The Moscow Times
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Pro-Russian Estonia Mayor Arrested for Bribery

September 22, 2015



Edgar Savisaar

TALLINN — Estonian authorities have arrested Edgar Savisaar, the long-term mayor of the capital Tallinn and leader of the pro-Russian opposition party, on suspicion of taking bribes.

Estonian Security Service (ISS) spokeswoman Agnes Suurmets-Ots said that the case had been transferred to the prosecutor's office.

The arrest comes as Estonian politics have been dominated by fears of interference by neighboring Russia following Moscow's annexation of Ukraine's Crimea region.

Savisaar's party draws most of its support from the quarter of Estonia's 1.3 million population who are Russian speakers. About 70 percent of Russian speakers support the party, which signed a 2004 cooperation deal with Putin's United Russia party.

But Savisaar lost the trust of many Estonians last year when he continued with his cooperation deal after Russia's annexation of Crimea from Ukraine.

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