

# FAKE IDS AND RUSSIA

## 2022-2023 STORIES IN THE NEWS



### RUSSIA REPORTEDLY ISSUING PASSPORTS TO UKRAINIAN CHILDREN AND PULLING THEM INTO THE COUNTRY

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) says that Russia is issuing passports in occupied Ukraine to Ukrainian children and putting them up for adoption. Commissioner Filippo Grandi said



Russia is violating the "fundamental principles of child protection" in wartime. "Giving them (Russian) nationality or having them adopted goes against the fundamental principles of child protection in situations of war," Grandi said. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy asked the agency and the world to create mechanisms to "defend and return" children deported to Russia, as well as adults, and to punish those responsible. Grandi said Russia has not allowed the agency enough access to estimate the total number of children brought into Russia.





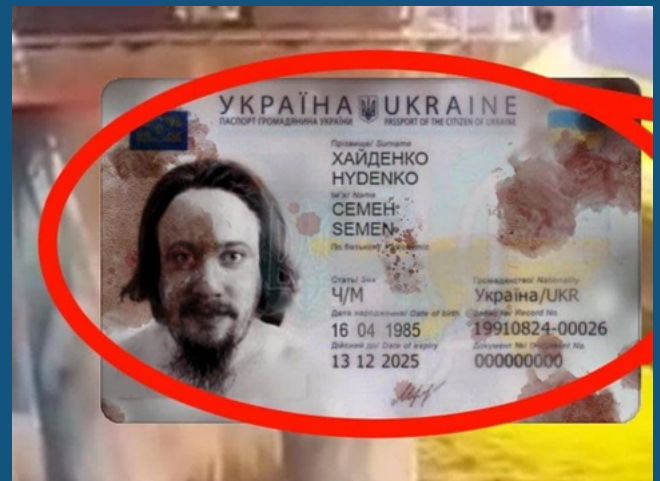
## EU WON'T ACCEPT RUSSIAN DOCUMENTS ISSUED IN OCCUPIED COUNTRIES

The European Union decided not to accept Russian identity documents issued in Ukraine or Georgia, citing Russia's "unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine." This follows Russia's attempts to incorporate the population of its occupied neighbors by effectively rendering their native documents administratively useless, mass issuing Russian documents, and, in many cases, forcefully transferring populations into Russia. In a statement, the European Union said "Russian travel documents issued in, or to persons resident in, Russian-occupied regions in Ukraine or breakaway territories in Georgia will not be accepted as valid travel documents for obtaining a visa or crossing the borders of the Schengen area. Russian travel documents issued in these regions are already not recognised, or in the process of not being recognised, by EU member states. This decision aims to set out a common approach, ensure the proper functioning of the external border and common visa policies and safeguard the security of EU member states."

## LAZY COUNTERFEITERS LEAVE EVIDENCE IN ATTEMPTED CRIMEA DISINFORMATION CAMPAIGN

Russians continue to use fake IDs as a weapon in their war against Ukraine. This time, they are spreading a digitally altered image of a Ukrainian ID on social media in order to claim it belonged to an alleged "terrorist" who bombed the Crimean bridge. The problem is, the crafty counterfeiters forgot to edit most of the biographical data.

Ukrainian news sources immediately recognized the doctored document as the country's exemplar, simply altered to replace the original woman's face with a man's and spruced up with burn marks and blood for effect. The name and sex were also changed, but every other data field was left over from the original exemplar, including document number, "00000000."







## FINLAND SEEING A RISE IN FALSE DOCUMENTS USED AT ITS BORDER WITH RUSSIA

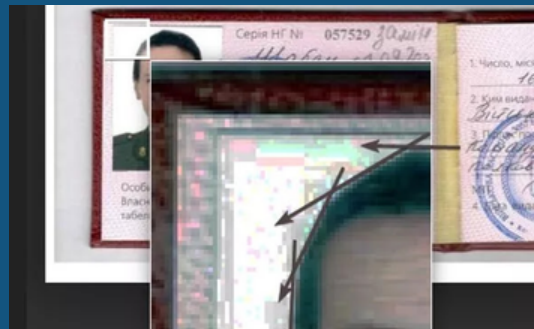
Authorities in Finland are reporting a disturbing trend in fake documents being used at its Eastern border with Russia. The Southeast Finland Border Guard says it has seen an exceptionally large number of false and forged documents being used by people attempting to enter the country.

In just 10 days this month, officials spotted 22 fake Belgian residence permit cards at crossings. They were reportedly high quality and cost thousands of euros, though not undetectable to border inspector document evaluation specialists. A disturbing number of counterfeit Schengen-area border control stamps were also uncovered in many passports presented at crossing points. Those using the fake documents came “mainly from around the Caucasus region – including Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and parts of Southern Russia – and their final destinations were chiefly in Central Europe.”

Just last week, a man was detained at a border crossing point after he presented a fraudulent Serbian passport with five forged Schengen border control stamps, as well as a counterfeit driver’s license and ID card. Another man, a Russian citizen, presented a forged Italian residence permit in an attempt to cross.

## RUSSIA MAY HAVE MADE FAKE IDS TO BACK UP ASSASSINATION STORY

The Express, a newspaper in the United Kingdom, is casting aspersions on the narrative Russian President Vladimir Putin is pushing out regarding the car bombing that killed Daria Dugina in Moscow this month. The Russian security service, FSB, claimed that the assassination was carried out by a woman serving in the Ukrainian army and the Azov Battalion, who infiltrated Russian borders undercover before carrying out the attack. They released an alleged passport photo of the woman in question, along with a video purporting to show her in Moscow. The Express, however, asked a data analyst what she thought of the photo. “Sharing close-up pictures of the passport image and explaining the editing process step-by-step, Ms Linnamae claimed that a ‘photoshop artist’ spent some ‘quality time’ with editing tools. In an unverified series of pictures, she pointed out a ‘killer shadow effect’, saying there are ‘no limits to what you can achieve with some gaussian blur.’”



*Special Report:*

## RUSSIAN FRAUDSTER IN NEW HAMPSHIRE CHARGED WITH SENDING MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO RUSSIA

A Russian man in New Hampshire was using a fake identity as part of a smuggling ring that sent American military equipment into Russia, according to federal prosecutors. Alexey Brayman is one of seven defendants on trial for an international smuggling scheme that sent restricted products through Estonia, Finland, Germany, and/or Hong Kong before reaching their destination in Russia, which is starved for munitions amidst its ongoing invasion of Ukraine and the ensuing sanctions. He faces charges along with a director of a Moscow-based machinery company that contracts with Russian intelligence, among others.

Our readers are well-versed in the many types of crooks using fake identities, but we don't often discuss arms dealers. According to CBS News, "Livshits is accused of communicating directly with the U.S. companies, often using the alias 'David Wetksy' to purchase the desired military-grade equipment. In one example, prosecutors claimed Livshits used the alias in the spring of 2022 — after Russia's invasion of Ukraine had begun — to contact an Illinois-based electronics distributor about purchasing a type of electric signal-monitoring system that is restricted by the Commerce Department for anti-terrorism reasons."



VADIM KONOSHCHENOK, DEFENDANT IN  
RUSSIAN SMUGGLING CASE

Another man connected with Brayman's scheme, Vadim Konoshchenok (right) was stopped by police in Estonia near the Russian border with 35 types of semiconductors, thousands of 6.5mm bullets made in Nebraska, and ammunition for sniper rifles. He is a suspected Russian intelligence officer.

"With three of the defendants now in custody, we have disrupted the procurement network allegedly used by the defendants and Russian intelligence services to smuggle sniper rifle ammunition and sensitive electronic components into Russia," Attorney General Merrick Garland said in a statement. "The Justice Department will continue to vigorously enforce our economic sanctions and export controls against those who enable the Russian government to continue its unjust war in Ukraine."