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Russia Linked to 151 Hybrid Warfare Operations in Europe Since 2022, Dutch Think Tank Says

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German police at Munich Airport after the airport halted flights due to drone sightings in October 2025.
Enrique Kaczor / AP / TASS

Russia has planned or carried out at least 151 hostile operations in Europe since invading Ukraine in February 2022, according to a report by the Netherlands-based International Center for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT) this week.

The figure includes only cases in which completed investigations or available evidence allow responsibility to be "confidently" attributed to Moscow, the report said. As a result, incidents are often identified and added to the tally with significant delay.

"As such, it is reasonable to assume that the actual number of incidents, particularly in the most recent period investigated, is likely higher," the authors wrote.

German security agencies alone recorded 320 suspected sabotage attempts in 2025, including

repeated sightings of unidentified drones near airports and military facilities, though conclusively identifying those responsible remains difficult, the report said.

Similar drone incursions have been reported across Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway, Denmark and the Baltic states.

The U.S.-based Institute for the Study of War has separately tracked suspicious drone activity, airspace violations, GPS signal jamming, cyberattacks, sabotage targeting undersea infrastructure and espionage operations believed to involve Russia.

Over the past year, more than 120 such incidents were recorded across Europe, according to reporting by The Wall Street Journal.

Related article: Russia Has No Intention of Attacking NATO, Estonian Spy Chief Says

An Estonian court last week sentenced Anatoly Privalov, a resident of the border city of Narva and an Israeli citizen, to 6.5 years in prison for spying on behalf of Russia.

Estonia's Prosecutor's Office said Privalov cooperated with Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB), participated in acts of sabotage and helped facilitate illegal migrant crossings.

Taavi Narits, deputy director general of Estonia's Internal Security Service, said Russian intelligence agencies recruit individuals regardless of nationality or citizenship, particularly those who need to travel to Russia.

"Russian special services recruit collaborators at the border and on their own territory, and use these people against Estonia and the West in general," Narits said in an Estonian Prosecutor's Office statement.

European authorities have linked several recent sabotage plots to Russia.

A November 2025 attack on Poland's railway network was blamed on Moscow, with investigators alleging Russian intelligence recruited three Ukrainian nationals to carry it out.

A month earlier, French authorities arrested four men reportedly from Russia's North Caucasus republic of Dagestan suspected of plotting to assassinate Vladimir Osechkin, founder of the anti-prison torture project Gulagu.net.

Related article: Russia Uses Ex-Wagner Operatives to Recruit 'Disposable' Saboteurs in Europe – FT

In October 2025, Poland and Romania said they had thwarted a Russian plot to send self-igniting parcels via the Ukrainian courier company Nova Poshta, one of which was allegedly intended to detonate at logistics facilities in Bucharest.

A similar operation was carried out in 2024, when parcels containing flammable magnesium compounds shipped from Lithuania ignited at DHL warehouses in Germany, Poland and Britain.

The incidents may have served as trial runs for sending such devices on transatlantic cargo flights to the U.S. and Canada, The Washington Post reported, citing current and former CIA officials.

At least 20 people in Lithuania and Poland were later charged with terrorism-related offenses in connection with the plot.

The ICCT report found Poland recorded the highest number of incidents overall. France has also seen a sharp rise, with the total reaching 20 cases. Lithuania and Germany each registered 15 incidents, followed by Britain with 12 and Estonia with 11.

“This distribution strongly suggests that support for Ukraine is the single most important factor shaping target selection. Some of the most pronounced supporters of Ukraine, such as Poland, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom, together account for more than half of all identified incidents,” the report said.

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