomes increasingly accessible and, to some extent, normalised, that more individuals will become susceptible to radicalisation. Such a situation could be used by various actors to fuel social tensions and could serve as a polarising influence. This could also encourage more individuals, especially young people, to become radicalised and, in the worst case, develop the intent to carry out attacks. In the past few years, the Swedish Security Service has noted that, in certain cases, violent extremist actors support specific incidents around the world rather than a uniform and joint ideology.

"Today, we believe that violent extremism is increasingly influenced by international developments instead of clear ideological motivations. Regarding the violent Islamic environment, it is predominantly that which is referred to as the LVU campaign (an organised campaign that started in 2021, which spread disinformation that the Swedish social services had forcibly taken Muslim children into state custody), the Qur'an burnings, and the war between Israel and Hamas that have been threat-inducing. In particular, we have observed that the violent Islamist environment in Sweden has been clearly affected by the war in the Middle East," says Kim*, Analyst at the Swedish Security Service.

In the 2010s, the Swedish Security Service noted that a large number of individuals travelled to the conflict regions in Syria and Iraq in order to join terrorist organisations, mainly the Islamic State. Today, these types of travel is not as common, but some individuals are still determined to travel. In 2024, two individuals were charged with attempted financing of terrorism and for having attempted to travel to join the Islamic State abroad.

Violence as an ideology

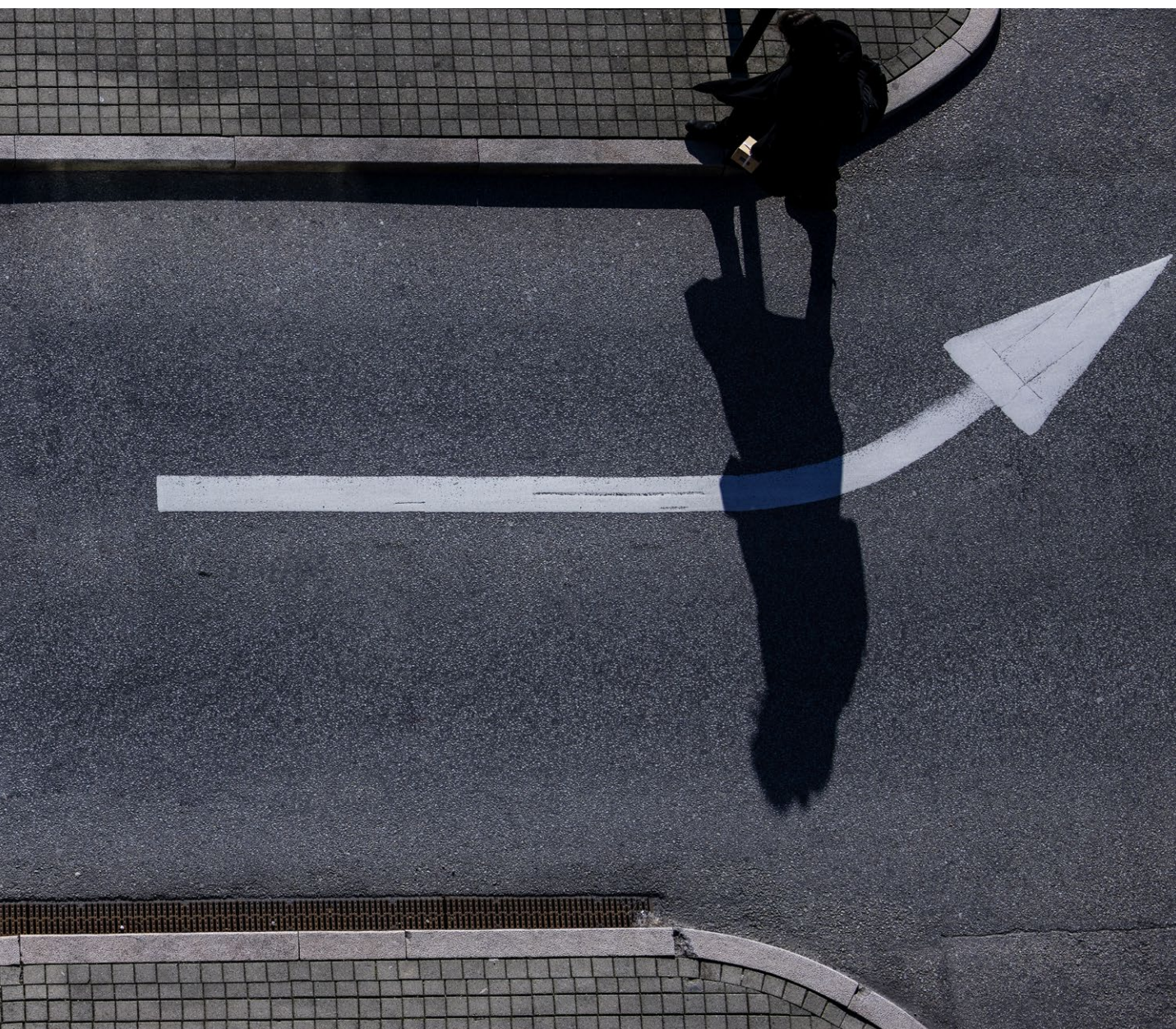
Young right-wing extremists often have the capability to carry out acts of violence but not always with the same expressed intent that can be observed within the violent Islamist environment. The Swedish Security Service has noted a reduction in the threat from the traditional violent and organised right-wing extremist environment. Part of the explanation could lie in the fact that the narrative and rhetoric that previously were limited to violent right-wing extremist circles have become more normalised and are used by a large number of actors who are not considered violent, for instance on social media.



"The rhetoric is being used by more people, and this has helped reduce the power of attraction of the traditional violent right-wing extremist organisations. Along with this, we have noted that young people are attracted to violence as an ideology, with many adopting the right-wing extremist ideology," says Kim.

The Swedish Security Service has noted that the minors who are radicalised online are becoming younger and younger, and the Swedish Security Service handle cases in which there are children who have not yet become teenagers. Often, the first point of contact is through social media and, from there, the interactions are moved to smaller and more closed forums where there are more radical forces.

"Young people often do not have a fully-developed



capacity to grasp the full consequences of their actions; therefore, once radicalisation starts, the persuasion process can go quickly. Usually, it is the use of violence that they find most fascinating. We have also noted that when young people carry out or plan attacks, it is not only ideology but also other motivators that could be influencing them,” says Kim.

Foreign powers as an underlying cause

Along with the development of violent extremism, the Swedish Security Service has observed tendencies towards a changed threat in which foreign powers are the instigators or the underlying cause to a greater extent. Foreign powers use proxies, for example criminal networks, to conduct acts of violence or carry

out attacks in Sweden. Acts of violence or attacks do not necessarily target Sweden but could instead be a matter of an international or regional conflict which is then transferred to Swedish soil.

“When a foreign power supports or instigates an attack in Sweden, the threat to Sweden also changes. Foreign powers use proxies that often do not have an ideological motive or a deeper understanding of why they are carrying out an attack. We therefore have to view the attack threat from several different perspectives and in somewhat new ways. In addition, we have noted that foreign powers act when the opportunity arises and against vulnerabilities that appear,” says Kim at the Swedish Security Service. ■

** Kim is a pseudonym.*

Financing of terrorism

Violent extremists in Sweden are mainly engaged in various types of support activities. These activities include radicalisation, recruitment, and the financing of terrorist organisations abroad. The Swedish Security Service has investigated several cases which resulted in convictions.

Terrorism financing relates mainly to the economic support provided to various support activities and not, primarily, to the financing of terrorist attacks in Sweden. The assessment of the Swedish Security Service continues to be that an attack in Sweden

would most likely be carried out using a relatively simple modus operandi which would not require large sums of money. Financing activities also involve the transfer of money to terrorist organisations abroad. Even if terrorism financing does not have any greater affect upon the threat of attacks in Sweden or abroad, the funds collected enhance the capacities of actors in Sweden and other parts of the world. The activities that are enabled due to the financing affect the degree of propaganda spreading, radicalisation, and recruitment and, consequently, the perpetuation of violent Islamist environments and the long-term threat of terrorism.

The scale of terrorism financing from Sweden is ongoing and constant, but it is also affected by international developments or conflicts in other countries.

The PKK is an example of a terrorist organisation which is financed through a clearly established structure where large sums of money are collected in Sweden annually.

“The Swedish Security Service investigated a matter in which an individual attempted to threaten a contractor into paying money to the PKK. He was charged and convicted in 2023 for attempted financing of terrorism and attempted gross extortion,” says Robin*, Investigating Officer at the Swedish Security Service.

Over the past year, the Swedish Security Service has seen an increase in financing activities for the benefit of terrorist organisations in the Middle East as a consequence of the conflict and war in the region. Funds from Sweden are likely used to finance the social and humanitarian activities carried out by various organisations in the area, but there is also the risk of the money being used for terrorist activities.

In Sweden, money is usually collected through fundraising activities and donations which can be made through both physical and digital platforms. It is not always clear to the contributor what the money will be used for. Donations may be voluntary but are also collected through threats and coercion. Money is also generated through criminal activities such as theft, drug trafficking, and, in some cases, a more systematic exploitation of the welfare system which could involve companies, associations, and foundations.

“We see cases of criminal activity being carried out



for the purpose of financing terrorist organisations. Here, we collaborate closely with other authorities in order to prevent and to make it more difficult for individuals to engage in terrorism financing,” says Robin.

Various methods for transferring money

Money is usually transferred out of Sweden to recipients overseas through not only traditional methods such as the banking system but also through currency exchangers, couriers, or hawala transfers. In the last few years, these methods have also been combined with cryptocurrency. Al-Qaida is one terrorist organisation which has been assessed as having increased its use of cryptocurrency for collecting and transferring money. In 2024, the Swedish Security Service investigated a case, which resulted in an individual being convicted of terrorism financing and

»Money is usually transferred out of Sweden to recipients overseas through not only traditional methods such as the banking system but also through currency exchangers, couriers, or hawala transfers.«

sentenced to prison for one year. The individual had collected money primarily through Swish (a Swedish mobile payment application) and had then transferred the money via bitcoin cryptocurrency transactions to individuals overseas with links to violent Islamism. ■

**Robin is a pseudonym.*

Anti-government movement a type of subversive threat

The Swedish Security Service is aware of an ongoing subversive threat towards Sweden where there is a risk of anti-government movements challenging and weakening Swedish democracy for example. Through both lawful and unlawful methods, these types of actors are trying to create divisions in Sweden.

Anti-government movements, violent extremists and foreign powers spread disinformation, conspiracy theories and propaganda on social media for instance. By using various types of platforms, these actors have a wide reach, not least to children and young people. The purpose of their activities is to increase distrust in Swedish society, and if possible, heighten polarisation and, in the long-term, increase radicalisation linked to their own issue or ideology. The rhetoric that the actors use refers to perceived and sometimes actual injustices, often conveyed in a simplified manner and without additional or problematic viewpoints. Occasionally, the rhetoric dehumanises certain groups in society. Along with the narratives conveyed, a solution is presented where the rationale often implies the use of violence.

The dissemination of these types of narratives and simple solutions has limited or no impact on the subversive threat to Sweden. In the long run, and in particular if the narrative appears more often and is adopted by more people, the effects could be more serious and could undermine basic democratic functions and values.

Anti-government movements a subversive threat

The Swedish Security Service has noted that there are individuals in Sweden who have expressed a wish to change the democratic system by using unlawful means and violence. Such individuals can often be associated with narrative that implies that the government and society are not capable of leading the country or dealing with its matters on behalf of its citizens. This narrative

indicates that a collapse of society will or must happen, after which the political leaders and institutions of today will be at a loss. Individuals who believe and disseminate this type of rhetoric are of the view that they must be ready to assume power and responsibility when society collapses. These types of actors want to covertly prepare an alternative societal structure, sometimes including their own system for law enforcement.

A significant challenge for the Swedish Security Service, concerning this type of long-term subversive threat against democracy, is to detect when there is an actual intent to carry out subversive action. This type of situation could also be of interest to foreign powers who could try to take advantage of it for their own benefit. Anti-government movements could thus be used as a proxy to destabilise society and try to influence political decisions.

Sweden is not alone in experiencing these types of phenomena or trends. Over the past few years, there are examples internationally of anti-government forces that are mixed with conspiracy theories, extremism and violent extremism and where individuals have gone from speech to action. Sweden is not immune to such a development as these ideas also exist here.

In the current security situation, small incidents could easily become more serious and flare up in ways that are difficult to predict. It is important to avoid an escalation of polarising incidents as this could be exploited by foreign powers and violent extremists. The main counter-measures against this are to critically evaluate sources and to abstain from disseminating questionable ideas. ■

Suspected incidents in infrastructure

In 2024, several incidents occurred which received major media attention, incidents that sometimes are referred to as hybrid threats, such as, cyber attacks, drone incursions, and cases of cable damage in the Baltic Sea. The Swedish Security Service has engaged in extensive intelligence efforts and, in some cases, investigation work related to these incidents.

Over the last few years, there has been an increase in security-threatening activities carried out by foreign powers in Sweden. In consideration of this, and a deteriorated international security situation, the Swedish Security Service has enhanced its efforts to monitor and counter the threat posed by foreign powers. The Swedish Security Service has, together with national and international partners, further developed its capability to gather and analyse intelligence about threats to Sweden posed by foreign powers. Together with other Swedish authorities such as the Swedish Police Authority, the Swedish Armed Forces, and the Swedish Coastguard, the Swedish Security Service has also developed its operational capability to counter security-threatening activities.

“The Swedish Security Service deals continuously with cases that concern suspected intelligence activities or suspected security-threatening activities. In most of these cases, the incidents can be dismissed as an accident, but in some cases, we have noted that foreign powers or their proxies are conducting activities against Swedish interests,” says Fredrik Hallström, Head of Operations at the Swedish Security Service.

As a result of the large number of cases concerning suspected security-threatening activities, that the Swedish Security Service has dealt with in recent years, collaborative efforts between the different agencies have improved, and the Swedish capability to handle complex operations has increased.

“**One result of** the close cooperation between agencies is, for instance, that we could act resolutely in response to the underwater cable incident between Sweden and Latvia on 26 January 2025. Swedish authorities could jointly produce a quick situational assessment of the incident and conduct an operation that enabled a comprehensive investigation to be carried out. Initially, sabotage was suspected, but this time we could reliably dismiss this suspicion thanks to an efficient approach and a thorough investigation,” says Fredrik Hallström.

In view of the changes to the threat to Sweden, and the deteriorated security situation, the Swedish Security Service will continue to develop its capability to identify, assess, and counter security-threatening activities against Sweden, both nationally and internationally. ■



Security-threatening activities from foreign powers



Foreign powers are conducting extensive unlawful intelligence activities in and against Sweden. In order to conduct covert and deniable intelligence and influence activities, these foreign powers are using agents and proxies in Europe and in Sweden. Existing societal structures are being exploited, and the activities are both long-term and opportunistic.

Russia, China, and Iran continue to be the three countries who pose the greatest threats to Sweden. Methods and the underlying purpose of the security-threatening activities are different in parts but there are also similarities.



→ Russian security-threatening activities in a deteriorated international situation

Russia remains the greatest threat to Sweden and carries out security-threatening activities that have a bearing on, for example, Sweden's territorial integrity and political sovereignty. Sweden's membership of NATO and the expansion of Sweden's total defence have strengthened Swedish security, but it has also entailed that Russia's need for intelligence has increased and partly changed.

The underlying purpose of Russian security-threatening activities against Sweden is primarily to undermine the cohesiveness of the NATO countries and the Western allies, to counter the West's support to Ukraine, and to circumvent sanctions and procure

new technology. The expansion of the Swedish total defence, conditions related to critical infrastructure, and the Russian diaspora are also prioritised Russian targets.

Russia depends heavily on Western products, components, and technology for use in civilian and military industries. Russia procures Swedish technology, but it also uses Sweden as a transit country to procure technology from other Western countries. To circumvent sanctions, Russia uses methods where the Russian security and intelligence services play an important part.

The Russian security and intelligence services' actions in Europe are indicative of Russia's increasing willingness to take risks and that they are becoming increasingly offensive. When gathering intelligence, the Russian security and intelligence services use multiple resources and various platforms. However, the possibility for Russia to act in Sweden, as well as in



several other European countries, has been significantly restricted as a result of expulsions of its intelligence officers from European countries. This has forced Russia to adapt its intelligence gathering methods. The Swedish Security Service notes that there are, and have been for some time, indications of changes in Russian security-threatening activities targeting Europe and Sweden.

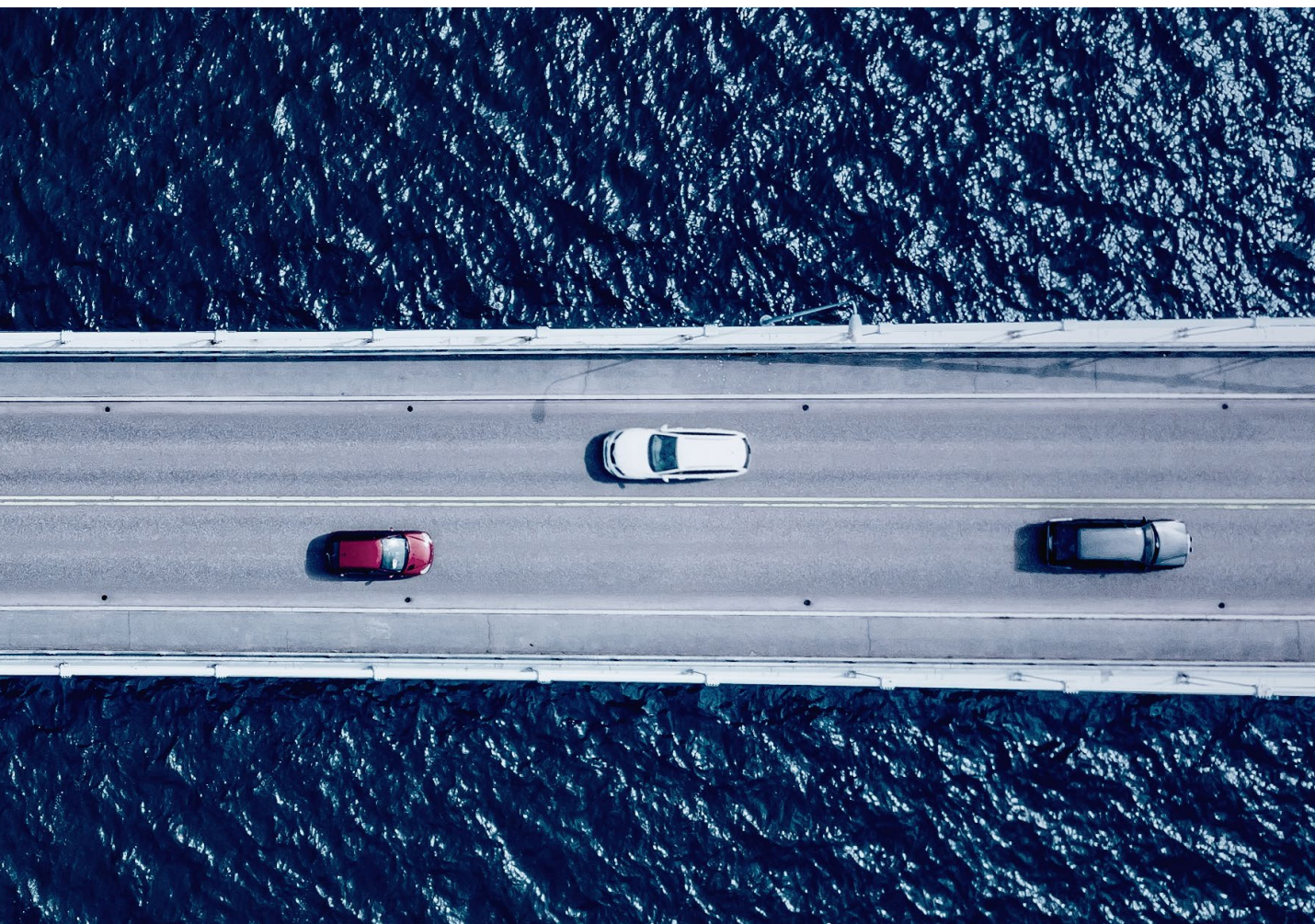
Sabotage and disposable agents

In 2024, several European countries named Russia as the responsible party in sabotage activities and incidents such as arson attacks and infliction of damage to property. These developments show an increasing Russian acceptance of serious consequences, even those that would mean a risk to life and health.

Lately, there are indications that Russia to a greater extent is using what is known as disposable agents, i.e.,

individuals who are being used to carry out specific assignments. These disposable agents are recruited and instructed mainly through social media platforms, and then tasked to carry out both simple and more complex sabotage and influence operations in Europe. From a Russian perspective, it is of little interest what happens to these individuals after they have served their purpose.

Through sabotage and other incidents, Russia tries to create social and political unrest with the aim of, for example, decreasing the support for Ukraine among the populations and decision-makers in Western countries. The Russian willingness to take more risks when carrying out sabotage in Europe, including Sweden, can change quickly depending on how the war in Ukraine develops. The Swedish Security Service assesses that there is a risk of sabotage activities in Sweden as well.



→ Chinese intelligence activities that support China's global ambitions

China acts on the basis of a long-term agenda to support its global ambitions, and uses both legal and illegal methods to fulfil them. The purpose of the activities of the Chinese security and intelligence services is to gather information and influence states, procure technology and expertise, and exert control over Chinese dissidents.

An important goal in China's global ambitions is to strengthen the Chinese economy. One way of doing this is to secure various forms of dependencies between China and other countries, for example by creating Chinese monopolies within certain sectors and value chains. This is often done openly and by legal means, such as research collaborations, investments, acquisitions, newly founded companies, trade relations, and various types of corporate cooperation.

In addition, China has a need to change its image in

the West. Chinese influence activities in Sweden primarily target the Chinese diaspora, dissidents, and minority groups. The Swedish Security Service is aware that individuals in Sweden, for example in their work capacity, are being used for the purpose of intelligence gathering, but also to influence political issues of importance to the Chinese state in the long term.

Cyber attacks are also a means of procuring sought after expertise and technology. The Swedish Security Service is aware that Chinese cyber threat actors have carried out attacks against Swedish defence and technology companies for instance. Also, established cooperation between China and Russia in various areas mean that there is a risk that Chinese technology procurement and intelligence gathering could be used to support the Russian military capability. This could eventually mean that Swedish security will become increasingly affected by the dynamics between the world's super powers.



Sweden as an arena for Iranian security-threatening activities

Iran's primary goal is to secure and strengthen its regime. Their goal is closely connected to their wish to protect Iran from perceived external threats and to circumvent sanctions. These priorities determine which security-threatening activities that the Iranian security and intelligence services carry out against Sweden.

A central part of Iran's agenda in this regard is to gather intelligence and to counter dissident movements and the Iranian diaspora, regardless of where in the world they are. Both dissidents and their family members are being pressured and threatened. Iranian citizenship, as well as trips to Iran, and relationships and assets in Iran, are potential vulnerabilities. The Iranian intelligence services may try to use these vulnerabilities to obtain information or to influence

individuals in a direction that would be beneficial for Iran.

In the past year, the Swedish Security Service has noted increased Iranian activity in Sweden. Iran has used criminal networks to conduct acts of violence against Israeli interests or against groups and individuals who are perceived as threats.

The modus of using criminal actors in this way is not new or unique to Iran, but it has not previously been used to the extent that Swedish Security Service has seen in the last year. Another new aspect is how young the actors were in several cases in 2024.

Additionally, Iran has an interest in procuring technology and expertise in Sweden, and, by other means, circumventing and countering the sanctions imposed on them. This could be a matter of Iran trying to gather information and expertise through Swedish higher education institutions and procuring dual-use products. ■



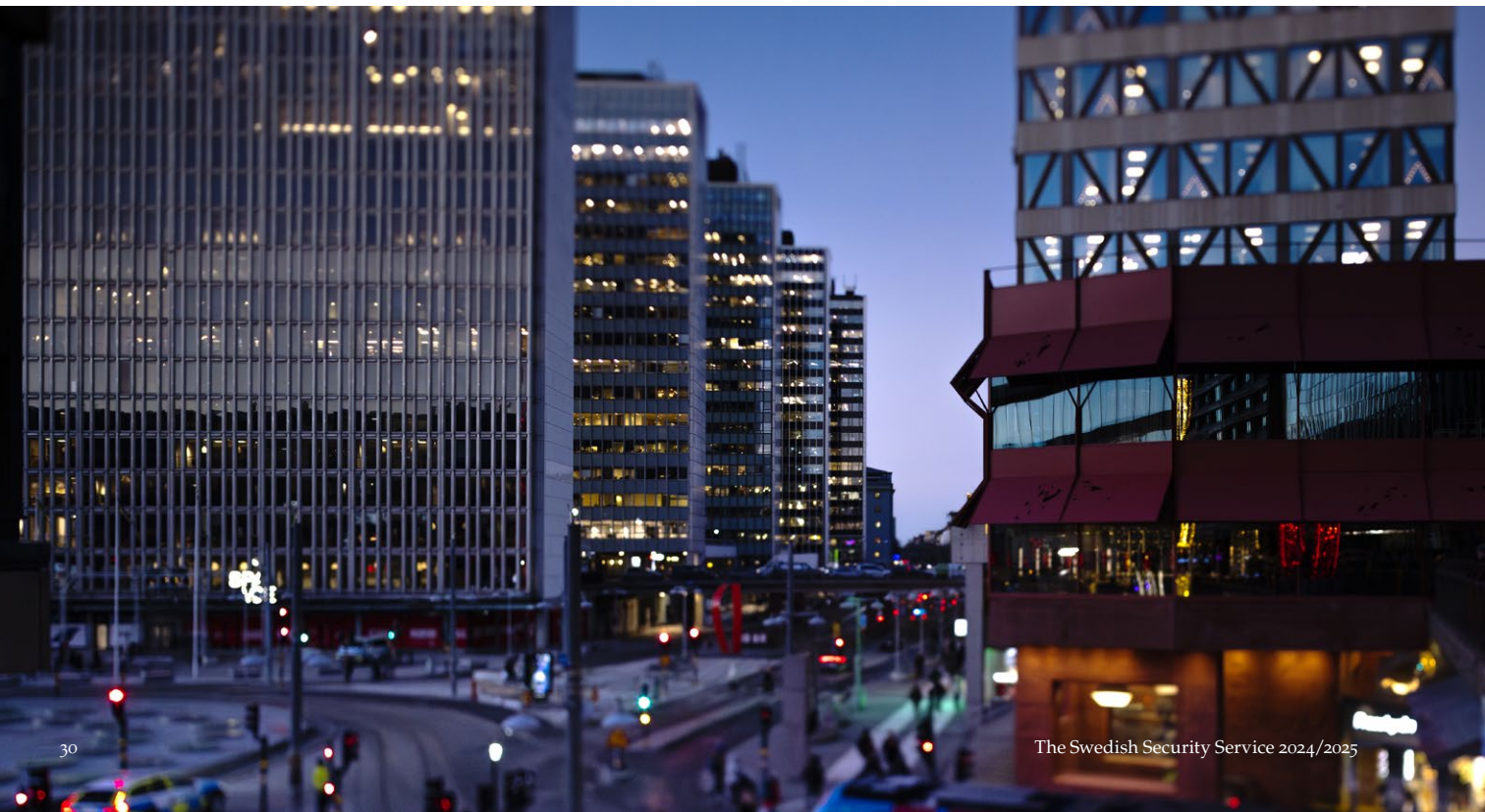
Wide-scale technology procurement

Western know-how and technology are top priorities for foreign powers' security and intelligence services. Procurement takes place in order to access know-how and technology which is needed for warfare but could also take place for more long-term, strategic purposes.

For a long time, Russia has depended upon Western know-how and technology to build-up and maintain its military capabilities. Procurement is highly prioritised and resource-intensive. Russia's procurement needs have increased considerably since the launch of its full-scale war against Ukraine. However, due to the sanctions introduced against Russia by the EU,

USA, and other countries, Russia currently almost exclusively uses covert methods, or other complicated and misleading methods, to unlawfully obtain know-how and technology. In this regard, the Russian security and intelligence services play a central role.

Through the use of proxies and corporate structures which on the surface appear legitimate, the Russian services procure the products needed by the Russian



defence industry. Critical research and technology development are also of interest.

The Swedish Security Service assesses that freight forwarders, logisticians, accountants, and lawyers, knowingly or unknowingly, facilitate, and even play an essential role, in enabling the procurement activities and front companies to be run in a manner that seems legitimate.

Sweden as a platform

In 2022, an individual was prosecuted for technology procurement on behalf of Russia's military intelligence service, the GRU. The individual was acquitted despite the district court finding that the individual had acted on behalf of the GRU and there being no question raised as to the prejudicial effects of the activities on Sweden's national security. According to the district court, the individual's activities were not carried out for the purpose of gathering information which could constitute espionage. There were therefore no legal grounds upon which to convict the individual. The decision has been appealed.

The Swedish Security Service has handled other cases where Sweden was used as a platform to procure products for the Russian defence industry. In one case, a Russian citizen used a network of companies to forward technology to Russia via for example Sweden. Reduction measures allowed the Swedish Security Service to greatly restrict the activities of the network and prevent Sweden from being used as a centre for procurement.

The Swedish Security Service assesses that Russian technology procurement will continue for the foreseeable future, and Russia's security and intelligence services will continue to use a range of methods to mask their activities. This place demands on law enforcement agencies and also on companies whose products could be of interest to foreign powers. By being aware of the methods used by foreign powers to procure technology, Swedish companies can reduce the risk of their products being used in Russia's warfare against Ukraine.

Strategic and tactical procurement

It is not solely military or dual-use products that are of interest to foreign powers. Products with seemingly civilian applications may also be used in contexts other than those originally intended. This pertains not only to products procured by Russia but also by Iran and China.

Iran focuses heavily on the procurement of know-how

and products that can be used for the development of weapons of mass destruction or weapon carriers. Iranian procurement of this type of technology is broadly directed at several different industries. One example is the procurement of machine tools intended for civilian use but which can also be used to develop weapons of mass destruction. As the conflict in the Middle East escalates, Iran needs to engage in tactical technology procurement, i.e., procurement of products that it will need in the near future.

Even if a large portion of the procurement targeted at Sweden relates to products needed here and now, procurement is also carried out for more long-term and strategic purposes. For Russia, strategic abilities and military programmes continue to be highly prioritised.


China also procures know-how and technology in order to achieve its long-term and strategic goals. By

»Countries which circumvent or are unable to follow sanctions regimes, enables these countries to unlawfully gain access to sensitive Western technology and know-how.»

focusing on developments within various strategic and emerging areas of technology, the Chinese Communist Party is seeking to establish mid and long-term global, high-tech dominance. The ensuing dominance could be exploited in direct, security-threatening activities, but could also be used to acquire market shares and, consequently, to cement various, potentially harmful critical dependencies, often at the expense of Swedish industry.

The Swedish Security Service notes that collaboration between Russia, China, and Iran has increased. Cooperation with one another, as well as with other countries which circumvent or are unable to follow sanctions regimes, enables these countries to unlawfully gain access to sensitive Western technology and know-how.

In order to counter technology procurement and sanctions breaches, the Swedish Security Service works with other authorities and regularly conducts information campaigns aimed at companies, industry associations, governmental authorities, and universities. ■



Warning signs of circumvention of sanctions, some examples:

- The business set-up includes indirect transactions through the use of intermediaries or shell companies as well as companies with complex corporate structures.
- The companies involved are based in, or the products are shipped through, countries that are known for sanctions violations.
- The customer or the company is newly incorporated, shares an address or contact details with several companies, or the ownership structure has changed.
- The CEO or responsible manager is unavailable; rather, all communication is via an employee or an individual with a power of attorney.

A complete list of warning signs and guidance to operators whose products are at risk of being exported to Russia, is available on the Swedish Security Service website. More information may be found in the European Commission's guidance on enhanced due diligence to shield against Russian sanctions circumvention.



Foreign direct investments

With the introduction of the Foreign Direct Investments Act which came into force in December 2023, Sweden limited the ability of foreign powers to make detrimental direct investments.

The Swedish Security Service engages in long-term deliberate efforts to reduce the ability of foreign powers to procure technology and know-how which could affect Sweden's national security. Under the Foreign Direct Investments Act, the Swedish Security Service, in its capacity as a referral body to the Inspectorate of Strategic Products (ISP), plays a role in countering the ability of foreign powers to develop and increase their capability to pose a security threat.

Foreign powers are interested in the many, different areas across which Sweden has achieved pre-eminence due, for the most part, to Sweden's good investment climate and advanced digitalisation. Sweden has been relatively open under a longer period to different forms of cooperation and trade and has welcomed investments. Foreign direct investments are generally positive for Sweden's economy and competitiveness, but there could also be risks associated with such investments.

The risk of talent and knowledge transfer through direct investments, acquisitions, and incorporations of companies could, in the long term, be detrimental to Sweden's economic security. New technology could be used for military applications, and could also be used to carry out security-threatening activities against

Sweden and other countries. The Swedish Security Service has noted interest from foreign powers in the energy and green technology sectors, as well as in new technology such as that related to AI, quantum technology, and biotechnology.

In its capacity as a referral body to the ISP, the Swedish Security Service has dealt with several matters since the Foreign Direct Investments Act came into force. The opinions provided by the Swedish Security Service to the ISP are based on an assessment of risks and vulnerabilities and an assessment regarding intent to exploit such vulnerabilities. For example, there is a risk that critical dependencies in especially critical activities could compromise Sweden's national security or undermine its sovereignty. Several different countries have been involved in the matters examined by the Swedish Security Service.

In addition to access to advanced technology and know-how, foreign direct investments could give rise to unwanted dominance in value chains within key sectors, where Sweden, as well as other countries in the West, risk falling into dependency positions. This could, in turn, entail the risk of interference for the purpose of exercising influence over decision-makers or limiting regime-critical opinions. ■



Cyber attacks as a tool

Through targeted cyber attacks, foreign powers can gain access to information related to Sweden's national security, political decision-making or other information that can be used to gather intelligence or exert influence. The targets of the attacks could be authorities but also private individuals such as decision-makers or dissidents.

International events have an impact on foreign powers' need for information and intelligence gathering. The security and intelligence services in Russia, China, and Iran have a huge capability for cyber intelligence gathering, with all of these countries having their own cyber units that conduct attacks. The Russian and Chinese security and intelligence services focus their efforts on numerous political, military, and financial targets in Sweden, while Iran often focuses on dissidents in the Iranian diaspora.

"Today, the threshold for conducting cyber attacks against targets in Sweden is low, as there are significant vulnerabilities that are open to exploitation. Extensive vulnerabilities exist in infrastructure and IT systems, and this, combined with a high level of cyber capability and a huge need for information from foreign powers, poses a serious threat to Sweden's national security," says Alex*, Analyst at the Swedish Security Service.

Cyber attacks aimed at gathering information and building infrastructure

The Swedish Security Service is aware that Iranian intelligence and security services have conducted cyber

attacks against private individuals, mainly dissidents, in Sweden.

This is done by hacking the targeted person's mobile telephones and computers in order to gather information on their activities and contacts. To control the malware that has been installed on the targeted devices, the Iranian regime uses servers that it owns around the world.

"Gathering information about dissidents through cyber attacks is a well-known Iranian approach. The Swedish Security Service has investigated several cases where the Iranian intelligence service has hacked and then exfiltrated or collected information from the hacked devices," says Alex.

Chinese security and intelligence services also hack private individuals' devices, but rather with a purpose of establishing major anonymisation networks so they can act with deniability. Through these networks, they are then able to conduct cyber attacks against authorities and institutions while masking the traffic and identity of the underlying actor.

The Swedish Security Service has previously

highlighted how a Chinese intelligence service hacked the servers and routers of tens of thousands of private individuals in Sweden for the purpose of building up their own infrastructure to use in attacking other countries and their government functions from Swedish soil. The Swedish Security Service has also investigated cases where a Chinese intelligence service conducted cyber attacks against targets in Sweden.

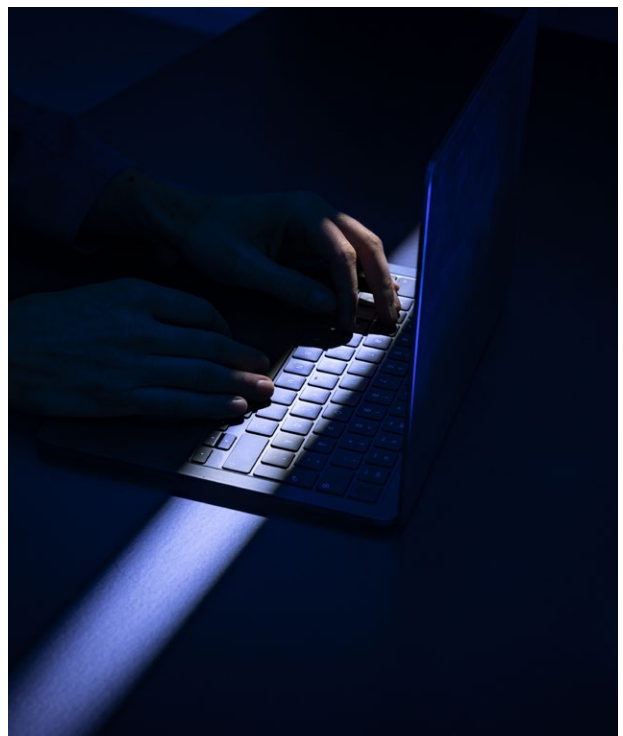
Iran behind influence campaigns

The Iranian intelligence and security services operate with a long-term approach based on their goals, but they can also act opportunistically. In connection with the Qur'an burnings in Sweden during the summer of 2023, an Iranian cyber actor hacked into a Swedish company that provided a bulk text messaging service. By establishing and taking control of the company's

»Chinese security and intelligence services also hack private individuals' devices, but with a purpose aimed instead at establishing major anonymisation networks so they can act with deniability.»

systems, the Iranian cyber actor sent a text message to thousands of individuals across Sweden with encouragements to provide information about those who carried out the Qur'an burnings. The attack was extensive, and the Swedish Security Service was able to establish that the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) was behind the operation, which was assessed to be an influence campaign against Sweden. The Swedish Security Service's assessment is that the influence campaign was carried out to strengthen Iran's own regime, by creating an image of Sweden as an anti-Islamic country, and to create divisions in Swedish society. ■

**Alex is a pseudonym.*



Anonymisation networks

Botnets run on the internet, and are clusters of infected devices that run bots, and this is fairly commonplace. These botnets are used for simple and relatively unadvanced campaigns, such as sending spam and executing distributed denial-of-service attacks (DDoS). A botnet is not to be confused with an anonymisation network, which is a network that has been created to conceal the user's traffic and identity. Anonymisation networks differ from botnets, in terms of both their purpose and capability. Foreign powers use anonymisation networks to execute advanced attacks and breaches of data security in other countries. In general, they conduct these activities to gather critical and sought-after information. The requirements for these covert operations are that they must be deniable and that it must be possible to send information back to the attacker without being discovered. The key to this is having anonymisation networks that continually change in character and size to avoid being detected.



Advice for more secure management of private devices

To conduct a cyber attack, foreign powers exploit technological vulnerabilities that are not always known and against which there is therefore no protection. However, known vulnerabilities are also used, and it is possible to protect oneself against these. To increase the protection on your own devices, there are several important things to think about and do. Some things that can be done to make it more difficult for attackers and to increase resilience against them are:

- Do not click on links and do not open files when the sender is unknown.
- Update anti-virus programs, firewalls, software, operating systems, and apps regularly.
- Keep an eye on your telephone. Do not give it to someone you do not know, as the phone could be manipulated.
- Get into the habit of turning off Bluetooth and WiFi when you are not using it.
- Grant minimum permission to apps, and log out from them when they are not in use.
- Delete apps that are not being used. Remember to also delete the accompanying account.





Magnus Krumlinde,
Deputy Head of the Swedish
Security Service

Magnus Krumlinde:

Every effort to ensure security

As a national security service, we are continuously working to protect Sweden, and for ten years now, the Swedish Security Service has been a separate government agency. In the past few years, the overall threat has become more complex, which increases the need for well-functioning national and international cooperation. Based on what we know and, on our assessments, we must act to prevent and avert threats to Sweden's national security.

Together, we build security and resilience. We must be able to act resolutely, but with due consideration. We have to base our actions on assessments of the security situation, which need to be as professional and comprehensive as possible, focusing on both threats and vulnerabilities in our society.

For this, our national and international collaborations are fundamental. When we contribute different perspectives and supplement our knowledge based on our different remits, we together create a better overall picture. We are thus able, together with other government agencies, to provide the government with assessments to support its work and decision-making.

The Swedish Security Service also plays an important role in the total defence. We are a designated emergency

preparedness authority, and we are expected to be able to carry out all of our tasks in situations of heightened alert and, in the worst case, war. We work closely with many Swedish government agencies, especially with the defence intelligence services: the Military Intelligence and Security Service (Must), and the National Defence Radio Establishment (FRA). In the past few years, this cooperation has deepened and become increasingly important. We also have a long-standing excellent cooperation with the Swedish Police Authority.

Throughout the years, we have also strengthened strategic cooperation through the Counter-Terrorism Cooperation Council, in order to increase Sweden's capability to counter and cope with terrorism. Furthermore, we have been tasked, together with the National Council for Crime Prevention, via the Swedish Center for Preventing Violent Extremism, the Swedish Police Authority and the Civil Contingencies Agency, to implement the government's strategy →



»The troubled international situation affects and challenges Sweden's national security but, every single day, we work together to handle threats and to strengthen protection.»

against violent extremism and terrorism. We welcome the strategy's comprehensive approach, which underlines the need for sustainability and the involvement of a wide range of societal actors.

International cooperation and collaboration will also help create situational awareness and build joint resilience. To a large extent, current threats and vulnerabilities are cross-border and cannot be understood or countered on a national level alone. For a long time now, Nordic cooperation in particular has been key, as has been cooperation and collaboration at a European level. Sweden's accession to NATO is becoming another important part of the international cooperation.

Our remit to avert and prevent includes intervening and disrupting ongoing or imminent crime, when

necessary. Our cooperation with both the Swedish Police Authority and the Swedish Prosecution Authority are very important in these efforts. As a referral body to the Swedish Migration Agency, we work to prevent individuals who pose a risk to Sweden's national security from staying in our country. The remit to prevent also means supporting other organisations in developing their protection, in order to make Sweden more secure as a whole.

The troubled international situation affects and challenges Sweden's national security but, every single day, we work together to handle threats and to strengthen protection. Substantial efforts will also be required going forward, particularly when it comes to developing Sweden's total defence. Together, we create resilience and a more secure Sweden. ■

More information about the Swedish Security Service
and its activities can be found at
sakerhetspolisen.se and in social media.

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The Swedish Security Service is responsible
for ensuring that what must not happen does not happen.
Therefore, our work is preventive. We avert threats to Sweden's security
and to our citizens' rights and freedoms. Because our mission is to secure
the future of our democracy. This we carry out resolutely and with a
long term perspective. We protect the central government and Sweden's
secrets. We counter espionage, extremism and terrorism. For us,
the most important incidents are the ones that never happen.

