

# Estonia Arrests Two Men Suspected of Spying for Russia

By [Bloomberg](#)

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An Estonian court sanctioned the arrest of a military officer and his father on Tuesday on suspicion of passing state secrets to neighboring Russia for more than five years.

A major at the headquarters of Estonian defense forces and his father are suspected of passing secrets from Estonia and its allies to Russia's military-intelligence service, Prosecutor General Lavly Perling told reporters in Tallinn. Both are ethnic-Russian Estonian citizens and face up to a lifetime in jail for treason if charged and found guilty.

Estonia, a member of NATO and the European Union since 2004, has had an uneasy relationship with Russia since regaining independence in 1991 and has been spooked by President Vladimir Putin's annexation of Crimea. It has jailed four people for treason over the last decade and "a dozen" for spying, according to its security service.

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“Estonia has chosen a path of transparency, where cases of working for hostile countries and special services are made public,” Prime Minister Juri Ratas said in an emailed statement. “It is at times difficult and painful, but it confirms the strength, ability and maturity of our society to act decisively.”

The 2009 [capture](#) of Herman Simm, a former high-ranking Estonian defense official, was considered the most serious case of espionage against the North Atlantic Treaty Organization since the Cold War, according to the Times newspaper.

The latest incident has caused “significant” damage to the security and national defense of Estonia, as well as that of its allies, Riho Terras, the commander of the Defense Forces, told the same news conference.

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