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# RACISM, DISCRIMINATION AND FIGHT AGAINST “EXTREMISM” IN CONTEMPORARY RUSSIA and its controlled territories

Alternative Report on the Implementation of the UN Convention  
on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination  
By the Russian Federation



*Demolition of Roma settlement Plekhanovo (see p.39). Picture from TeleTula TV-channel program. 2016.*

For the 93<sup>rd</sup> Session of the UN CERD  
July 31 – August 11, 2017

**Racism, Discrimination and Fight Against “Extremism” in Contemporary Russia and its Controlled Territories.** Alternative Report of the ADC Memorial, CrimeaSOS, SOVA Center, together with FIDH (International Federation for Human Rights) on the Implementation of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination By the Russian Federation. For the 93rd Session of the UN CERD. July 31 – August 11, 2017.

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# INTRODUCTION

This report was prepared by a number of organizations specializing in the problem of racial discrimination and in protecting groups affected by racism.

This report addresses the problems of hate crimes and methods the government uses to combat extremism (similar materials based on regular monitoring by the SOVA Center for Information and Analysis were included in the last alternative report to UN CERD in 2013<sup>1</sup>). It also examines the problem of the systemic discrimination faced by ethnic groups like the Roma, migrants from the Caucasus, and a new group — ethnic Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars. It should be mentioned that the latter issue was primarily caused by the military intervention in 2014, when hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars found themselves under the de facto rule of Russia. Following the annexation, the Russian authorities started to implement discriminatory policy towards these ethnic groups, based on various instruments for pressure and persecution. Discrimination against the Crimean Tatar people has been aggravated by the religious aspect (Crimean Tatars are Muslim) and visual differences, which amounts to ethno-religious discrimination in a political context.

Many people belonging to the traditionally Muslim community suffer from suspicion of religious extremism and connections with Islamic radicals and even terrorist groups. In addition to Crimean Tatars, this affects residents and natives of the North Caucasus and many millions of migrant workers from Central Asian countries (above all people is Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan). Regular repressions against religious organizations and groups paired with ethnic profiling by the police results in multiple discrimination. Many Caucasians who are citizens of Russia suffer from “Caucasus phobia”: they cannot rent housing, get good jobs, or easily gain access to education or social assistance. The situation is even harder for non-citizens, who are seen as “foreigners” on the basis of religion, country of origin, and citizenship. Fear of migrants and Caucasians has become a regular argument in the political battle in Russia. Propaganda has persisted in creating an “image of the enemy” out of the Ukrainian people, and state television stations are constantly frightening viewers with stories about “the hand of the West” and the conspiracy of neighboring countries against Russia.

Recently, prominent political figures have even used crass anti-Semitic myths to nettle their opponents. For example, State Duma Deputy Speaker Petr Tolstoy spoke about the descendants of those who “broke out of the Pale of Settlement” (meaning Jews, as they were not allowed to live outside the so called “Pale of Settlement”, and referring to the myth that Jews were responsible for the revolution in 1917). Vitaly Milonov, another State Duma deputy seized on this rhetoric and stated that the ancestors of people who were against transferring museum property to the Church (two Jewish names were given) “fed Christians to wild animals.” Even though there was a large-scale public response to the statements of these parliamentarians, their anti-Semitic speeches were not condemned at the state (or even party) level, and the deputies asserted that they had simply been “misunderstood.”

The revival of anti-Semitism has also been manifested in regular attacks on synagogues and sites of religious significance to Judaism (in Arkhangelsk, Perm, Bryansk<sup>2</sup>), the destruction of memorial

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<sup>1</sup> Report available here: [http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CERD/Shared%20Documents/RUS/INT\\_CERD\\_NGO\\_RUS\\_13735\\_E.pdf](http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CERD/Shared%20Documents/RUS/INT_CERD_NGO_RUS_13735_E.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> On April 8, 2015 in Arkhangelsk, unknown people shot a synagogue under construction and wrote anti-Semitic inscriptions. Find more information here: <http://www.interfax-religion.ru/?act=news&div=58454> ; On September 20, 2016, opponents of the construction of the religious center of the Chabad Lubavitch community in Perm buried a pig's head on the construction site. Find more information here: [http://v-kurse.ru/news/incidents/v\\_permi\\_na\\_meste\\_stroitelstva\\_evreyskogo\\_tsentra\\_zaryli\\_svinyu\\_3001905/?utm\\_source=permactive&utm\\_medium=timeline\\_topnews](http://v-kurse.ru/news/incidents/v_permi_na_meste_stroitelstva_evreyskogo_tsentra_zaryli_svinyu_3001905/?utm_source=permactive&utm_medium=timeline_topnews) ; On December 7, 2015, in Bryansk unknown people wrote anti-Semitic inscriptions on a Jewish monument. Find more information here : <http://www.24tv.pro/news/1054118>



plaques at places where Jews were shot during World War II (in Pskov Oblast, Tver Oblast, and Volgograd<sup>3</sup>) and Jewish cemeteries (in Kaliningrad, Petrozavodsk, and other cities<sup>4</sup>).

Meanwhile, the problem of hate crime remains worrying in the Russian Federation. Although the number of racist murders has declined in recent years, this is only in comparison to the fact that the number of such crimes was very high in 2002-2012. According to statistics collected by the SOVA Center, which specializes in monitoring hate crimes, nationalism, xenophobia and political radicalism, there were 10 racist murders and more than 70 other attacks based on racial motives in 2016 alone. The victims of the attacks were mostly migrants from Central Asia and foreign students (in 2017, a student from the Republic of Chad was killed in Kazan by a neo-Nazi gang, which had previously attacked a worker from Kyrgyzstan and a student from India).

The data collected by the SOVA Center gives an incomplete picture of the scale of hate crimes in Russia since investigators and courts often do not classify hate crimes as such, and classify it without the aggravating hate or racist motivation.

The fight against extremism, however, raises multiple concerns regarding the violation of freedom of expression. Russian law enforcement authorities focus on prosecuting minor cases of incitement to hatred or on charges that dubiously fall under the category of “extremist crimes.” For example, there were cases of convictions for expressing a critical opinion on social networks about Russia’s current foreign policy as “hate for Russians.” According to the SOVA Center, roughly 10 percent of these convictions cannot be considered extremist.

The government’s intensive battle against extremism (real and imagined) goes along with an increase in ethnic discrimination by the government. A striking example of this is the practice of segregating Roma children in schools. This is typically not condemned by state agencies. For example, when the minister of education in Tula conducted a check of a school at the request of parents that found a “separate Roma class,” it concluded that “no violations of the law were discovered” (even though the Law on Education expressly prohibits any exclusion based on race)<sup>5</sup>. The RF’s State Report to CERD asserts that segregated schools exist for the convenience of the Roma community itself. However, monitoring by ADC “Memorial” has shown that in most cases the community (both parents and children) are not at all pleased with this segregation and see it as a violation of their rights, humiliating treatment, and racism. This pronounced ethnic discrimination is often accompanied by the demolition of Roma settlements (so-called “tabors”). The eviction of Roma residents from their homes in Tula, Tatarstan, and the Urals came coupled with xenophobic rhetoric from the government, anti-Roma campaigns in the media, and cruel police actions.

Thus, some of the high-priority problems the RF faces include state discrimination against several ethnicities, hate speech, hate crimes, and contradictory anti-extremism laws that violate freedom of speech. This all goes along with repressions against civil society, including organizations protecting the rights of indigenous peoples of the Russian North and East (many of them have been declared “foreign agents”), representing the Crimean Tatar people (the Mejlis, which was labelled an “extremist organization” by a Russian court), and fighting racism and discrimination (the Anti-Discrimination Centre “Memorial” was subjected to repressions in 2013-2014 specifically in connection with its preparation of a report on discrimination against Roma and migrants for the UN, the SOVA Center was fined as an “NGO — foreign agent” in 2017).

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<sup>3</sup> On August 29, 2016 in Pskov Oblast, a memorial to the victims of the second world war in a Jewish cemetery was destroyed. Find more information here: <http://kant.kg/2016-08-30/v-pskovskoy-oblasti-vandalyi-razrushili-evreyskiy-memorial/> ; In October 2015 in Tver Oblast, a memorial to the victims of the Holocaust has been twice vandalized. Find more information here: <http://www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/news/racism-nationalism/2015/11/d33221/> ; In March 22, 2015 in Volgograd, swastikas were drawn on a stone commemorating mass execution of Jewish people. Find more information here: <http://bloknot-volgograd.ru/news/v-volgograde-razrisovali-svastikoy-memorial-v-pamyat-587540>

<sup>4</sup> On March 8, 2016, several graves were desecrated in a Jewish cemetery in Kaliningrad. Find more information here: <https://regnum.ru/news/accidents/2093283.html>; On April 3, 2016 swastikas were drawn on a Jewish Cemetery in Petrozavodsk. Find more information here: <https://ptzgovorit.ru/content/vandaly-oskvernili-evreyskoekladbishche-v-petrozavodsk-foto>.

<sup>5</sup> In May 2017, when the minister of education in Tula conducted a check of a school at the request of parents. More information here: <https://www.tula.kp.ru/daily/26690.7/3713594/>

# RACIALLY MOTIVATED VIOLENCE<sup>6</sup>

## HATE CRIMES

Patterns in racial violence over recent years appear encouraging due to a decisive stepping-up of law enforcement activities. As noted in paragraph 150 of the synthesis report, which combines the twenty-third and twenty-fourth reports of the Russian Federation, there has been a steady downward trend in the number of murders committed on the grounds of racial and similar hate. This corresponds to data from the Sova Center<sup>7</sup> (see annex to this report).

However, hate crimes continue to be a pressing problem for Russia. According to the Sova Center ten murders and over 70 other attacks were attributed to hate in 2016, and the numbers in previous years were even higher. But this data should be considered preliminary because hate crimes have a very high latency.

The main group of victims is comprised of people whose attackers perceive them as “ethnic interlopers” (people from Central Asia and the Caucasus, people who are not “Slavic” in appearance), and this group’s share has grown noticeably. Some attacks (particularly against adolescents and women) are notable for their extreme harshness. The Committee’s recommendation (paragraph 11 c) to maintain an accurate register of crimes that are only suspected of being hate crimes when they are initially registered over the reporting period was not implemented.

The Committee expressed its concern with manifestations of racism and xenophobia on the part of racist football fans (paragraph 11 b). As part of preparations for the 2018 World Cup, the topic of racism in football has been given closer attention than it has been previously (see paragraphs 8, 9, 10 and 54-55 of the RF report). However, racist displays remain deeply entrenched among fans in spite of measures taken by leaders in the football world: in addition to chants and displays of racist symbols during matches<sup>8</sup> (according to the UEFA, racist behavior was observed at the European championship<sup>9</sup>), their aggression is also manifested outside of the stadium, in open assaults and attacks<sup>10</sup>.

The Committee’s recommendations to collect and publish data on hate crimes disaggregated by type, location, and number of victims, with account for both acquittals and convictions, has not

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<sup>6</sup> Information prepared by SOVA Center for Information and Analysis is a Moscow-based Russian nonprofit organization that was founded in 2002. SOVA Center conducts informational and research work on such topics as nationalism and xenophobia, relations between the churches and the secular society, and political radicalism. On 30 December 2016, SOVA Center for Information and Analysis was included into the “foreign agents” list.

<sup>7</sup> Hate crimes patterns and efforts to combat them are methodically tracked in Sova Center monitoring and annual reports available at: <http://www.sova-center.ru/en/xenophobia/reports-analyses>. The most recent of these reports is Natalia Yudina, Vera Alperovich. “Old Problems and New Alliances: Xenophobia and Radical Nationalism in Russia, and Efforts to Counteract Them in 2016,” SOVA Center, May 8, 2017 available at <http://www.sova-center.ru/en/xenophobia/reports-analyses/2017/05/d36995/>.

<sup>8</sup> See the FARE and Sova Center report “A Changing Picture: Incidents of Discrimination in Russian Football. — 2015-2017,” Sova Center, June 20, 2016 available at [http://www.sova-center.ru/files/xeno/Russia\\_report.pdf](http://www.sova-center.ru/files/xeno/Russia_report.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> “Fanaty v Marsele: eshche i rasizm,” Sova Center, June 16, 2016 available at: <http://www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/publications/2016/06/d34799/>.

<sup>10</sup> “Pravonogii futbol,” Sova Center, May 20, 2016 available at: <http://www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/publications/2016/05/d34534/>.

been implemented, since the statistics provided by the Russian Federation do not include verdicts where articles on “crimes of an extremist nature” (Article 17 of the Criminal Code) were not the main articles cited in the charges.<sup>11</sup>

## **REACTION OF THE AUTHORITIES TO XENOPHOBIC SPEECH**

The Committee expressed concern (paragraph 12b) that racist and xenophobic speech are not always condemned publicly by officials. As the Committee noted, Russia is seeing a growth in racist and xenophobic speech aimed against ethnic minorities in the press and the public speeches of politicians and officials.

The situation has not fundamentally improved since 2008. Officials continue to make xenophobic speech, usually for political reasons. For example, during a press conference at TASS on January 23, 2017, State Duma Deputy Speaker Petr Tolstoy commented on the collection of signatures against transferring St. Isaac’s Cathedral in Saint Petersburg to the Russian Orthodox Church. He spoke insultingly about people who are in favor of keeping the museum in the cathedral’s building and hinted at the Jewish descent of people opposed to this move in an obviously anti-Semitic fashion. The Administration of the RF President and the speaker of the Duma never condemned this statement, and comments on it were non-committal.

## **COMBATING ONLINE INCITEMENT TO HATRED**

There are serious doubts that the mechanisms Russia uses to combat online incitement to hatred are effective or balanced against the protection of freedom of expression.

Statistics from the Supreme Court<sup>12</sup> and the Sova Center (see annex) show that since 2008, the number of sentences for “extremist speech,” i.e. for inciting hatred (Article 282), calling for extremist or terrorist actions (articles 280 and 205<sup>2</sup>, respectively), and so forth, exceed sentences for all other “extremist crimes” taken together. The drop in the number of sentences for racist and similar violence can be explained by a fall in this kind of violence (paragraph 150 of the RF report), but the upsurge in the number of sentences for racist speech cannot similarly be explained by the explosive growth of the propaganda of terrorism, extremism, racial enmity, etc., since we have not observed an increase of this kind, and penalties for inciting hatred and other hate speech still remain extremely selective.

Around 500 people were convicted of “extremist speech” annually in 2015–2016 (and most of these people were only convicted of this). These sentences were removed frequently for insignificant and harmless statements, and there are also verdicts that we consider simply unlawful (their share is within the limits of 10 percent, see table in the annex<sup>13</sup>). The vast majority of verdicts were issued

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<sup>11</sup> According to the RF report, a total 530 people were convicted under these articles by various levels of RF courts in 2013–2014. However, according to the Sova Center, 625 people were convicted under these articles. The difference can be attributed to the fact that the Sova Center takes other articles into account aside from the main article in the indictment.

<sup>12</sup> These statistics are cited in the RF’s report. Data for 2016 can be accessed on the Supreme Court’s website here: <http://www.cdep.ru/index.php?id=79&item=3834> .

<sup>13</sup> The details on unlawful sentences can be read in Sova Center reports dedicated to the improper application of anti-extremist laws. They are all available on the Sova Center website at <http://www.sova-center.ru/en/misuse/reports-analyses/>. The most recent of these reports is Kravchenko, Maria. Inappropriate enforcement of anti-extremist legislation in 2016,” Sova Center, April 21, 2017. More information here <http://www.sova-center.ru/en/misuse/reports-analyses/2017/04/d36857/>

in relation to materials posted online, and the vast majority of people convicted were users of the VKontakte social network who were reposting videos and other materials and who had a small or miniscule number of followers.<sup>14</sup>

The main reason for this disparity is that in recent years the police have mastered the technology for investigating public statements made online, found that these cases are much easier to investigate than cases on street attacks, which previously formed the basis for internal reporting on combating “crimes of an extremist nature,” and switched to this easier method for filling out their reports.

This large number of criminal sentences for statements gives rise to fears about observing the balance between protection from discriminatory behavior and protection of free speech. Additionally, the number of people sentenced alone to actual deprivation of freedom for making public statements has increased without significant aggravating circumstances. According to data from the Sova Center, 43 people had been imprisoned for this as of February 2017, which is twice as high as the previous calculation made in September 2015.<sup>15</sup> But neither the Russian government, the Sova Center, nor any other sociological services have published data showing that such large-scale criminal repressions are responsible for the increase in inflammatory speech or greater public danger caused by this speech, or that this enforcement has helped noticeably reduce the spread of hate speech, primarily on the internet, where this enforcement has been concentrated.

Since 2013, the main way to combat hateful online content has been to block access to this content (paragraph 70 of the RF report), since there is no reliable way to remove content if it is not housed on a Russian server and users whose content is in threat of deletion can move it outside of Russia.

An internet filtering system based on a unified register maintained by Roskomnadzor at the request of various state agencies (its full name is “Unified register of domain names, website page indexes in the Internet network, and network addresses allowing sites to be identified in the Internet network that contain information forbidden to be distributed in Russia”) has been operating in Russia since 1 November 2012, after the federal law “On Amendments to the Federal Law ‘On Protecting Children from Information Harmful to their Health and Development’ and Individual Legal Acts of the Russian Federation” entered into effect. According to the website Roskomsvoboda, in 2016 486 resources were entered in this registry “for extremism” under court decisions, as compared to 283 resources in 2015.<sup>16</sup> As of 1 January 2017, at least 908 resources have been blocked in this manner.

The Unified Register is complemented by a separate resource based on the extra-judicial blocking of websites calling for extremist actions, mass unrest, and unsanctioned public actions. The websites are blocked at the request of the Procurator General (on the basis of a law known as the Lugovoy Law and mentioned in paragraph 71 of the RF report). This register is growing by leaps and bounds: 923 entries were added in 2016 compared to 133 in 2015; there are a total of 1,410 resources listed in it.<sup>17</sup>

The RF Presidential Council for Civil Society and Human Rights stated in 2013 that the adoption of the Lugovoy law would result in the infringement of constitutional rights and freedoms and create the foundation for an increase in legal nihilism and the illusion of a fight against extremism in place of actual work to eradicate it. An overview of “Lugovoy’s registry” shows that these fears were justified and that the implementation of this new norm does not meet the stated purpose. Pages calling for radical racist or other violence alternate with harmless resources like satirical works or with calls to come out for peaceful meetings. At the same time, many blocked materials are easily accessible using different addresses.

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<sup>14</sup> Yudina Natalia. “Anti-extremism in Virtual Russia, 2014-2015,” Sova Center, August 24, 2016. Available here: <http://www.sova-center.ru/en/misuse/reports-analyses/2016/08/d35262/> .

<sup>15</sup> “Kto lishen sbobody za ‘ekstremistskie prestupleniia’ ne obshcheugolovnogo kharaktera. Fevral’ 2017,” Sova Center, February 20, 2017. Available here: <http://www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/publications/2017/02/d36413/> .

<sup>16</sup> See the updated list “Extremist Resources in the Unified Register of Banned Websites,” Sova Center. Available here <http://www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/docs/2016/04/d34421/> .

<sup>17</sup> See the updated list of resources in the register of websites blocked under the Lugovoy law, Sova Center. Available here: <http://www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/docs/2017/01/d36203/> .



Since 2015, the Unified Register has grown not from the blocking of specific websites or pages, but from search engine keyword results, mainly from music-related resources, which clearly amounts to excessive interference in the functioning of the internet, since a wide variety of pages can be found in the keyword list on these pages.

## **FEDERAL LIST OF EXTREMIST MATERIALS**

The Committee has previously noted that even though the federal list of Banned Extremist materials has been updated, it still contains inconsistent and outdated information (paragraph 11e).

The situation has not improved over recent years. The Federal List of Extremist Materials (mentioned in paragraphs 41 and 63 of the RF report), which is based on court bans of various types of materials, has proven unworkable. As of 07 July 2017, the list of extremist materials has almost 4,200 items, many of which may include the most various kinds of materials.

In 2016, the Procurator General attempted to improve the situation by centralizing this activity, but the results of this measure are not yet visible. Even more items were added to the list in 2016 than in 2015: 785 versus 667. Materials continue to be entered in the list with an enormous number of various bibliographic, grammatical, and spelling mistakes and typos. Courts add the same materials to the lists. Some of the materials continue to be wrongfully found extremist.

Clearly, such a list cannot serve as a practical tool for citizens or law enforcement agencies. But the scale of resources spent on these bans is growing, as is the scale of dissatisfaction with these resources. But most importantly, the mechanism of a ban does not really work: any material can be quickly released in a new form, especially on the internet, and this will require a new procedure for banning. Thus, the most sought-after materials, including ones that are actually dangerous, are still widely distributed.

## **DEFINITION OF “EXTREMIST ACTIVITIES”**

The Committee has also previously recommended that the Russian Federation reformulate its broad and vague definition of extremism enshrined in the law “On Combating Extremist Activity” and the wording of articles 280 and 282 of the Criminal Code.

This recommendation has not been implemented, and the definition of “extremist activity” (mentioned in paragraphs 40, 161, 162, and 163 of the RF report) continue to include unclear items such as “incitement to social discord” or “assertion of religious superiority.” Such a broad and vague definition of extremism encourages dishonest employees at law enforcement agencies to investigate insignificant actions instead of truly dangerous crimes. Meanwhile, the number of instances of illegal restrictions on fundamental rights and freedoms continues to grow.<sup>18</sup> The unlawful application of anti-discriminatory laws discredits the idea of fighting racism in the eyes of society and does not provide it with an understanding of which specific actions are illegal.

This broad definition, especially in terms of “asserting religious superiority” results in discriminatory court decisions against religious minorities. The most significant decision of this kind was the total ban on Jehovah’s Witnesses organizations in Russia as extremist specifically on the grounds of their assertion of their “religious superiority.” This Supreme Court judgment of 20 April 2017 placed tens of

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<sup>18</sup> Kravchenko, Maria. “Inappropriate Enforcement of anti-extremist legislation in 2016,” Sova Center, April 20, 2017. Available here: <http://www.sova-center.ru/en/misuse/reports-analyses/2017/04/d36857/>

thousands of Jehovah's Witnesses in the country under the threat of criminal prosecution, since any organized actions on their part after the ban's entry into effect could be construed as a continuation of the activities of a banned organization (Article 282<sup>2</sup> of the Criminal Code).

In recent years, new articles have been added to the Criminal Code that are intended to prevent the distribution of racist and borderline racist materials and discrimination, including on the basis of religion, according to the declarations of the deputies who proposed them.

The RF report (paragraph 65) mentions Article 354<sup>1</sup> of the Criminal Code, but does not mention that it criminalizes not just the justification of Nazi crimes, but also *"the public denial of the facts established by the judgment of the Nuremberg Tribunal, for public approval of the offences established by that judgment and for the public dissemination of deliberately false statements concerning the actions of the USSR during the Second World War" and "the distribution of information manifesting patent contempt of society of the days of military glory and memorable dates of Russia connected with the defense of the Fatherland, as well as the defacement of symbols of Russia's military might committed in public."* People have been sentenced under both elements of the new article not out of analytical or anti-discriminatory considerations, but out of political considerations connected with the military conflict in Eastern Ukraine.<sup>19</sup>

In 2013, Article 148 of the Criminal Code was amended. Now Part 1 of this article criminalizes *"public actions expressing patent disrespect for society and committed to insult the religious feelings of believers."* In 2016, several verdicts were rendered under this article that were clearly not aimed at protecting believers from discriminatory treatment and grossly violated the rights to freedom of speech and freedom of conscience. While some of these verdicts referred to coarse language in religious polemics, others referred to statements that were not in accordance with the Orthodox religion. For example, a criminal sentence was rendered for amateur theological assertions about one famous icon.<sup>20</sup>

We can see that further attempts to expand the sphere of anti-extremist norms will not lead to greater protection from discriminatory treatment, but only to more gross and frequent violations of fundamental rights and freedoms.

NGOs working with national minorities, indigenous peoples, non-citizens, and other vulnerable groups subject to discrimination

The Committee previously recommended reviewing the law on non-profit organizations to ensure that the abovementioned non-governmental organizations could effectively perform their work to promote and protect the rights stipulated in the Convention without illegal interference in their activities or without the observation of onerous obligations.

However, in 2016 the definition of political activity used in this law to define NGOs "performing the functions of a foreign agent" was expanded, creating more opportunities for including NGOs in this register.

In 2015, the "law on undesirable organizations" (mentioned in paragraph 38 of the RF report) was adopted. Under this law, new amendments were introduced to the unfortunately well-known "Dima Yakovlev law" (full name "On Sanctions for Individuals Violating Fundamental Human Rights and Freedoms of Citizens of the Russian Federation"). According to these amendments, the status of "undesirable organization" is assigned to a foreign or international non-governmental organization by the Procurator General with the participation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Justice, but not with the participation of a court. Cooperation with these "undesirable organizations" is an administrative violation, and the repeated violation of this cooperation and, even more so, management of such an organization's work in Russia amounts to a crime.

It could be assumed that this refers to threats that could be called extremist or terrorist. In that case, the amendments could have been viewed as an additional tool of anti-extremist law, even though it would still be unclear why an extrajudicial procedure is necessary if an organization, including a foreign

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<sup>19</sup> Kravchenko Maria. "Inappropriate Enforcement of anti-extremist legislation in 2016," Sova Center, April 20, 2017. Available here: <http://www.sova-center.ru/en/misuse/reports-analyses/2017/04/d36857/>

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

organization, can only be found extremist or terrorist through a court. In practice, the application of the law follows another path: Western foundations supporting social activities (including assisting vulnerable groups) become “undesirable organizations,” which does not correspond to even a broad interpretation of the definition of extremism.

# DISCRIMINATION IN CRIMEA

## RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AGAINST CRIMEAN TATARS IN CRIMEA<sup>21</sup>

The Russian Federation established control over the Autonomous Republic of Crimea in 2014 following a military intervention. The introduction of the Russian system of government and Russian laws has resulted in systematic violations of human rights, including racial discrimination against Crimean Tatars<sup>22</sup> and ethnic Ukrainians.<sup>23</sup> Racial discrimination against Crimean Tatars is expressed in the routine violation of civil and political rights, bans and restrictions on the operation of national institutions, discrimination in the areas of employment and education, and restrictions on the use of the Crimean Tatar language and freedom of religion. Moreover, official Russian rhetoric and propaganda has created animosity towards Crimean Tatars in society. Below is a description of the main trends in these areas.

### **Restrictions on the operating of national institutions and systematic violation of civil and political rights**

Russia's policy in Crimea has resulted in major restrictions of the right to self-determination of the Crimean Tatars, primarily through a ban and strict limitations on the operation of national institutions. On 29 September 2016, the RF Supreme Court banned the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar people after finding it an extremist organization. Twenty-three regional Mejlis working in Crimea as local government bodies and the Qurultay (the national congress of the Crimean Tatar people), which is made up of 250 deputies elected every five years, were also banned. Another national institution — the Spiritual Board of Crimean Muslims — fell under the full control of the de facto government.

National media outlets such as the TV stations ATR and Lyale, the QHA news agency, radio Meidan, and the news websites Qirim-Vilayeti.org and qirimtatar.org have stopped functioning because their applications for registration were rejected. Currently only about five periodicals in the Crimean Tatar language are being published; two of these are run by the de facto Foreign Relations Committee.<sup>24</sup> The

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<sup>21</sup> This chapter is prepared by CrimeaSOS, an Ukrainian NGO founded on February 27, 2014, the first day of occupation of Crimea, to provide timely and reliable information about the situation in Crimea. As the conflict and armed violence has escalated, the organization started social and legal assistance for victims of the military conflict and Human Rights violations. CrimeaSOS collects and disseminates information about the situation in Crimea, maintains connections between the peninsula with the mainland Ukraine, as well as works on consolidation of Ukrainian society through the protection of rights, freedoms and interests of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and others who were affected by armed the conflict in eastern Ukraine and Crimea.

<sup>22</sup> Crimean Tatars are an indigenous people of Ukraine who reside in Crimea. According to the 2001 Ukrainian census, 243,400 Crimean Tatars lived in Crimea; according to a census conducted by the occupying government in 2014, this figure stood at 277,300.

<sup>23</sup> According to the 2001 Ukrainian census, 494,200 Ukrainians lived in Crimea; according to a census conducted by the occupying government in 2014, this same figure stood at 260,000.

<sup>24</sup> "Regarding the press, I received a list. I can't recall exactly what the number was. Russia submitted a list of several dozen periodicals that are supposedly published in the Crimean Tatar language to the UN International Court and there were no problems. But it's a total lie. When they compiled this list, they worked from the fact that the founding documents of the media outlets indicate that they may be published in the Crimean Tatar language. But there's a documented part, a factual part. The magazine *Iyldyz*, the newspapers *Yany Dun'ya* and *Krym*, and the children's magazine *Armanchyk* are definitely published in the Crimean Tatar language. I think that's it. There are literally five publications in the Crimean Tatar language. They are facing real difficulties. *Yany Dun'ya* and *Iyldyz* were included in the so-called media holding company in the name of Gasprinsky, who as good as controls the Foreign Relations Committee, which is chaired by Zaur Smirnov. So what kind of talk of freedom can there be?" (N. — 9 May 2017); "There's real damage from the loss of media in the Crimean Tatar language. In 2010, when ATR and Lyale became popular, children started to recognize ATR, Meidan, children started watching" (A. — 30 April 2017).

de facto government regularly refuses to allow mass and public events of a socio-political and cultural nature in Crimea.<sup>25</sup> This has a negative effect not just on socio-political life, but also on the development of Crimean Tatar culture.<sup>26</sup> Crimean Tatars who participate in cultural events in mainland Ukraine face the risk of repressions against themselves and their families.<sup>27</sup> At the same time, the de facto government is trying to create the illusion that it is realizing the cultural rights of Crimean Tatars. For example, government agencies have organized a celebration for Khydyrlez for several years that state workers must participate in, even though Crimean Tatars do not attend this event.<sup>28</sup>

Discrimination against Crimean Tatars on the basis of ethnicity is built on grave systemic violations of civil and political rights by the de facto government in the form of enforced disappearances, criminal and administrative prosecutions, mass raids, searches, and interrogations. From June 2014 to the end of 2016, the majority of victims of enforced disappearances were Crimean Tatars. Of the 18 people who were kidnapped or disappeared in this period, 16 were Crimean Tatars. There is evidence indicating the involvement of RF state actors in 10 of these 16 cases, and no effective investigations have been conducted into any of these cases.<sup>29</sup> In the three years since the annexation, 36 of the 66 people of interest in politically motivated criminal cases in Crimea have been Crimean Tatars.<sup>30</sup> Administrative arrests, searches, and raids in densely-populated areas, mosques, and markets are also taking place on a mass scale. Over the past three years, the occupying government has performed at least 90 searches, and at least 500 people have been detained as part of administrative proceedings or for questioning. The victims of these human rights violations are not just the political leaders of the Crimean Tatars but also citizens who are directly involved in political or civic activities. Detentions and searches are conducted in areas densely populated by Crimean Tatars as special operations with a disproportionate application of force and special means, which points to the indiscriminate nature of repressions against any

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<sup>25</sup> On 16 May 2014, the self-proclaimed "Leader" of Crimea Sergey Aksenov banned mass events on the peninsula's territory until June 6 (including events on May 18 to commemorate the deportation of Crimean Tatars). Find more information here: [https://lb.ua/news/2014/05/16/266637\\_aksenov\\_pered\\_godovshchinoy\\_deportatsii.html](https://lb.ua/news/2014/05/16/266637_aksenov_pered_godovshchinoy_deportatsii.html). Events of mourning to commemorate the anniversary of the deportation were banned in 2015–2017. Find more information here: <https://ru.tsn.ua/video/video-novini/v-simferopole-zapretili-miting-pamyati-zhertv-deportacii-krymskih-tatar.html>, <https://15minut.org/news/159803-v-seti-poyavilis-kadry-traurnyh-akcij-v-bahchisaraye-fo-to-video>, <https://15minut.org/news/171684-v-sudake-zapretili-traurnyj-miting-v-den-pamyati-zhertv-genocida-krymskih-tatar>.

"They don't let us commemorate May 18. In 2016, they said there was a danger of terrorist threats in Simferopol. When they banned meetings in the center of the city, people started gathering in villages." (E. — 30 April 2017).

<sup>26</sup> The Krym ensemble was forced to appear at public events supporting Russia. The ensemble itself was merged with a Russian institution resembling a philharmonic orchestra, so the artistic director and repertoire changed. They used to be able to travel around villages collecting old songs to bring them back to life, but this is not possible anymore" (Kh. — 30 April 2017).

"Now everyone celebrates at home, behind closed doors. So this part of the culture of Crimea, and not just of the Crimean Tatar people, it has simply been wiped out. This has a huge impact on children. As a parent, I know I have to instill the culture in my children. How can I do this when I'm scared to talk about it? They take the culture to school and daycare. And then the parents are summoned and told: 'Your children talk a lot, don't discuss this' (Z. — 7 May 2017).

<sup>27</sup> "Many artists are scared to come perform at Ukrainian events, because then they will have problems in Crimea. They are also scared that their families will be pressured. There were plans for artists to come [to the festival], but many of them refused to come at the last moment" (Kh. — 30 April 2017).

<sup>28</sup> "No one has banned holding a competing Khydyrlez, but this is a closed event. There are people who attend the state celebration, but they are mainly forced. Many [Crimean Tatars] went there only until their managers saw them, and then they left. Workers from Crimean State Engineering Pedagogical University." Ensembles also have to "participate"; in 2016 ensemble members said: "we're being forced, we don't have a choice" (Kh. — 30 April 2017).

<sup>29</sup> Report on enforced disappearances, CrimeaSOS. Available here: <http://krymsos.com/en/reports/analitichni-zviti-po-krimu/nasilnitski-zniknennya-v-krimu-za-period-aneksiyi-rosiiskoyu-federatsiyeyu-20142016-rr/>

<sup>30</sup> Criminal cases in Crimea, CrimeaSOS. More information here: <http://krymsos.com/reports/analitichni-zviti-po-krimu/infografika-po-kriminalnim-spravam-v-okupovanomu-krimu/>



Crimean Tatar.<sup>31</sup> Like searches and mass detentions, criminal and administrative prosecutions are presented as the fight against extremism and terrorism and are frequently described in this light by the state-controlled media. Thus, the Russian government uses criminal and administrative prosecutions to label Crimean Tatars as a dangerous and aggressive group.

### **Barriers to studying and using the Crimean Tatar language**

There are extensive restrictions on the study of the Crimean Tatar language in the public education system. Pursuant to the so-called “Law on Education in the Republic of Crimea,” adopted on 17 June 2015, instruction in public schools shall be conducted in the Russian language.<sup>32</sup> Instruction in the native language in primary school (grades 1 to 9) is only possible upon the application of parents. According to information from the de facto government, 5,500 schoolchildren received instruction in the Crimean Tatar language in the 2013-2014 academic year, 4,835 in the 2014-2015 academic year, and 5,083 in the 2015-2016 academic year (2.76 percent of schoolchildren in Crimea).<sup>33</sup> At the same time, the census conducted by Russia shows that 29,140 children of school age in Crimea identify as Crimean Tatars.<sup>34</sup> School administrations regularly refuse to open classes with instruction in the Crimean Tatar language<sup>35</sup> and eliminate classes that were previously taught in the Crimean Tatar language.<sup>36</sup> In particular, the administrations of educational institutions create barriers to submitting applications for instruction in the Crimean Tatar language under various pretexts,<sup>37</sup> force parents to turn down instruction in the Crimean Tatar language,<sup>38</sup> or cut back on the hours for studying the Crimean Tatar language and

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<sup>31</sup> [In the spring of 2014] some cars, three Kamaz trucks, actually, drove into my native village. They were carrying special ops forces. These soldiers led people out of their homes, pushed them up against a wall, and put guns to their heads. They explained that this was for religious reasons, they were looking for literature. But many times they went to see people who had no connection whatsoever to religion, and regular people had to endure searches” (A. — 27 April 2017.)

“My neighbor in Feodosia was not interested in politics, he played football. He was taken to the FSB, where they wanted him to give testimony on the ‘February 26’ case. He isn’t religious, so we have no idea why he was taken. They asked for testimony against other people. Then they let him go and drove him to a forest. They promised to bring a lawyer, but they actually left him there alone. They openly threatened to search his parent’s house” (A. — 30 April 2017).

<sup>32</sup> The law “On Education in the Republic of Crimea,” part 1, article 11. Available here: <http://crimea.gov.ru/text-doc/ru/7/act/131z.pdf>

<sup>33</sup> Find more information about the data here: <http://qha.com.ua/ru/politika/krimskim-tataram-i-ukraintsam-vse-slojnee-sohranit-samobitnost/171970/>

<sup>34</sup> Find the results of the whole census here: [http://www.gks.ru/free\\_doc/new\\_site/population/demo/perepis\\_krim/tab-krim/pub-04-07.xlsx](http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/population/demo/perepis_krim/tab-krim/pub-04-07.xlsx)

<sup>35</sup> Find more information here : [http://ru.espreso.tv/news/2015/11/17/za\\_20\\_mesyacev\\_okkupacyy\\_kryma\\_vse\\_ukraynskye\\_shkoly\\_zakryly\\_chubarov](http://ru.espreso.tv/news/2015/11/17/za_20_mesyacev_okkupacyy_kryma_vse_ukraynskye_shkoly_zakryly_chubarov)

<sup>36</sup> “In Soviet District [Simferopol], one of the schools was Crimean Tatar. It remained Crimean Tartar after March 2014, but the content changed. Classes were once conducted in Crimean Tatar, but now everything is in Russian” (A. — 30 April 2017).

“The gymnasium (village of Tankovoye) was sponsored by the Turkish government, and half of the teachers there were Turkish. When Russia launched actions against Turkey, half of the teachers were fired and, possibly, deported. The school’s principal was a Crimean Tatar, and a great deal of pressure was put on the school” (E. — 1 May 2017).

<sup>37</sup> People wanted to open a Crimean Tatar class in School No. 9 [Simferopol], but they didn’t, even though the appropriate number of applications were received in the 2014-2015 academic year. This situation existed prior to March 2014, but now no one presses for it, since the result is predetermined. People have no hope” (E. — 30 April 2017).

<sup>38</sup> “Only two classes in the school follow the program. And that’s only if the principal approves. Otherwise, there’s no way. My brother is in a small class. Crimean Tatar is an elective. Otherwise, you have to pay the teachers’ salaries. The principal is against this” (A. — 27 April 2017). Find the whole article here: <https://ua.krymr.com/a/27220898.html>.

literature.<sup>39</sup> In 2015, the father of a student in Krasnoperekopsky District filed an application with a court in response to the refusal of a local school principal to open a Crimean Tatar class.<sup>40</sup> This trial lasted for several months, but the claimant was never able to ensure that his child would be able to study in his native language.<sup>41</sup>

There is also a shortage of instructional materials in the Crimean Tatar language, even at Crimean Tatar national schools.<sup>42</sup> Instruction in the Crimean Tatar language has also been cut significantly at universities.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, state authorities refuse to provide services in the Crimean Tatar language or to provide an interpreter. In particular, during trials courts have refused the right to conduct a trial in a native language and to provide an interpreter from the Crimean Tatar language.<sup>44</sup> Prisoners cannot correspond in Crimean Tatar, and they are subjected to punishment if they do so.<sup>45</sup> This attitude has also spread to the private sphere, as some employers ban Crimean Tatars from using the Crimean Tatar language at work.<sup>46</sup> At the interpersonal level, some people have noticed that they were treated with bias for using the Crimean Tatar language.

## **Freedom of religion and access to religious and culture sites**

One of the most acute manifestations of ethnic discrimination is discrimination against Crimean Tatars who practice Islam. There have been cases where observant Crimean Tatars were not hired because

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<sup>39</sup> "I was a student at the national Crimean Tatar school. After March 2014, it was renamed, and the number of hours of Crimean Tatar language was reduced" (R. — 30 April 2017).

"At Simferopol School No. 21, Crimean Tatar was reduced to an elective course, whereas previously Crimean Tatar had been a required class" (E. — 30 April 2017). Find the whole article here: <http://kerch.fm/2015/10/08/v-shkolah-kryma-net-potrebnosti-v-uvelichenii-urokov-krymsko-tatarskogo-yazyka-ministr.html>.

<sup>40</sup> Find more information here: [https://lb.ua/news/2016/10/17/347908\\_krimskie\\_tatari\\_rossiyskie.html](https://lb.ua/news/2016/10/17/347908_krimskie_tatari_rossiyskie.html)

<sup>41</sup> Find more information here: <https://15minut.org/news/149751-problemy-izucheniya-krymskotatarskogo-yazyka-v-krymu-doshli-do-suda-video>

<sup>42</sup> "Parents are saying that they wrote applications for creating a Crimean Tatar class in the summer of 2016 at the village school for Marina, but it was never started since there wasn't enough money: textbooks must be translated into Crimean Tatar, and there are not enough teachers" (A. — 2 May 2017). In Crimean Tatar School No. 42 Eshref Shemi-zade in Simferopol, for the 2015—2016 academic year seven books were issued for the eighth grade, two of which were for teachers and five of which were for 28 students. Find more information here: <https://ru.krymr.com/a/27222030.html>

<sup>43</sup> "Over 300 hours were removed from the program. Now, Crimean Tatar is only taught in the Philology Department, while specializations only offer one course and a half course" (A. — 27 April 2017).

<sup>44</sup> "It was during my appeal, after I was released from five days in prison. February 2017. We were taken for five days, and I was released. An appeal was scheduled, I went to it. I wanted to speak Crimean Tatar. The judge asked if there was a motion about this. I immediately asked for an interpreter. She didn't even want to hear me out. She said that this was not an explanation and that there would be no interpreter" (O. — 4 May 2017).

"After I was detained at my second trial (I had two trials), I was sitting with my lawyers, my parents with my wife. They were speaking the Crimean Tatar language. The bailiff came in and started explaining the rules, but only in Russian. My lawyer said: 'We live in a country with three official languages (Crimean Tatar, Russian, and Ukrainian).' He responded: 'That was in Crimea, but now we live in the Russian Federation, so we should only speak Russian'" (St. — 5 May 2017).

<sup>45</sup> On 23 March 2017, Teimur Abdullaev, a person of interest in the Simferopol case of Hizb ut-Tahrir, was placed in solitary confinement for writing a letter in the Crimean Tatar language. More information from defense attorney here: <http://krymsos.com/ru/news/teimura-abdullayeva-z-simferopolskoyi--spravi-khizb-uttakhrir--vidpravili-v-kartser/>.

<sup>46</sup> A worker at a Simferopol hairdresser was fired for speaking the Crimean Tatar language: <https://15minut.org/news/135618-razgovarivaj-zdes-na-russkom-yazyke-video>. "In May 2014, I was fired because I listed my status on the work network as 'milet vaten khyrym' (people, homeland, Crimea) in the Crimean Tatar language. I wrote it in the morning, and the director summoned me by lunchtime. He said: 'Why are you writing in the Crimean Tatar language? Why don't you write in Russian? I don't understand anything. After all, we all speak Russian here.' The director didn't even ask what it meant. A couple of hours later, my aunt came to me. Her director had summoned her and told her that I should look for another job. Several Crimean Tatars worked in our organization, but one of the managers was very strict. People were scared to speak the Crimean Tatar language in front of her. She could report them, and they could be fired." (E. — 1 May 2017).

of wearing a hijab or following other requirements of Islam.<sup>47</sup> Crimean Tatars who practice religious observances face bias both at work and in their daily interactions.<sup>48</sup> At educational institutions, there have been numerous instances when women face degrading treatment for wearing a hijab. In a number of cases, parents are forced to transfer their children to a different school.<sup>49</sup> More and more schools are instituting bans on performing Nawaz, and many even have an unwritten rule that children cannot have religious literature at school.<sup>50</sup> Along with these repressions at schools themselves, there have also been instances of pressure at madrassahs and cultural centers.<sup>51</sup> For example, in the winter of 2016 two unplanned searches were conducted of the children's Crimean Tatar center Elif in Dzhankoy, and the center's director and several caregivers were taken into the prosecutor's office for a "conversation."<sup>52</sup> This all occurred right in front of small children.

Crimean Tatars also face restrictions on access to religious sites and the problem of freely performing religious ceremonies. For example, since 2014, the occupying government has installed video cameras in mosques, tracked people who attend mosques,<sup>53</sup> and conducted regular searches by entering mosques,

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<sup>47</sup> According to media reports, in 2015 an employer prohibited Rustem Seitov, a Crimean Tatar and Muslim, from performing his daily prayers at work. The "human rights ombudsman" in Crimea refused to take measures on his behalf.

<sup>48</sup> "I worked with vacationers from Russia. The first thing I faced was 'Oy, a headscarf,' 'Oy, a hijab,' they recoiled from me. One guest came and said: 'Why didn't you tell us you were a Muslim when we spoke. You scared my child.' Then they apologize: 'We just have a stereotype that Muslim women are oppressed, dangerous'" (Z. — 7 May 2017).

"I'm the chief accountant. Russian and Ukrainians both look surprised when you use the language of the law. It turns out a Muslim woman can be literate, can have a conversation." (A. — 7 May 2017).

"When we opened the children's center, we leased a space in a multistory building, there were lots of children there. While the space was being renovated, people kept asking the workers if a daycare center would be there. They thought it was great that there would be something for children. During registration, when people came and saw covered women, they lost interest." (L. — 7 May 2017).

<sup>49</sup> "Our principal doesn't like Muslims. My children wear headscarves at school, and she always says something about that. When my first daughter went there, I had to withdraw her. I put her in distance learning classes in Simferopol, because it was impossible for her here. We have to perform Namaz, but they don't even give you five minutes to do this in a closet. And it's always like this. This is Golubinovskaya Grammar School" (B. — 5 May 2017). "My daughter has been wearing a headscarf since she was six. The problems started in the summer of 2014. The principal called home and warned that 'starting September 1, we want to see children in line without religious clothing. There is an order from the Ministry of Education about school uniforms that says that a school uniform must be secular.' The principal stopped girls and put emotional pressure on them: 'What do you not understand? I told you not to come in a headscarf.' She even called on 31 August 2015: 'I hope that you will dress normally this year.' My daughter will leave after 9th grade and start homeschooling. That's how it is in all the schools." (A. — 7 May 2017).

"I don't have daughters, only sons. Our Russian teacher, a Soviet woman, warned me right away that it would be harder for people in headscarves with the arrival of Russia, that they will be restricted." (Z. — 7 May 2017).

<sup>50</sup> "When my son took a Koran the school [in the fall of 2015], the teacher took me aside and told me: 'Don't create more problems for yourself or for us. It's better to play it safe and take the Koran back home' (Z — 7 May 2017).

<sup>51</sup> On 24 June 2014, an Islamic school (masdrassah) in Kolchugino was searched. More information here: <https://15minut.org/news/40608-v-krymu-ljudi-v-maskah-obyskali-medrese-foto-2014-06-24-12-40-51>. On 27 August 2014, a search was conducted of a madrassah in Dzhankoy. By November 2014, the occupying government had searched eight of 10 Tatar religious schools.

<sup>52</sup> "When the colonel came, he initially said that this was an unplanned search at the request of citizens, and later, in official correspondence, that this was a regular inspection. We were not notified of planned checks. One of the caregivers was asked questions of a religious nature. Children were present during the search. Many were frightened and hid under the table. One child still hides behind my skirt when a stranger comes to the Center and stays there until that person leaves. The parents even wrote to the prosecutor for a reaction to the fact that the search was conducted in front of children. The prosecutor's office never responded. We connect this check with the fact that we are no longer considered a regular institution. We communicate in two languages — Russian and Crimean Tatar — and half of our staff members wear religious attire. We have a register of checks. I asked them to make a note so that all the structuers would remove us from their lists. They didn't. The prosecutor's office also ignored this. They returned the books six months later. They didn't find any signs of extremism" (L. — 7 May 2017). More information here: <https://ru.krymr.com/a/news/27557397.html>

<sup>53</sup> "The FSB comes and stands by the Seitsetar Mosque in Simferopol for Friday prayers. They count how many people come in. When I went there for New Year's [2016—2017], I saw these people standing there and counting. The locals said this happens a lot." (Z. — 30 April 2017).

interrupting prayers, and detaining many of the worshippers.<sup>54</sup> The de facto government also applies pressure in an attempt to eliminate the practice of *surbets* (discussions of pressing everyday, political and other problems within the Muslim community).<sup>55</sup> Local independent imams are being squeezed out and replaced with imams controlled by the de facto government, which put religious practices under the government's control.<sup>56</sup> The Spiritual Board of Muslims in Crimea and Sevastopol is performing an increasingly controlling function over Muslims in Crimea. For example, it was announced in June 2016 that the Spiritual Board is the only organization that can approve and issue all printed matter of an Islamic nature or organize Hajj trips. Local authorities have also attempted to ban traditional religious practices like Adhan (call to prayer) or the celebration of religious holidays.<sup>57</sup> Requests to hold

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<sup>54</sup> On 17 September 2014, the occupying government raided a mosque and a school in the neighborhood of Borchokrak (Fontany) in Simferopol. On 22 September 2014, it raided the Derekoy mosque in Yalta with the goal of finding extremist materials. On January 28, 2016, armed people surrounded a mosque in Simferopol. More information here: <https://15minut.org/news/155759-v-simferopole-vooruzhennye-lyudi-otsepili-mechet>. On 14 August 2016, the Ay-Vasil' mosque in Yalta was searched. More information here <http://krymsos.com/news/55cdb6c4cd3c8/>. After prayers on 6 May 2016, armed people drove 100 Muslims away from the mosque in an unknown direction. More information here: <http://krymsos.com/news/572c7b7dd07e0/>. On 13 May 2016, the mosque in the village of Vishennoe in Belogorsky District was searched. More information here: <http://qha.com.ua/ru/politika/v-mecheti-krimskogo-sela-provoditsya-obisk/159476/>. On 6 September 2016, law enforcement officers conducted a search of a mosque in Simferopol. More information here: <http://avdet.org/ru/2016/09/06/v-simferopolskoj-mecheti-siloviki-nashli-zapreshhennuyu-religioznuyu-literaturu-vozhle-tualeta/>

<sup>55</sup> Pressure on worshippers at a mosque in the 6th microdistrict of Bakhchisarai. "There was a story about the mosque. All these cases are connected with the latest story, which occurred this week in the mosque in the 6th microdistrict of Bakhchisarai. They tore up three Korans in broad daylight and decided to start a fire right in the middle of the mosque. But I think it's a provocation to install video surveillance, listening devices, and so forth in a mosque. Just so that people don't discuss problems in a mosque, so that they don't get together too much. We hold *surbets* there, we gather and discuss all sorts of problems, everyday problems, political problems. And the muftiate has personally sent us texts to stop this. There have been three attempts at this" (St. — 5 May 2017).

<sup>56</sup> "Then one time I came, this was in 2015. Here we have a video camera above where the imam sits. This isn't everywhere, but other mosques do have it too. And they recorded us about three times. The FSB reviews the tapes and determines which mosques practice traditional Islam and which ones practice non-traditional Islam. They sniffed them all out and then went around to their houses. They wrote up reports on all of them to the effect that they do not practice traditional Islam, that they deviate from this. They recorded them all as non-traditional. That's the FSB that came in 2015. Then this cell disappeared, but it reappeared recently, about three months ago" (Dt. — 8 May 2017). "Belaya skala, the imam in the mosque calls someone, they say he called supervisors at the security agencies and told them how many people were at prayers" (E. — 30 April 2017). The de facto government of Crimea refused to issue residence permits to all 23 Turkish imams working with the Tatar Muslim community.

A case of unfounded administrative prosecution of an imam was recorded in Bogatyr in 2014. Then there was the first time, they prosecuted the imam of the Bogatyrsky mosque. Two young people came and presented themselves as the FSB, a man and a woman. This was in the fall of 2014. And they found two slim volumes with Russian stamps (from Dagestan). These books were banned on their list. And then they started in on our imam. And he was issued a 1,000 ruble fine in Bakhchysarai Court. He filed an appeal, after all, he wasn't guilty. The Simferopol Court cancelled the fine, but the stigma remained. And in the village people were so scared that they started saying that the imam should have been more vigilant, that he should have removed those books from the mosque" (Sm. — 5 May 2017). "They came to the village [in the summer of 2016] and tried to change the imam. Then people came with machine guns, they had some necessary documents confirming the imam's replacement; the new imam was a Crimean Tatar, but one put in place by the Russian government" (E. — 30 April 2017).

<sup>57</sup> In April 2017, the chair of the village council in Shchebetovka tried to ban the call to prayer and the reading of Namaz at the local mosque: "The chair said that she had received a complaint from residents that the morning prayers annoyed them, that they felt nervous and ill. She said, I propose that we buy you speakers and you can read over the speakers in dense communities. They have a mosque in the center. You need to take a microphone out to the country and read the prayers in someone's yard, but not in the mosque. That's how she put it. She's the sister or aunt of Aksekov. She despises all Tatars. This was on April 25 of this year" (R. — 3 May 2017).

In July 2015, social media users were informed that Crimean Tatar Muslims in Bakhchysarai were prohibited from gathering to celebrate Eid al-Fitr in July to prevent large groups from gathering. "We were banned from gathering because there could supposedly be a terrorist attack. But our religion has two main holidays: Eid al-Adha and Eid al-Fitr. Parents arranged a celebration for children, we wanted them to have fun, to develop our culture (dances, fighting), to talk about history, so that children know the history of our nation, but they have started to ban this" (A. — 30 April 2017). "[After March 2014], the celebration after the fast was no longer permitted. We used to gather in the park of Tavrichesky Univeristy [Simferopol]. We slaughtered sheep, prepared a lot of food. Several thousand people used to gather, they came from other cities and villages. Now, we can't do this, we can only do it at home. It sounds like we're not allowed to make shashlik in the park, my mother said that" (M. — 1 May 2017).



burials have been rejected,<sup>58</sup> and Muslim graves and other cultural and religious heritage sites have been defiled as local authorities fail to take action.<sup>59</sup> Many Crimean Tatars have been forced to stop displaying their religion openly due to repressions connected with religious persuasion,<sup>60</sup> while others, including religious leaders who are not loyal to the Russians, decided to leave Crimea.<sup>61</sup>

### **State propaganda and incitement of ethnic strife**

State policy regarding Crimean Tatars promotes everyday discrimination and a growth in ethnic enmity. Victims of violations have reported that there were individual instances of discrimination prior to 2014, when Ukraine controlled the peninsula, but it was not systemic in nature. The state policy of Ukrainian authorities was aimed at keeping national and ethnic enmity in check and regulating conflicts arising from this enmity. Specifically, public conversations were held about the unacceptability of intolerance and hate speech, local authorities got involved in solving everyday ethnic conflicts, and educational events were held on a regular basis.<sup>62</sup> Since 2014, when the RF established de facto control over Crimea, Russian politicians and media outlets have transmitted strong public messages indicating that most Crimean Tatars are allegedly terrorists, extremists, and Islamists.<sup>63</sup> This information is usually reinforced by false pieces on TV about the detention of alleged terrorist cells of Crimean Tatars. These pieces show a lot of military weapons and use linguistic devices to make generalizations and show that all Crimean Tatars are criminals.<sup>64</sup>

Additionally, there is ongoing speculation about historical myths about the Crimean Tatars as “collaborators and traitors of the Soviet Union” during WWII in the media and in public discourse. The main themes that are spread throughout Crimean society are: “Crimean Tatars are traitors,” “Crimean Tatars are not an independent people,” “Crimean Tatars must be deported again,” “Crimean Tatars are dishonorable, they must be avoided, and so forth.” Thus, any Crimean Tatar could become the victim of discriminatory rhetoric and practices. According to the testimony of victims of everyday

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<sup>58</sup> On 5 May 2015, the Muslim community in Sary Krym was deprived of its ability to hold burial services on a plot allocated to the new cemetery.

<sup>59</sup> “This year there was a local resident here who put up a Christmas tree even though he knew very well that there was a [Crimean Tatar] cemetery there. They live here, but they’re from Sevastopol. His wife told him there were graves here, that it was a cemetery. He knew this. He set up the Christmas tree on the edge, not in the middle” (Sm. — 5 May 2017). More information here: <http://informator.media/archives/137649> <https://15minut.org/news/170975-v-okkupirovannom-krymu-vandaly-oskvernili-mogily-na-krymskotatarskom-kladbische>; <http://investigator.org.ua/news-2/186298/>; <http://investigator.org.ua/news/129638/> <http://investigator.org.ua/news/141671/>

<sup>60</sup> “Our neighbor would go down our street handing out religious newspapers; he spoke with my father about religion, but then [after the spring of 2014] he stopped coming, his beard disappeared, he stopped talking to my father about religion, he didn’t bring around religious literature” (A. — 27 April 2017). “You’re scared to say anything on the phone, especially in a headscarf, and not just on the topic of religion” (Z. — 7 July 2017).

<sup>61</sup> Many people decided on their own to move to Kiev, Lvov, Turkey, they decided it was dangerous to remain in Crimea” (U. — 30 April 2017). According to data from CrimeaSOS received from Ukraine’s Ministry of Social Policy, almost 25,000 people from Crimea are registered as internally displaced persons.

<sup>62</sup> “In reality, these views existed here before 2014, we encountered them all the time and recorded them, spoke about school textbooks. If we’re talking about at a higher level and everyday instances. All of this was here. But people were more restrained. Society itself didn’t welcome this. There was constant monitoring, constant talk about hate speech in the press, that it wasn’t acceptable, that we had to be tolerant. A great many training sessions, seminars, and studies on tolerance were conducted in Crimea” (N. — 9 May 2017).

<sup>63</sup> “Anti-terrorism teachings and events — this is the Russian trend. Unfortunately, society has formed the persistent stereotype that a terrorist is equal to a Muslim. It’s a woman in a headscarf or a man with a beard” (L. — 7 May 2017).

<sup>64</sup> “When I was arrested, I was sitting at work. Customers started saying, ‘It turns out he’s a terrorist’ and so forth. Like, ‘how can you hold onto him.’ These were my customers that I worked with for a year. They ate at my house. There was never anything like this prior to my arrest and the search. The Russian television stations (Russia2, NTV) reported that a terrorist cell had been neutralized in Bakhchysarai, that I was part of the banned Hizb ut-Tahrir party” (Sd. — 5 May 2017).



discrimination, their close friends, neighbors,<sup>65</sup> colleagues, and clients started to display discriminatory treatment against them with the annexation in 2014. Moreover, these victims have noted that they had never previously experienced similar situations with these people. Some people show their negative attitudes towards Crimean Tatars when performing their official duties at government agencies.<sup>66</sup> Discrimination has been manifested in different forms, including slurs and offensive actions,<sup>67</sup> refusals to buy/sell goods to/from Crimean Tatars,<sup>68</sup> informing, threats, marking of Crimean Tatar homes,<sup>69</sup> and so forth. It should also be noted that instances have been recorded when young children made similar statements, which proves that this position is articulated in families and is most likely imposed on children.<sup>70</sup> All the victims connect this upsurge in everyday discrimination with aggressive Russian propaganda.<sup>71</sup> There have been cases where schoolchildren, students, and teachers show bias against national minorities.<sup>72</sup> Cases have been recorded where teachers pronounced slurs against Crimean

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<sup>65</sup> "Before March 14, my Russian neighbors talked with me. After, though, they put up a fence and, without a dispute or anything, stopped talking to me. It was clear that they had gone to the referendum, while, Crimean Tatars were obviously for Ukraine" (A. — 30 April 2017).

"Before you could go out into the courtyard, see a [non-Crimean Tatar] neighbor and chat with them, but now there's no conversation, only talk about daily matters — move this rock out of our way and then go about your business" (E. — 30 April 2017).

<sup>66</sup> "The village is 90 percent Crimean Tatar, ambulances reach us very rarely when it is a case of life or death. In August 2015, one person got an electric shock. The ambulance took three hours and 23 minutes to get here, and it wasn't in time. But the hospital is only a 15-minute drive from here. I asked people I know who work there why this happened. They said that there were six free ambulances in the parking lot at that time. I've noticed that I always spend a long time waiting in the hospital. They take my card, which gives my first name and last name, and I can wait two to three hours. One day [in August 2014] I went to the district polyclinic with a serious injury, I had a broken ankle. The nurse didn't like me because of my nationality even when we were still under Ukraine. When I finally got an appointment, I was told that it was a fracture, but it was a dislocation. They didn't provide high-quality service. The nurse even said several times so that everyone could hear 'you need to leave here, you should be deported.' In 2009–2010, this attitude was hidden, they didn't always show it, but now their hands have been untied" (A. — 27 April 2017).

"Two people I knew were taken to the military recruitment office in 2015; they came back two months later in zinc coffins. They were 18, 19. One person from the unit let it slip that they were very depressed. They both hanged themselves, they were brought to that. They were constantly beaten because of their nationality, they were punched in the kidneys, people tried to kill them emotionally. The commanders had no reaction. A guy from their unit let this slip when he was intoxicated. The leaders concealed this. They were threatened with deportation" (A. — 27 April 2017).

<sup>67</sup> "Most dollar vans here are driven by Crimean Tatars. We've started to hear phrases like 'the Crimean Tatars have overrun us here' in these vans (Sd. — 5 May 2017).

<sup>68</sup> "All the ads are peppered with the word 'Slav.' 'Respectable family of Slavs renting housing,' 'hiring Slavs.' The Tatars aren't sitting on their hands either. Our people don't really want them, they leave you high and dry. They live there for three months and leave and that's it. They leave at the end of the year, and you don't know who to complain to, where to find them, who actually rented from you. This scam is well developed with them" (Dt. — 8 May 2017).

<sup>69</sup> "The place that we later leased on Inkerman, they probably thought that Crimean Tatars were leasing it. They demolished everything (at that time it was abandoned). I turned onto Inkerman, 50 meters and our café, and no homes in the surroundings. They demolished everything, they wrote, 'get the hell out of here, Crimean Tatars' (on our café). They drew crosses on some people's gates." (St. - May 5 2017).

<sup>70</sup> "I came in and there was a fight going on in my class. All the Crimean Tatars came and said: 'Can you believe it, Nastya is walking around and saying 'all you Tatars, leave here,' she's walking around, calling us names, 'traitors, my father said, my grandmother said.' Tanechka, who makes out with me, said: 'My grandmother said you're traitors.' That was in 6th grade. Tanya and Nastya said such things to their classmates. To me this means that these things were said at home, that this topic was discussed at home" (Lm. — 5 March 2017).

<sup>71</sup> "We used to be able to react to all this in the form of meetings, pickets, we held different events, we reacted. Now we have been deprived of this ability, so many people have really let their hair down in terms of discrimination, starting at the everyday level. Various conflicts even arise with my neighbors every day. In terms of 'you came here, now leave, you're no one here'" (N. — 9 May 2017).

<sup>72</sup> My neighbor was summoned to the university's legal committee and then to the FSB, Center E [counterterrorism] for comments in a university group's social media account. People in this group wrote offensive things about Crimean Tatars [late 2015 to early 2016]. He stood up for them, and the person who said the offensive thing was not held responsible. After this, he was expelled, and he left Crimea on 11 May 2016" (E. — 30 April 2017).

Tatars that repeat the themes of Russian propaganda word for word.<sup>73</sup> In 2015, announcements offensive to Crimean Tatars were posted on information boards at some Crimean schools.<sup>74</sup> At some educational institutions, staff members from Russian special services have held “preventative” discussions about extremism in Crimean Tatar classes, but not in Russian ones.<sup>75</sup> There have also been cases where people were fired or not hired<sup>76</sup> on the basis of ethnicity.

Various pretexts are being used to squeeze Crimean Tatars out of spheres of services mainly offered to Crimean Tatars and replace them with workers from Russia.<sup>77</sup> In these cases, Russians generally have significantly higher salaries than Crimean Tatars. This kind of masked discrimination is also manifested in the creation of obstacles for selling food products produced by Crimean Tatar farms. For example, agricultural oversight agencies and services have banned the sale of products on contrived grounds.<sup>78</sup>

Many Crimean Tatars have reported encountering bias when crossing the administrative border between mainland Ukraine and Crimea.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> “In January 2017, the topic in a 6th grade geography class at a school in Golubinsky was on supporting the deportation of Crimean Tatars. The teacher dictated that Crimean Tatars were traitors. They had to write a summary of the dictation. When they were writing this, one of the students stood and said: ‘That’s not true.’ This went all the way up to the principal, who closed down the topic nicely. The teacher wasn’t even fired” (B. — 5 May 2017). “After school, a child, an 8th grader, went outside and put her book bag on a bench. That year a military instructor started working at the school as a teacher. He was well-meaning, a veteran of Afghanistan. He waited until the children were approaching and said: ‘Children, don’t come near this bag. It might explode.’ And the girl (Medine) was covered, she said: ‘That’s my bag. Why should it explode?’ He said: ‘It won’t explode with you, but it might with me’” (B. - 5 May 2017).

<sup>74</sup> “As early as 2015, there was an announcement: ‘Crimean Tatar extremists on the border with Ukraine. You are under threat of danger.’ That was on our bulletin board. At the second school, which had few Crimean Tatars, the staff gathered and this was read this out loud, announced. The principal at our school didn’t check anything, she just hung up this announcement” (Lm. — 3 May 2017).

<sup>75</sup> One of these cases occurred on 27 May 2016 at School No. 15 in the village of Blizhneye (Feodosia). More information here: <https://ru.krymr.com/a/news/27761578.html>.

<sup>76</sup> “On the day before that [15 April 2014], I went [to apply for the position of merchandiser at a company]. They told me that there were no vacancies. And this Ukrainian guy I know went there the next day and was told that he should come the next day.” (A. — 27 April 2017).

“A woman was looking for a new job as a pharmacist in Simferopol [in early 2017]. One of the employers said that she would be a good fit, but only if she had a different name. She ended up finding a job at a pharmacy, but it was run by Crimean Tatars” (A. — 30 April 2017).

<sup>77</sup> “My father wasn’t hired for a doctor’s position. They hired an intern, even though my father has 25 years of experience. They hired a young person from Krasnodar Krai” (E. — 30 April 2017).

<sup>78</sup> “Village of Pyatikhatka, Krasnogvardeisky District. Residents of this village specialize in growing cabbage, squash, tomatoes, cucumbers. Five to eight years ago, they brought all of this to the wholesale market. Then entire trucks started to go to their village. About 400 Crimean Tatar families live there. This year they came and took some squash from some families, apparently to test it. The agricultural oversight agency. They supposedly found that the level of something was higher than it should have been. That’s it. Nothing can be sold from the entire village. Now they’re trying to get themselves out of this situation somehow. Now they’re not allowed to sell at the market anymore. They bring everything in from Krasnodar, from somewhere else. As if a squash from Krasnodar will have the acceptable norm, even after it travels this distance” (Sh. — 8 May 2017).

<sup>79</sup> “I crossed the border with my friend [August 2015]. They started asking questions, where are our Russian passports, apparently because we are Crimean Tatars, because the people who crossed in front of us were from Kiev and had Ukrainian passports. They weren’t stopped, but we’re both Crimean Tatars. It was ‘follow us’ right away. They took our passports and led us to the room where people usually give bribes. They asked where I was from, where I was going, what I thought of the Donetsk People’s Republic. They even dug down to my Polish visa. The FSB said: ‘Be careful, you have parents here [in Crimea]’” (E. — 30 April 2017).

## DISCRIMINATION AGAINST UKRAINIANS

The events of early 2014 — the annexation of Crimea and the start of the war in Eastern Ukraine— have led to a marked deterioration in the situation of Ukrainians who are now under the de facto control of Russia. This has affected Ukrainians who have lived in Russia for a long time, more recent arrivals who traveled to Russia as migrant workers or fled the war-torn eastern regions of Donbass for safety, and, of course, people who have remained in occupied Crimea.

In Russia, it has even become dangerous for ethnic Ukrainians to use their native language.<sup>80</sup> A large role in the escalation of this situation has been played by the Russian government's position as conveyed in the media.<sup>81</sup> The consequences of inciting hatred of Ukrainians have been reflected in daily life<sup>82</sup> (including on social media<sup>83</sup> and at work<sup>84</sup>) and in the attitudes of state institutions.

For example, in November 2015, 16-year-old Ukrainian Vitaly Pop died at the Belorechensky juvenile detention facility in Krasnodar Krai from numerous injuries he suffered at the hands of guards at the facility. This boy was called names like "Banderite" and "khokhol." He was also beaten more than the others (the entire group of adolescents was subjected to beatings when it arrived at the colony) until he died from his injuries.<sup>85</sup>

People engaged in promoting Ukrainian culture in Russia have also experienced repressions.<sup>86</sup> For example, after books by Dmytro Korchinsky, who was declared an extremist by Russia, were found during a search of the Library of Ukrainian Literature in Moscow on 28 October 2015, a criminal charge was lodged against the library's director Natalya Sharina for distributing extremist material and supporting "anti-Russian propaganda" using other printed materials.<sup>87</sup> Sharina has been under house arrest since October 2015. She received a five-year suspended sentence in June 2017,

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<sup>80</sup> "It would be a brave act to speak Ukrainian." (T. — 17 May 2017).

<sup>81</sup> "After the spring of 2014, Ukrainians started to be treated worse in Russia because this trend is supported by the state. One of the main problems is how the news about Ukrainians is presented in the media, which is inciting hatred. On the Rossiya 24 news channel, I saw the phrase 'Ukraine is not a state' among quotations from famous people. In V. Solovov's show on the state channel Rossiya, the anchor frequently parodies the Ukrainian language and ridicules the accent and national symbols. I think this is much more frightening than statements made by individual people in everyday life" (T. — 17 May 2017).

<sup>82</sup> "They were making comments about a name, mocking it. Once they wrote on Facebook that the name Tetyana does not exist, that it should be written Tatyana, that it's a Russian name, and the Ukrainians made up different names because they hate Russia." (T. — 29 April 2017).

<sup>83</sup> "The account that was trolling me was new and didn't list any information. People are paid to promote anti-Ukraine sentiments, that's part of the state policy. Then people start repeating what they've been told, so the situation deteriorates" (T. — 17 May 2017).

<sup>84</sup> "I returned to Ukraine because of problems I had from being Ukrainian. I would have stayed to work in Moscow if it weren't for this treatment and the conflict between the countries. When I lived in Moscow, people would ask me 'Why did you come here to earn money if you don't support Russia's policies?' I really hope I don't end up having to go back" (T. — 17 May 2017).

"I had a daily planner from the old [Ukrainian] office with a map of the country. When I worked in Moscow, one of my colleagues said 'you have an old map' when he saw it. Lots of workers thought that was a funny joke. Another time one of my colleagues said: 'We're still going to take Kherson and Nikolayev from you.'" (T. — 17 May 2017).

<sup>85</sup> Novaya gazeta online article from 3 December 2015 "Akh ty, banderovets! Kak ubivali podrostka v Belorechenskoj kolonii." Available here: <https://www.novayagazeta.ru/articles/2015/12/03/66640-171-ah-ty-banderovets-187>

<sup>86</sup> On 28 October 2015, the same day the library was searched, Valery Semenenko, the representative of the Ukrainian World Conference and co-chair of the Association of Ukrainians of Russia was also subjected to a similar investigative action. In his case, however, this undertaking ended with a conversation at the prosecutor's office. Article of the Gordon media outlet of 28 October 2015 "Propavshii v Moskve chlen Vsemirnogo kongressa ukrainsev na svobode." Available here: <http://gordonua.com/news/localnews/propavshiy-v-moskve-chlen-vsemirnogo-kongressa-ukraincev-na-svobode-104041.html>

<sup>87</sup> Radio svoboda online articles of 23 March 2017 "ESPCh zaregistroval zhalobu bibliotekaria Natal'i Sharinoi" <https://www.svoboda.org/a/28386603.html> and of 6 October 2016 "Utverzhdeno obvinenie direktoru Biblioteki ukrainskoi literatury". Available here: <https://www.svoboda.org/a/28035784.html>

after the library was closed in January 2017.<sup>88</sup> Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Culture have defended Sharina and condemned Russia's policy of labelling everything Ukrainian as "extremism." Human rights defenders have declared her a political prisoner.<sup>89</sup>

Groups arriving in Russia from Ukraine have found themselves in difficult situations. For example, Roma migrants who left the eastern regions of Ukraine because of the start of the military conflict have faced numerous difficulties trying to obtain documents that would legalize their stay in Russia, and, in most cases, have been unable to obtain them. As a result, families with many children have been left without benefits or assistance, disabled people without their required medications, and children without the chance to get an education, while adults have trouble finding seasonal work. Roma families have been forced to find funds to subsist on without any housing, which has compounded the marked negative attitudes that local residents and representatives of the government and state institutions have towards them.<sup>90</sup>

Migrant workers who were in Russia at the start of the military conflict have faced prosecution for violating migration rules, actual imprisonment in temporary Foreign National Detention Centers (FNDC), and threats of expulsion back to the war zone, even though the government has promised to offer asylum to all Ukrainian citizens requiring it.<sup>91</sup>

In today's Russia, the persecution of Ukrainians is connected with citizenship and ancestry and with attempts by some Ukrainians to assert their native culture and pro-Ukrainian positions. For example, in the spring of 2015, Natalya Romanenko, an ethnic Ukrainian who was born and raised in Siberia and who is the artistic director of a Ukrainian choir in the Far East's Khabarovsk, was subjected to pressure by the Russian government and the Russian public<sup>92</sup> in connection with her trip to Kiev, her expression of sympathy for the people killed on Maidan Square, and her critical attitude towards information published in the media about the situation in Ukraine. Under threat from the KGB, Romanenko was forced to record a video stating that radical fascist groups were seizing power on Maidan Square.<sup>93</sup> Natalya continued to be humiliated after this: government agencies subjected her to a check for professional ineptitude as a soloist, the Ukrainian choir that she led was shut down, and people on the street splashed her with brilliant green and shouted: "That's for Novorossiia, Banderite."<sup>94</sup> Two criminal cases were opened against her. One of these

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<sup>88</sup> Ukrinform online article of 11 January 2017 "Novye khozyaeva' uzhe delyat kabinety Biblioteki ukrainskoi literatury v Moskve.". Available here: <https://www.ukrinform.ru/rubric-world/2154626-novye-hozaeva-uzedelat-kabinety-biblioteki-ukrainskoj-literatury-v-moskve.html>.

In spite of this, in December 2015 head of Moscow's Culture Department A. Kibovsky denied that personnel were being fired and that the library would be closed and added that this was not just a place to check out books, but also a cultural center. Article from the Gordon media outlet of 23 December 2015 "Glava departamenta kul'tury Moskvyy: Biblioteky ukrainskoi literatury zakryvat' ne budut." Available here: <http://gordonua.com/news/worldnews/glava-departamenta-kul'tury-moskvyy-biblioteku-ukrainskoy-literatury-zakryvat-ne-budut-112208.html>

<sup>89</sup> Article of the Gordon media outlet of 30 October 2015 "Obvinennaya v ekstremizme direktor ukrainskoi biblioteki v Moskve ne priznala svoey viny v sude." Available here: <http://gordonua.com/news/worldnews/obvinennaya-v-ekstremizme-direktor-ukrainskoy-biblioteki-v-moskve-ne-priznala-svoey-viny-v-sude-104387.html>

<sup>90</sup> ADC "Memorial" report Roma and War. Available here: [https://adcmemorial.org/wp-content/uploads/ROMA-REFUGEES\\_RUS\\_FOR-PUBLICATIONwww.pdf](https://adcmemorial.org/wp-content/uploads/ROMA-REFUGEES_RUS_FOR-PUBLICATIONwww.pdf)

<sup>91</sup> More information here: <https://adcmemorial.org/www/12259.html?lang=en>, <https://adcmemorial.org/www/12696.html?lang=en>

<sup>92</sup> Upon her arrival in Khabarovsk, Romanenko was fired: first from the House of Culture and, later, from the Ministry of Internal Affairs "for violating bans and restrictions connected with performing military service, for work with a Ukrainian choir"; the choir she led was excluded from participating in events. "The Committee's decision found that her work with the choir was not creative in nature, but organizational-managerial instead." Radio Svoboda online article of 24 March 2015 "Eto tebe za Novorossiia, banderovka!" <http://www.svoboda.org/content/article/26915369.html>

<sup>93</sup> More information here: <http://youtu.be/RspDBfxzYug>

<sup>94</sup> Radio Svoboda online article of 24 March 2015 "Eto tebe za Novorossiia, banderovka!". Available here: <http://www.svoboda.org/content/article/26915369.html>



cases was closed, but the investigation continues in the second case.<sup>95</sup> In 2016, another activist — Ekaterina Vologzheninov — was sentenced to a year of mandatory work for publishing comments in Ukrainian on social media.<sup>96</sup>

Even though protests against military actions in Ukraine and a pro-Ukrainian position can lead to arrest by police officers, and even though these protests are not approved by the government, they still have not resulted in criminal prosecutions in Moscow or other large cities. The situation in Crimea is much more complicated, and any manifestations of support for Ukraine give rise to prosecution by the de facto government there. For example, in May 2016 a person holding a Ukrainian flag was arrested during the ascent of Chatyr-Dag, which is made in memory of the victims of the deportation of the Crimean Tatar people.<sup>97</sup> There have been known cases when repressions against supporters of Ukraine went all the way up to the use of torture against children. In 2014, members of the Russian law enforcement services confiscated a phone from an adolescent with pro-Ukrainian views as he was crossing the border between mainland Ukraine and Crimea and copied all the information from it (including information showing support for Ukraine). During a second crossing in 2016, this adolescent was subjected to torture and harsh treatment: beatings, dousing with water in cold weather (which led to a serious lung infection), and threats against the safety of his parents<sup>98</sup> and the child himself.<sup>99</sup>

There is no doubt that people in Crimea, particularly Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars, the majority of whom have made their support for Ukraine clear, currently face the greatest risks for expressing their pro-Ukraine position.<sup>100</sup>

A number of international institutions have already expressed concern about the violation of the rights of national minorities in Crimea.<sup>101</sup> On 19 April 2017, the UN International Court of Justice agreed to introduce temporary measures regarding the matter of discrimination against national minorities in Crimea in the case of Ukraine vs. Russia and found that Russia must end the infringement of the rights of Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars, allow the activities of the Mejlis to resume, allow instruction in the Ukrainian language in Crimea, and refrain from any forms of racial discrimination.<sup>102</sup> Ukrainian, Crimean, and international organizations have repeatedly drawn attention to the sharp drop in instruction in Ukrainian in schools under pressure from the de facto government.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Under Article 159.2 of the RF Criminal Code (Fraud Committed when Receiving Payments).

<sup>96</sup> In January 2015, a criminal case under Article 282 of the RF Criminal Code (Incitement of Hatred or Enmity, Abasement of Human Dignity) was opened against Ekaterina Vologzheninovi. Available here: <http://echo.msk.ru/news/1468338-echo.html>. Radio Svoboda online article of 20 February 2016 "Ekaterinbug: sud vynes prigovor Ekaterine Vologzheninovi." Available here: <https://www.svoboda.org/a/27563769.html>

<sup>97</sup> "A young man who took a photo with a Ukrainian flag right before the ascent was arrested after he got back down and taken in for questioning." (E. — 30 April 2017).

<sup>98</sup> These threats were connected with the fact that the parents supported Ukraine and remained in Crimea. Even though this child is now in mainland Ukraine, he regularly receives calls from special services warning him that his parents will be put in prison if they participate in any pro-Ukraine activities.

<sup>99</sup> (O. — 6 May 2017)

<sup>100</sup> "When I speak Ukrainian with Crimean Tatars in dollar vans, they answer in Ukrainian; even though they don't know if very well, they are making an effort" (O. — 6 May 2017).

<sup>101</sup> In November 2015, the OSCE High Commissioner of National Minorities, Astrid Thors, raised the issue of the worsening situation of Crimean Tatars and Ukrainians in Crimea at a meeting with representatives of the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Article of the Gordon media outlet of 3 November 2015 "Klimkin obsudil s komissarom OBSE po voprosam natsmen'shstv situatsiiu s pravami chelovek v Krymu i davenie na ukraincev v RF." Available here: <http://gordonua.com/news/politics/klimkin-obsudil-s-komissarom-obse-po-voprosam-nac-menshinstv-situatsiyu-s-pravami-cheloveka-v-krymu-i-davlenie-na-ukraincev-v-rf-104777.html>

<sup>102</sup> Press release of the UN International Court of Justice No. 2017/15 of 19 April 2017. Available here: <http://uacrisis.org/55445-icj-prima-facie-ukraine-russia>

<sup>103</sup> BBC Ukraine article of 18 March 2017 "Nedostachno prosto vziat' vse i 'zalit' bablom': tri goda posle anneksii Kryma." <http://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/features-russian-39314541>



## Studying and using the Ukrainian language

In accordance with current *de facto* law, the official languages in Crimea are Russian, Ukrainian, and Crimean Tatar.<sup>104</sup> The law also specifies the ability to receive preschool, elementary, and high school education in one's native language,<sup>105</sup> the teaching and study of Russian, Ukrainian, and Crimean Tatar languages in state educational institutions,<sup>106</sup> and the right to choose elective academic subjects and courses.<sup>107</sup>

When speaking of Crimea, it must be noted that the city of Sevastopol has the special status of "city of federal significance," so a number of provisions that are in *de facto* effect in Crimea are not applicable in Sevastopol, specifically norms on official languages, which means that there is a critical problem with teaching Ukrainian in this city. In response to a request from the Ukrainian Cultural Society of Sevastopol (USCC) to start teaching Ukrainian in city schools, director of the "Education Department of the Government of Sevastopol" Mikhail Rodikov stated in the spring of 2017 that this language could only be studied as an elective. Even though USCC has stated that not enough time is devoted to electives and that the quality of teaching is poor, this representative of the *de facto* government believes that there are no legal grounds for teaching Ukrainian in Sevastopol.<sup>108</sup>

Children throughout the rest of the peninsula's territory also frequently find that it is impossible to study the Ukrainian language, contrary to the demagogic statements of government representatives. Although students may officially select from several curricula, including curricula developed for regions where Russian is not the native language for a large part of the population,<sup>109</sup> according to data from the "Ministry of Education of Crimea," the predominate curriculum in Crimean schools envisages the mandatory study of Russian and permits only elective study of the two other official languages of Crimea.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Part 1 of Article 10 of the current *de facto* Constitution of the Republic of Crimea: <http://rk.gov.ru/rus/info.php?id=623228>

<sup>105</sup> Paragraph 4 of Article 14 of RF Federal Law "On Education" of 29 December 2012 No. 273 FZ. Available here: <http://zakon-ob-obrazovanii.ru/34.html>

Part 2 of Article 11 of the current *de facto* law "On Education in the Republic of Crimea" No. 131-ZRK/2015 of 17 June 2015. Available here: [http://mirnoe.com/respublika\\_krym/zakonodatelsvo\\_rk/2868-zakon-respubliki-krym-ob-obrazovanii-v-respublike-krym.html](http://mirnoe.com/respublika_krym/zakonodatelsvo_rk/2868-zakon-respubliki-krym-ob-obrazovanii-v-respublike-krym.html)

Part 3 of Article 11 of the current *de facto* law "On Education in the Republic of Crimea" No. 131-ZRK/2015 of 17 June 2015. Available here: [http://mirnoe.com/respublika\\_krym/zakonodatelsvo\\_rk/2868-zakon-respubliki-krym-ob-obrazovanii-v-respublike-krym.html](http://mirnoe.com/respublika_krym/zakonodatelsvo_rk/2868-zakon-respubliki-krym-ob-obrazovanii-v-respublike-krym.html)

<sup>106</sup> Law "On Education in the Republic of Crimea" No. 131-ZRK/2015 of 17 June 2015. Available here: [http://mirnoe.com/respublika\\_krym/zakonodatelsvo\\_rk/2868-zakon-respubliki-krym-ob-obrazovanii-v-respublike-krym.html](http://mirnoe.com/respublika_krym/zakonodatelsvo_rk/2868-zakon-respubliki-krym-ob-obrazovanii-v-respublike-krym.html)

<sup>107</sup> Paragraph 5 of Part 1 of Article 34 of RF Federal Law "On Education" of 29 December 2012 No. 273-FZ. Available here: <http://zakon-ob-obrazovanii.ru/34.html>

<sup>108</sup> Article of the Sobytiia Kryma news portal "V Sevastopole trebovali vernut' v shkoly ukrainskii iazyk" of 4 May 2017. <http://www.sobytiya.info/news/17/71836>

<sup>109</sup> One option envisages mandatory study of a region's second official language and the literature in this language. Another option was developed specially for Crimea. Explanatory note to the framework curriculum and model curricula for educational institutions in the RF. [https://help.dnevnik.ru/hc/ru/article\\_attachments/200929598/01.02.2012\\_.pdf](https://help.dnevnik.ru/hc/ru/article_attachments/200929598/01.02.2012_.pdf)

Letter of 7 August 2015 No. 08-1228. Available here: <http://monm.rk.gov.ru/file/Методические рекомендации по вопросам введения ФГОС ООО.pdf>

<sup>110</sup> EurAsiaDaily online article "Shpil'ka Tatarstany: vlasti Kryma — protiv obyazatel'nogo izucheniia ukrainskogo i krymsko-tatarskogo iazykov" of 18 April 2016. Available here: <https://eadaily.com/ru/news/2016/04/18/shpilka-tatarstanu-vlasti-kryma-protiv-obyazatelnogo-izucheniya-ukrainskogo-i-krymsko-tatarskogo-yazykov>

In reality, instruction in the languages of national minorities and the study of these languages in Crimea has plummeted,<sup>111</sup> and the number of classes taught in Ukrainian dropped by the start of the 2014-2015 school year.<sup>112</sup> A representative of the Ukrainian Cultural Center in Crimea believes that the Ukrainian language is an official language only on paper.<sup>113</sup> According to norms established by the de facto government, instruction in the Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar languages is possible at the request of parents until grade 9, while children in grades 10 and 11 only receive instruction in Russian.<sup>114</sup>

Most subjects are now taught in Russian even at the Ukrainian gymnasium in Simferopol.<sup>115</sup> A former teacher at a Crimean school reported that the principal of this school told teachers about the 2014 order of the “Ministry of Education of Crimea” requiring teachers to speak with the parents of students from Ukrainian classes in order to force them to sign an application to have their children transferred to Russian language instruction, which most parents did<sup>116</sup> over the objections of their children.<sup>117</sup> Some of the Ukrainian classes were disbanded,<sup>118</sup> which meant that children from these classes were unable to continue their studies in their native language and found themselves in a difficult situation when other students started to view the use of the Ukrainian language in school in a negative light.<sup>119</sup> According to

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<sup>111</sup> According to information received by the Crimean field mission from the de facto Ministry of Education, Science, and Youth of the Republic of Crimea, from 2013 to 2016 the number of students receiving instruction in Ukrainian fell from 13,589 to 371 (with a total of 188,517 students in Crimea in 2016); by the fall of 2014, only one out of 532 schools in Crimea provided instruction in Ukrainian. Analytics of the Crimea Human Rights Group. <http://crimeahrg.org/situatsiya-s-dostupom-k-obrazovaniyu-na-rodnom-yazyike-v-kryimu/> Meanwhile, according to data from the RF Federal Statistics Service, in 2014 Ukrainians made up the second largest nationality group in Crimea (344,515 people, or 15.08 percent of Crimea’s total population), of which 18,706 children of school age identified themselves as Ukrainians. This data was collected in October 2014 by the RF Federal Statistics Service in the digest “Results of the Census in the Crimean Federal District. Available here: [http://www.gks.ru/free\\_doc/new\\_site/population/demo/perepis\\_krim/KRUM\\_2015.pdf](http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/population/demo/perepis_krim/KRUM_2015.pdf), [www.gks.ru/free\\_doc/new\\_site/population/demo/perepis\\_krim/perepis\\_krim.html](http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/population/demo/perepis_krim/perepis_krim.html) Analytics of the Crimean Human Rights Group available here: <http://crimeahrg.org/situatsiya-s-dostupom-k-obrazovaniyu-na-rodnom-yazyike-v-kryimu/>

<sup>112</sup> Many schools (like gymnasium No. 11 and school No. 29 in Simferopol) used to offer many Ukrainian classes, but now only offer a few. (Interview with former teacher L. - 6 May 2017)

<sup>113</sup> BBC Ukraine article of 18 March 2017 “Nedostachno prosto vzyat’ vse i zalit’ bablom’: tri goda posle anneksii Kryma,” <http://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/features-russian-39314541>

<sup>114</sup> In April 2016, Minister of Education of Crimea Natalya Goncharov announced that “at the request of parents and on the basis of their applications, classes offering instruction in the Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar languages will be formed. But this is only for grades 1 to 9. In grades 10 and 11, so-called high school, Russia will be the only language of instruction.” Article “Shpil’ka Tatarstany: vlasti Kryma — protiv obiazatel’nogo isuchenii ukrainskogo i krymsko-tatarskogo iazykov” of 18 April 2016, EurAsiaDaily online media outlet available here: <https://easaily.com/ru/news/2016/04/18/shpilka-tatarstanu-vlasti-kryma-protiv-obyazatel'nogo-izucheniya-ukrainskogo-i-krymsko-tatarskogo-azyakov>

A Crimean woman said that in schools where instruction in Ukrainian is possible, instruction in the last two years (grades 10 and 11) is only given in Russian. She believes that children “do not have the chance to really know and learn the Ukrainian language.” (Interview with N. - 6 May 2017)

<sup>115</sup> Ukrainian is taught at the Ukrainian gymnasium in Simferopol, but the educational process takes place in Russian. (Interview with student R. - 30 April 2017)

A teacher from a Ukrainian gymnasium told her friend that now most subjects are taught in Russian and new classes for Ukrainian are not being set up. (Interview with O. - 6 May 2017)

<sup>116</sup> “The school no longer has Ukrainian classes, especially from grades 4 to 8.” (Interview with former teacher L. - June 5 2017)

<sup>117</sup> “My neighbor’s daughter studied in a Ukrainian class. In April 2014, she came home in tears and said: ‘I want to stay in the Ukrainian class’ after she learned the class was switching to Russian.” (Interview with N. - 6 May 2017).

<sup>118</sup> Information from ADC “Memorial” based on interviews conducted in April and May of 2017.

<sup>119</sup> In April 2014, a Ukrainian class at a regular school was disbanded. Three people, including the child O., ended up in one Russian class where many people refused to speak with them. When they walked by, everyone said: “Look, there go the Banderites.” O. refused to go to school after this, and his mother transferred him to a Ukrainian gymnasium during the academic year. In the same school, there was “a boy from the Ukrainian class who could have cared less who was in power. But he was still called a Banderite.” (Interview with N. and O. 6 May 2017)

a Crimean philologist, the virtual lack of access to education in the Ukrainian language and the overall political de-Ukrainization of the population means that in several years children will no longer have a command of their native language.<sup>120</sup>

School principals frequently even prevent the creation of elective groups for studying Ukrainian.<sup>121</sup> Pressure on teachers of Ukrainian, students, and their parents has meant that people are increasingly scared to study Ukrainian because of possible negative consequences,<sup>122</sup> while school principals prefer not to introduce instruction in Ukrainian to avoid possible problems with the de facto government.<sup>123</sup>

The very format of elective classes, which frequently cannot be held because of lack of financing, textbooks, or teachers, is also cause for criticism.

Many teachers of Ukrainian have been forced to take courses to qualify for teaching Russian language and literature under threat of dismissal.<sup>124</sup> Pronounced aggression and negative reactions<sup>125</sup> to the use of Ukrainian in public have meant that many people try to avoid speaking their native language and replace it with Russian.<sup>126</sup>

### **Holding of cultural events**

Many manifestations of discrimination have been seen in the cultural sphere and in daily life in Crimea. National clothes, Ukrainian music,<sup>127</sup> and even the combination of colors of the Ukrainian flag

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<sup>120</sup> Interview with L. - 7 May 2017

<sup>121</sup> In the 2016—2017 academic year, L.'s daughter in fifth grade was given the chance to study Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar as electives. "We had to pick which language to study, because they scheduled both classes for 7th period on the same day. Now we can't study Ukrainian at school because the vice principal set the schedule that way. Seven or eight people wanted to take both electives, but there ended up not being a Ukrainian group because of the schedule. A request was made to change the schedule at a parents' meeting, but no one tried to meet us halfway. They said the schedule was already full and there were no openings. We concluded that no one (the teachers or the principal) were interested." A Ukrainian elective was never organized at this school. (Interview with L. - 7 May 2015)

<sup>122</sup> A former teacher explained that "now when you fill out an application for a school, there's a filled-in blank that reads 'I agree that the study of the Ukrainian language is not mandatory for my child.' You just have to make a check by it, you don't even have to write anything. Very few parents insist on Ukrainian classes, this is a very small number of people." (Interview with L. - 6 May 2017)

"Even so, people are scared to write that they want to study Ukrainian." (Interview with N. - 6 May 2017)

<sup>123</sup> At a parents' meeting at one school in Simferopol District, the parents and the teachers decided together that it would be undesirable to offer Ukrainian as an elective because problems could arise from this (Interview with student A. - 30 April 2017).

<sup>124</sup> After the events of March 2014, R's mother, a Crimean Tatar with over 20 years' experience teaching Ukrainian, had to become requalified as a Russian teacher. (Interview with student R. - 30 April 2017).

A student from the Department of Ukrainian Philology planned to start working at a Ukrainian school after graduating from the university in 2015, but in the spring of 2014, in the fifth and final year of her studies, "she was sent for reprofiling" from a Ukrainian teacher to a Russian teacher. "Teachers of Ukrainian in Russia are no longer needed." Many people are asked to resign or to undergo retraining. (Interview with teacher Z. - 2 May 2017).

Teacher A. reported that the number of state-financed spots for the 2014—2015 academic year at the Ukrainian and English Philology Department at the Crimean Engineering and Pedagogical University were cut, while the number of seats in other departments (like International Economics) increased by a factor of 2 to 2.5. (Interview with teacher A. 2 May 2017).

<sup>125</sup> A teacher of Ukrainian in the Department of Philology at CEPU was standing outside speaking Ukrainian on her phone. She regained consciousness at the hospital (someone had hit her on the head), but no one looked for anyone, found anyone, it remained unclear who had attacked her. This was in late spring, early summer of 2014. (Interview with A. - 30 April 2017)

In April 2014, L. was walking with a person speaking Ukrainian. "Officers from the self-defense force came up to them and kept asking them not to speak the enemy's language." (Interview with L. - 6 May 2017)

<sup>126</sup> Some people interviewed who had left Crimea returned there several times in 2016 and noticed that they didn't hear Ukrainian on the streets at all or heard it only once during their visits. (Interviews with A. E. U. 30 April 2017)

<sup>127</sup> The city's children's orchestra (one of the Crimean cities) now practices strict censorship: orders were made get rid of all the Ukrainian works and quickly learn Russian works." Many children left the orchestra because they were forced to start all the concerts with Russia's hymn. (Interview with O. - 6 May 2017)

My ringtone is "Okean El'zi" (a group that sings songs in Ukrainian). If it plays on the dollar van, people look at me and turn away annoyed. (Interview with N. - 6 May 2017).

on clothing or in public are condemned, because most people try to avoid demonstrating what may be regarded as a manifestation of “pro-Ukrainianism.”<sup>128</sup> There have also been numerous negative reactions to demonstrations of features of Ukrainian culture.<sup>129</sup> An entire installation illustrating Ukrainian culture was destroyed at a Ukrainian gymnasium,<sup>130</sup> and the director of a children’s Ukrainian club had to close it under threat of repressions.<sup>131</sup> To avoid unpleasantness with the government, educational institutions prefer not to arrange events with Ukrainian acts, songs, costumes, and symbols.<sup>132</sup>

It has also become much more difficult to hold Ukrainian-themed cultural events in Crimea.<sup>133</sup> Workers at the Ukrainian Cultural Center in Crimea, which is one of the few centers that continues to promote Ukrainian culture, have experienced so much pressure from the government that people who are interested in the culture of the Ukrainian people are afraid to participate in events. In the spring of 2017, a “public event” to lay flowers at a monument to the Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko on his birthday were rejected.<sup>134</sup> On the day the flowers were laid, many officers from the FSB and the Counterextremism Department were taking videos. The organizers were summoned to the prosecutor’s office, while one activist from the Ukrainian Center who was laying flowers was asked by pro-government journalists if she wanted to leave Crimea since she held such a pro-Ukrainian position. Later this woman’s own father wrote a statement against her at the FSB and the Counterextremism Department calling his daughter and her close friends Banderites, accusing her of treason, and calling for her to be imprisoned and her child to be placed in an orphanage.”<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> “A babushka came up to me. She hugged me and cried. She said: ‘If I had known I could wear an embroidered shirt, I would have put one on too.’” (O. - 6 May 2017)

<sup>129</sup> “A child in an embroidered shirt was playing Ukrainian songs on a musical instrument on the street. People from the self-defense forces went up to him, told him that he wasn’t 18 yet and that they would put his parents away for eight years for threatening the integrity of the RF and put him in an orphanage.” (O. - 6 May 2017)

<sup>130</sup> Parents of children at the Ukrainian gymnasium in Simferopol explained that they spent ten years building the school building using money from parents and the state. “We created such an amazing environment inside. The walls were covered with bas-reliefs, the poems of Shevchenko, and portraits of Ukrainian poets.” After the referendum, the first thing representatives of the ruling party did was “cover it all with paper and scotch tape. Then they painted over it. They destroyed everything, they couldn’t leave one thing remotely related to Ukrainian culture.” A large collection of books in Ukrainian, including rare books, were put into storage and will be destroyed. Parents of students at this gymnasium have been told to pick up these books while this is still possible, but now there’s no more access to the books. Parents think that in Crimea “they want to destroy everything that serves as a reminder of the Ukrainian language.” (Interviews with O., N. - 6 May 2017)

<sup>131</sup> The Ukrainian club Svyatanok met in the Pioneers Palace in Simferopol, but it was closed in December 2015 after a girl said: “We must fight for our freedom and our land” during a Ukrainian-language performance about the Amazons. This was taken as a call to extremism. When the head of the club was called in for a “conversation,” he was told that this was unacceptable and could result in real trouble. But this wasn’t written anywhere officially, of course. The head of the club never made contact again. He said: “I want to live.” (N. — 6 May 2017)

<sup>132</sup> “It has become difficult to organize Ukrainian-themed events.” (Interview with L. - 6 May 2017)

“Schools basically don’t hold competitions mentioning Ukrainian culture. We used to have competitions in the Ukrainian language, Ukrainian costumes, etc. Now it’s really unlikely that they would allow a song in Ukrainian into a competition. At school No. 11 in Simferopol, there was a competition of various peoples (which took place in early 2017), and there was a picture of the Ukrainian people. I was surprised that they had the nerve to do this.” (Interview with N. - 6 May 2017)

“In late 2016, the children decorated a Christmas tree at the Ukrainian gymnasium. The teacher asked the children to help decorate and find something to go with the blue ribbon. A young girl brought a yellow balloon. The principal asked the teacher to explain to the child that this could not be done now. The teachers took this balloon down later because they didn’t know what to say to the child.” (N. — 6 May 2017)

<sup>133</sup> “Closed events are held all the time: lectures on history, movies, literary readings. We do it in a closed space, but people from the services come to see what’s going on.” (Interview with L. - 6 May 2017)

<sup>134</sup> They received rejections for technical reasons (incorrect application format, incorrect spelling) until the period for filing applications expired.

<sup>135</sup> O. — 6 May 2017



# DISCRIMINATION AGAINST MIGRANTS FROM REGIONS OF THE CAUCASUS TO RUSSIA (in the example of cities in western Siberia)<sup>136</sup>

Residents of regions of the Caucasus located in the Russian Federation may face instances of discrimination from the majority. Technically, this depends on whether or not the person is a Russian citizen. For example, migrants from republics of the North Caucasus and immigrants from countries of the South Caucasus who have become Russian citizens do not officially encounter the form of discrimination from employers and law enforcement agencies that could pose danger to foreign migrants: as Russian citizens, they have the right to reside in any RF constituent entity, find employment, rent housing, and set up a business.

In reality, however, there have been clear instances of discrimination based on ethnicity or region of origin throughout various parts of the country. Moreover, there is a certain discriminatory hierarchy connected with the stereotypes in society: Chechens and Dagestanis will be discriminated against more frequently than Armenians and Georgians when they are applying to law enforcement agencies due to the stereotypical qualities attributed to certain ethnic groups (aggression, adherence to radical Islam, etc.).

As an example, we will examine **Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug** (KMAO) and large and mid-size cities in the region. The materials used here were collected by the author during field studies in 2011, 2015, and 2016 and mainly relate to data on migrants from the republics of the northeast Caucasus (Chechnya, Dagestan, Ingushetia) and, to a lesser extent, Azerbaijan. It should be noted that the main task of these studies was not to uncover instances of discrimination against Caucasian people in Russia. All the examples chosen were either offered by the informants themselves or initiated by the author in the context of a conversation on another topic. This is to stress that there was no targeted search for instances of discrimination in this case, but that these instances generally surfaced on their own.

The KMAO has a unique migration fate: it was very attractive to migrants from all regions of the Soviet Union, including the Caucasus, due to the discovery of oil and gas fields in the 1960s. It has continued to attract migrants from other regions of Russia and the CIS in the post-Soviet period.

In terms of migration from Dagestan during this period, field data shows that the highest influx of Dagestanis came in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Data of researchers at the Surgut laboratory Modern Migration Processes and Diaspora show that the number of migrants specifically from Dagestan has been growing steadily over the past two decades (in comparison, the growth in migrants from Azerbaijan slowed significantly during this period)<sup>137</sup>.

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<sup>136</sup> Materials from studies by E.L. Kapustina (Candidate of Sciences in History, head of the Department of Ethnography of Caucasian Peoples, Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography (Kunstkamera, Russian Academy of Sciences)) "Mezhdu severom i zemlei: doroga iz Zapadnoi Sibiri v Dagestan kak element sotsial'nogo prostranstva translokl'nogo migranta," *Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniia*, 2017, no. 5, pp. 26–34; "Sobstvennost' na sever: migranty iz Dagestana i osvoenie gorodskogo prostranstva v Zapadnoi Sibiri (na primere situatsii v g. Surgut)," *Zhurnal sotsiologii i sotsial'noi antropologii*, 2014, no. 5, pp. 158–176. Text available here: <http://www.jourssa.ru/sites/>; "O translokal'nosti i diskriminatsii (postsovetskaia migratsiia dagestantsev v Zapadnuu Sibir)," *Vestnik Orlovskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta. Seriia: Novye gumanitarnye issledovaniia. GOU VPO Orlovskii gosudarstvennyi universitet*, 2015, no. 12, pp. 299–302.

<sup>137</sup> Ten VA, Delitsoy AI, Shkarevsky DN, Avimskaya MA, Telegina TS, Toktonova KO, Arslanov RS, Fabusheva KV *Evolutsiia etnokul'turnogo oblika Yugry v kontse XX — nachale XXI veka (na materiale Surgutskogo regiona)*. Surgut, 2007. P. 98.



A comparison of official statistics and data from experts and community organizations shows that approximately 35,000 to 45,000 Dagestanis and over 2,000 Chechens and Ingush people currently reside (permanently or temporarily) in Surgut and Surgut Region alone (population 400,000).

Even though these cities have a high percentage of residents who migrated from other regions of the country and the CIS, it is specifically migrants from the Caucasus region and particularly from Dagestan who are frequently stigmatized and become the targets of anti-migration discourse and even discrimination. This was noted by informants who were interviewed, representatives of Dagestani community organizations, and even representatives of the Surgut administration (in private conversations).

## **RESTRICTIONS DURING THE HIRING PROCESS, LOWER SALARIES, AND THE GLASS CEILING IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR AND AT LARGE CORPORATIONS**

We will take the city of Surgut as an example. A large percentage of Dagestanis migrating to the KMAO live in this city. Here, migrants from the Caucasus primarily encounter problems finding employment. The majority of informants mentioned this, and they are inclined to connect this with their ethnicity and region of origin. The head of the National Cultural Autonomy of the Republic of Dagestan (NCARD) also confirmed this in an interview:

*"The direct order comes from above: don't hire them, don't give them loans. Surgutneftegaz and major employers don't hire them for regular positions... You call about an ad, yes, they're hiring, but when they start reviewing your documents, that's it, we'll call you. This means that they will never call, it's a rejection. Dagestanis are hired either because they pay or because they have very close acquaintances." (author's field data, 2011, Laki man, 60). He also spoke about this in an interview with a local newspaper: "I think there is an unwritten law in Surgut banning the employment of Dagestanis. I have sufficient grounds for saying this. For example, you have no idea how much effort it took me to find one man a job as a driver at a construction project"<sup>138</sup>.*

It is difficult for newly-arrived migrants who were born in one of the republics of the Caucasus (especially for those who practice Islam) or who have first or last names that are recognizable as Caucasian to find skilled jobs. Even the children of people who have lived in Surgut for 20–30 years and were born in the North also face the same problem.

The specialist D. Sokolov has also noted a trend that is relevant for Caucasians in the KMAO: *"It is next to impossible to find work with the police, the prosecutor's office, the Ministry of Emergency Situations, the tax office, or any special services, even with the corresponding confirmed qualification"*<sup>139</sup>.

People who already work in the public sector or the oil industry have complained about a glass ceiling in these workplaces for migrants from the North Caucasus. Even Caucasians who have lived in the North for a long time complain that it is rare for one of their fellow Caucasians to be appointed to a position in middle management, and they all tie this to the unwritten rules in state companies.

*One Nogai man from the village of Novaya Fedorovka in Surgut District had the nickname of "Monday." "He spent a year-and-a-half trying to find a job. He lived wherever he could, and every time he had an interview, they told him to come back on Monday"*<sup>140</sup>.

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<sup>138</sup> Yakovleva D. Aleksandr Zubairov: «Prestupnikami nas delayet vlast'» // SIA-PRESS. 2013. <http://www.siapress.ru/news/opinion/23683>

<sup>139</sup> Sokolov D. Rol' «Sovesti» v neftegazovoy politike. 2014. [http://kavpolit.com/articles/rol\\_sovesti\\_v\\_neftegazovoj\\_politike-7452/](http://kavpolit.com/articles/rol_sovesti_v_neftegazovoj_politike-7452/)

<sup>140</sup> Sokolov D. Rol' «Sovesti» v neftegazovoy politike. 2014. [http://kavpolit.com/articles/rol\\_sovesti\\_v\\_neftegazovoj\\_politike-7452/](http://kavpolit.com/articles/rol_sovesti_v_neftegazovoj_politike-7452/)

*People have also complained that migrants from the Caucasus earn less than others with an equal position and that they are not paid bonuses. M: "Every family has experienced prejudice. You feel like you're working for a good company — and then they don't give you a bonus. Your salary can be two to three times lower than the salary of a Russian who has the same job and length of service. They ask for bribes for finding jobs. They give drivers old cars."*

However, the same informants do say that they are frequently rejected for jobs because they do not have enough experience. Indeed, many young migrants who have left their country after graduating from the university experience this as an "objective" barrier to employment. However, the personal stories of informants' attempts to find work put this objectivity into question, for example when a person is rejected on the grounds of lack of experience but the vacancy remains open for a long time and is finally filled by another person without experience, or when the obstacle of "no experience" is removed as soon as a Russian colleague vouches for a Dagestani job seeker.

Both informants and employees have indicated the low level of contemporary education in the republics of the North Caucasus Federal District (NCFD), especially in Dagestan, as a reason for job rejections. However, Dagestanis who were educated in cities in the KMAO have also encountered this problem, although to a lesser degree.

*M: "I have two children, they were good students at a vocational school for the oil industry. And they can't find jobs, even though they have residence permits and were born in Surgut. Things are still divided up (by nationality), there's an unwritten order" (Dagestani man, about 50).*

Surgut residents who have a generally negative attitude towards residents arriving in the North from the Caucasus also admit this practice exists. For example, an official from the city administration admitted in a conversation that barriers have always been created for migrants from the Caucasus.

*M: Now, at least, there are certain attitudes.*

— *Whose attitudes?*

*M: Well, certain attitudes. I mean, I can't say right now, but if the head of an organization doesn't want to see people like them in his collective, then he will do everything possible to avoid this... but they still make their way in one way or another..." (2015, Russian man, 45).*

Here is the opinion of another resident, a taxi driver and self-identifying Russian with anti-Caucasian attitudes:

— *Are Caucasian people hired to work in the oil sector?*

*L: No, they aren't really hired for state jobs. I mean individuals are, of course, but not in general. It's an unwritten rule, but they have [grabbed] all the markets, all the trading" (2015, Russian man, about 40).*

This kind of discriminatory practice is mainly based on ethnic prejudice and not on religious affiliation, since data shows that Tatars and Bashkirs who come north from neighboring RF constituent entities and are mainly Muslims do not suffer from a "glass ceiling."

*Sh.: "They give us jobs, but dirty work, at construction sites... It's hard for an educated person to get a job....Our people here sometimes work as junior managers. One of them is a foreman in the oil industry. I was surprised that he reached this position. He was too. He said it was maybe because he looks like a Bashkir" (2011, Nogai man, 48).*

Meanwhile, while the problem of the "glass ceiling" persists, a positive shift has been noted in some sectors like healthcare and education. Judging by field data, migrants from the Caucasus are frequently able to find work as specialists, especially as junior and mid-level medical personnel. For example, a young Dagestani who spoke about his lack of success finding work in 2014 was able to find employment in 2015, although with difficulties (the amount of experience he had in the medical field had not changed — he had worked as an unskilled laborer over the previous year).

Field data show that women encounter fewer problems with employment. This is because other northerners trust them more and feel less enmity towards them, and also because of the vacancies themselves that the women are interested in. These are mainly positions in the service sector, as

well as positions as junior and mid-level medical personnel and in preschools and, less frequently, schools. The level of salaries and competition in these sectors is low, so women from the North Caucasus can freely occupy these niches.

*Z., who works as a salesperson in a small retail store said: "That's nonsense that it's hard for migrants from the Caucasus to find work. I got a job right away. The salary here is 1,000 [rubles] a day." [2014, Lezgian woman, 19].*

The only group of women that might encounter obstacles and discrimination when job hunting are women who wear a hijab. However, they face this same risk at home in the North Caucasus, even though hijabs are worn widely there. This type of discrimination is not connected with region of origin or ethnicity, but with religious affiliation, particularly with the majority's fear of practitioners of radical Islam, which covered women are automatically assumed to be.

Since it is so difficult to find work and build a career in the government sector and large private companies, it comes as no surprise that all the successful migrants from the North Caucasus in the area are generally connected with private business. They run markets, construction companies, and private dental clinics. Two exceptions for Surgut District are the head of the municipal public utility Teplovik and the head of the Surgut Road Construction Company, who are both Dagestani. Both willingly hire their fellow Caucasians, and many people who despaired of finding work through want ads eventually end up working for one of these two people.

## **PROBLEMS WITH REGISTRATION, RENTING HOUSING, AND CONSCRIPTION**

It is important to note that the right to free movement within the country is restricted for all Russian citizens by the institution of registration (temporary or permanent). When moving from one region to another, every Russian citizen may face the problem of difficulties with registration or the impossibility of registering at all in their new place. In this matter, the problem of additional control by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and other monitoring structures arises for migrants from the Caucasus. Even though migrants sometimes sympathize with these heightened measures of control because they agree that the North Caucasus region is rightly viewed as troubled, they still see some manifestations of inequality in them.

*V: "If you're Dagestani, they're going to put you under the microscope <...> we need to have our wives fingerprinted, ourselves fingerprinted. It's total nonsense. In any other place, you explain this, and, well, it just makes no sense." (2015, Rutul person, 31).*

Along with employment, the problem of renting housing is one of the most widespread for migrants. Ads in newspapers and on poles typically read "apartment to rent to Slavic people" or "apartment for rent. NO CAUCASIANS." This practice has also become widespread in other Russian cities, for example, Moscow.

*A. 56. "The first problem was renting housing. I was rejected because of my nose. I ended up having to 'marry' a realtor. I was able to arrange for an apartment in this way, with a fake wife. I didn't have any major problems with employment."*

*F., 18. "Housing...All newcomers encounter this problem. Anywhere we look, it's written in caps "for Slavic people." I mean, I understand that sometimes migrants get up to terrible things in rented apartments. But this is still real discrimination"<sup>141</sup>.*

Another typical form of discrimination against people from the Caucasus is the restriction on the conscription of people from the republics of the North Caucasus into the ranks of the Russian army. Many young people from this area dream of a career in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the army, and

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<sup>141</sup> Zdes' i tak vse khorosho, plokho, chto tol'ko zdes' vse khorosho. 2016. <https://etokavkaz.ru/spec/zdes-vse-khorosho-plokho-cto-tolko-zdes-vse-khorosho>

other state structures that require a military service card indicating actual time of service. Additionally, people in this region generally view service in the army as prestigious and as confirmation of the proper masculine status. At the same time, the army drafts many fewer people from the Caucasus than the number of young people eligible for a spot in the ranks of the Russian army — in these conditions, people who want to serve must bribe military recruitment officers (a remarkable situation for most other regions in the country, where bribes are given to avoid serving in the army). Many connect the restriction on the enlistment of people from the North Caucasus with fears that those people will create enclaves of their fellow nationals that are poorly managed by officers. Young migrants from the NCFD are not even accepted into the army in the North, even though their residence permits mean they should be drafted from this region, where there is no surplus of conscripts.

This restriction is clearly based on ethnicity and mainly affects natives of Dagestan. The illegal nature of this selective conscription is underlined by the means northern military recruitment offices and community organizations have found to resolve this problem. Over the last few years, Surgut's NCARD has taken responsibility for its fellow Dagestanis entering the service and has conducted outreach conversations with them, like: *"Trust is being placed in you and you are being sent to serve, you are responsible before your brothers, if you mess up, they won't take you to serve."* The possibility of a young person's personal responsibility and the inalienable right to be drafted into the army regardless of nationality clearly remain outside this agreement.

### **INCREASED ATTENTION FROM LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES. DISCRIMINATORY AND ACCUSATORY RHETORIC IN THE MEDIA AND SOCIETY**

In matters of enforcement, it should be noted that migrants from the Caucasus, in particular several republics of the NCFD, are presumed guilty, especially if the case is connected with violence and the use of weapons.

*B: The thing is that if a Russian person commits a crime, they just turn a deaf ear. If a person from the Caucasus commits a crime, then this will be recorded (Chechen man, 45).*

The following is an example of a statement made by Ministry of Internal Affairs representative and deputy chief of the Surgut Office of the Ministry of Internal Affairs I. Topchiev at a meeting with the Dagestani community and young people: *"...there is society, there are laws, and they must be respected. Your nationality is still under special control. You are being watched and observed"*<sup>142</sup>.

As seen above, migrants from the Caucasus sometimes encounter manifestations of discrimination and segregation from other city residents in their daily lives. Judging from publications and stories from informants, many migrants from the Caucasus who have moved outside the NCFD for a temporary or extended stay have found themselves in similar situations. Migrants are seen by long-time residents as interlopers who do not have sufficient rights in the receiving community, while members of the receiving community view themselves as the legal owners of these places who have been endowed with right to the given territory.

As a result, there are conflicts that usually take place in public, especially during holidays and festivals. Below is a description of a conflict surrounding national dances of the Caucasus, the discriminatory discourse and practices related to this conflict, and reactions to it.

The phenomenon of dancing the Lezginka in the street emerged in Russian cities in the mid-2000s and became a source of discussion in society, which has started to take on a more aggressive nature with an anti-Caucasian bent. The most intense emotions about the Lezginka have been recorded in Moscow and cities in southern Russia, particularly Stavropol, Rostov, and the region of Caucasian mineral waters. The discussion about the legality of folk dancing on the streets has

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<sup>142</sup> Stepygin A. Stvolny, lezginka i OMON...// Ura.ru. 31.03.2014 (<http://ura.ru/articles/1036261701>)



included not just nationalist organizations, the media, and law enforcement bodies, but also school heads and local lawmakers. In Kislovodsk, 18 students were expelled from a medical college for dancing the Lezginka on the street at night. Significantly, the discriminatory nature of these expulsions did not go unnoticed in the Caucasus — the city of Nalchik promised to provide these former students with the opportunity to complete their educations in Kabardino-Balkaria. Rostov and Stavropol took this one step further — laws were published banning people from dancing the Lezginka in public places outside of normal hours.

*“The authorities of Rostov Oblast have already banned the public performance of the Lezginka on the street, and in Stavropol, the police detain people for performing the Lezginka”<sup>143</sup>.*

*N.: “...why is there such a negative attitude towards the Lezginka? Maybe it’s all politics, maybe it stokes tensions that these are Caucasians, good for nothings, thieves...” (2015, Lezgian man, 44).*

Indeed, informants complained of the fairly harsh detentions of dancers by the police and negative comments from passersby, who gathered on the square in front of the Surgut retail center in 2011–2014. The Lezginka is frequently seen as an element of the culture of interlopers, who do not have the right to exist in the public space of a Russian city. This kind of viewpoint also has discriminatory potential.

*T.: A director of one of Surgut’s vocational schools banned performances of the Lezginka in student discotheques: “I don’t need people to dance the Lezginka, I’m not running a music/cultural school here, I’m providing workers with specializations. I banned the Lezginka at discotheques. Let them dance to songs in Russian, to Russian pop music. They’re in Russia, they’re students at a Russian vocational school” (author’s field notes, Russian woman, 33).*

It is clear from the above that xenophobia, fear of migrants, and nationalistic ideas form the foundation of these bans. Moreover, dances like break dancing, the tango, and salsa, which also “come out onto the streets” of Russian cities from time to time are not subjected to the same stigmatization as the Lezginka.

The discourse in the media described by migrants from the Caucasus in Surgut is frequently unabashedly xenophobic in nature. It has sometimes been popular to exclude natives of the Russian Caucasus (who may have been born in Surgut) from Russian society. Take, for example, a journalist’s rhetorical question of **“are Caucasian horsemen prepared to live by Russian law?”**, which was placed in an article about a meeting between representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Dagestani community organization NCARD, and young people of Dagestani origin<sup>144</sup>.

Within the framework of the anti-Caucasian discourse, explanations are given for the restrictions that the majority imposes on access by Caucasians to various types of resources. People from the Caucasus are also assigned stereotypical characteristics like a monopoly on high-status items and a disregard for social conventions, a desire to resolve questions using corrupt practices, closed network corporations leading to the enrichment of specific ethnic groups, and a monopoly on violence. All of this is seen as an explanation for “heightened control and restrictions for migrants from the region of the Caucasus.”

Here it makes sense to examine the question of how the specific character of migration in cities of Russia’s north (the majority of the population is made up of migrants, and Khanty and Mansi people make up an extremely low percentage of the population) complicates the application of the nationalistic formula of “there goes the neighborhood” in relation to migrants from the Caucasus. The illegitimacy of these rebukes has been stressed by informants in interviews, especially by those informants who have lived in the city for several decades and who define themselves as long-time residents of cities in the North.

*N: “So imagine this situation: Khanty Mansi Autonomous Okrug, these same Russian guys are saying ‘Russia is for Russians,’ tomorrow 500 Khanty and Mansi will gather and say, “Yes, Russia is for Russians, from now on, Moscow, Golden Ring of Russia, go on, guys, go back there” (2015, Lezgin man, 45).*

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<sup>143</sup> Lezginka na ulitse kak simbol protesta. 2011. ([http://www.bbc.co.uk/russian/radio/radio\\_rannychas/2011/01/110114\\_lezginka.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/russian/radio/radio_rannychas/2011/01/110114_lezginka.shtml))

<sup>144</sup> Stepygin A. Stvol, lezginka i OMON...// Ura.ru. 31.03.2014 (<http://ura.ru/articles/1036261701>)



Similar arguments about the Khanty owners and the rights of other peoples to the Surgut territory can be found in internet forums. The fact that the oil that has ensured the region's socio-economic development was discovered by a geological party led by the Azerbaijani F. Salmanov adds an additional piquancy to the discussion of rights to the territory.

To some extent, the rhetoric of no one's territory helps Dagestanis stand up to this discriminatory discourse and insist on their equal rights to Russian cities of the North.

To be fair, there are those who totally refute any problems with discrimination. The majority of these people are women or people who have lived in the region for decades and have almost no problems with adaptation.

## **NATIONALIST ORGANIZATIONS AND THEIR INITIAL SUPPORT FROM THE GOVERNMENT**

In recent years, the nationalist anti-Caucasian movement in Surgut has been connected with the activities of the Sovest' [Conscious] organization, which was founded in 2011. *"The social organization Sovest' has been appearing in Surgut. Its activists position themselves as supporters of a healthy way of life and come out in support of developing sports and culture in their speeches. In actuality, they are conducting a series of provocations against migrants from the North Caucasus and Central Asia. According to several local experts, members of Sovest' train with police officers at the gym. And they conduct their violent acts under the cover of the police."*<sup>145</sup>.

Sovest' fighters have achieved notoriety through their nationalist rhetoric, raids to "educate" Caucasian youth, and several large fights with young people of Caucasian origin. In 2015, this organization was unexpectedly liquidated, and its leaders were placed under investigation (under articles unconnected with discrimination). At the city administration, some officials explained that this organization could have been created by pro-government groups in order to create a counterweight to Caucasian groups, but then took on a life of its own and was shut down. Whatever the case, this organization added fuel to the fire and took the discriminatory, anti-Caucasian discourse to new heights.

These examples of discrimination against migrants from the Caucasus are typical not just for cities in KMAO, but also, in varying extents, for all of Russia. As places where migrants from many regions of the country can be found, northern cities may be good examples of how discriminatory strategies are aimed not at newly-arrived migrants in general, but specifically at members of Caucasian ethnic groups.

It is also worth noting that the general degree of xenophobia against migrants from "non-Russian" regions of Russia and the CIS in large cities has shifted from the Caucasus to Central Asia. The situation with discrimination based on ethnicity has improved somewhat in western Siberia. However, people from the Caucasus still face discriminatory practices and discourse from the government, the media, and ordinary citizens.

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<sup>145</sup> Sokolov D. Rol' «Sovesti» v neftegazovoy politike. 2014. [http://kavpolit.com/articles/rol\\_sovesti\\_v\\_neftegazovoj\\_politike-7452/](http://kavpolit.com/articles/rol_sovesti_v_neftegazovoj_politike-7452/)

# DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THE ROMA POPULATION

## DISPLAYS OF XENOPHOBIA AGAINST THE ROMA POPULATION: ETHNIC PROFILING BY LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES

ADC “Memorial”<sup>146</sup> has conducted studies in dense Roma settlements for many years. During field missions, our specialists have found that existing laws, programs, and Russian government policies in several RF regions have not been able to ensure the elimination of racial discrimination against Roma people. The most recent study was conducted in 2016–2017; it found a growth in discriminatory activities against this group by the authorities in several regions.

We discovered signs of ethnic profiling during a field mission on 6 May 2017 in Belgorod Oblast, where Roma from the settlement of Shishino had to deal with groundless arrests and rude behavior directed at them by officers from law enforcement agencies throughout 2016. The arrests started approximately one year ago and have affected the entire population of the tabor.

*“At first our women were arrested for fortune-telling at the market. They think this is fraud. We prohibited them from fortune-telling a year ago, and they don’t do this anymore. We have already appealed to head of the village administration Igolkin, and we have spoken with the police officers. We explained that we’re not stealing, we’re not killing. But they continue to arrest us, they treat us as if we were enemies of the people.”*<sup>147</sup>

According to Roma people, some of them were arrested several times over the course of a year by officers from the same police departments, who put them through the same identification procedures each time they were arrested. For example, approximately 10 people complained that police officers fingerprinted them every time they were arrested, even though they had previously been fingerprinted many times.

*Women are detained with particular frequency on their way to stores or the market, or near the polyclinic: “My friends and I have been detained three times over the past six months. They fingerprinted us three times. Just like that, for no reason. We asked why we were being picked up, what we had done, but we were just told: ‘that’s the way it has to be.’ The police officers just came up to us, asked for our documents, and put us in the car. Some behaved brazenly, they just grabbed us and took us to the precinct. Others even apologized and said that those officers should be reprimanded according to the rules. After we finished at the precinct, they even took us back to the place where they had picked us up. The last time we were placed in a UAZ, and the person who detained us asked over the radio: ‘Do you need gypsies?’ Apparently, they said they did, and we were taken to the precinct on Gagarin Street. They held us for about an hour, then fingerprinted us and copied out our information from our passports. They wrote in the report that we were drinking alcohol in public.”*<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> The central focus of all the activities of ADC “Memorial” is the defense of the rights of minorities and vulnerable groups, opposition to racism, sexism, homophobia and all other forms of xenophobia in countries which formerly were part of Soviet Union. ADC “Memorial” pays considerable attention to the protection of the rights of Roma people, who continue to suffer from various forms of systemic discrimination. More about ADC “Memorial”: [www.adcmemorial.org](http://www.adcmemorial.org)

<sup>147</sup> From an interview with S., a resident of the village of Shishino, Belgorod Oblast, 2017.

<sup>148</sup> Interview with R., a resident of Shishino Village in Belgorod Oblast, 2017.

Several men complained that their passports were taken from them during their detention and that they were held at the police precinct for several hours without any explanation. After an extended time, they were released without being told the cause for their detention.

*"I was last detained in March, when I was on my way into the city. I was just walking along the street. Officers in uniform came up to me. They asked me to show them their documents. I gave them my passport, they took it and led me to the car. I didn't understand anything. I asked what was going on and why I was being detained. They said that I looked suspicious and that they had to establish my identity. They took me to the precinct on Bogdan Khmel'nitsky Street. I was there for three hours. Then they just returned my passport and released me, without even apologizing."<sup>149</sup>*

As these incidents show, police actions against the Roma population in Belgorod are connected not just with biases that Roma are involved in various aspects of criminal activity, drug dealing, theft, fraud, etc., which is typically the reason for aggression and abuse of power by officials, but also because the police are convinced of the complete legal vulnerability of the Roma population and the fact that illegal actions taken against these people will go unpunished. Detentions and fingerprinting are performed without any formal legal grounds, and, even though these procedures do not involve violence, they are degrading and raise the level of intolerance among other citizens who regularly observe how Roma people are detained on the streets of Russian cities.

## **RACIST STATEMENTS BY OFFICIALS**

The public statements and actions of Alexander Tygin, head of Zelenodolsk District of the Republic of Tatarstan, are clear evidence of a display of discrimination against Roma people. Over the past few years, Tygin has not concealed his dislike of the Roma people.

*"When Alexander Tygin assumed his duties as head of Zelenodolsk District in 2013, the attitude to local Roma changed completely, especially at the official level. In his public statements, he has repeatedly blamed members of this people for existing problems."<sup>150</sup>*

In 2013, Tygin stated the following at a visiting joint session of the Council of the Assembly of the Peoples of Tatarstan and an interagency task force of matters of interethnic and interdenominational relations in the Republic of Tatarstan:

*"In the public consciousness, people have the image of a woman in long skirts, surrounded by many small children panhandling. Zelenodolsk is no exception in this regard. We face these exact problems every day."<sup>151</sup>*

*At a business meeting in November 2015, Tygin made a direct connection between Roma and fraudulent actions. "And fraud, what is that?" said the mayor of Zelenodolsk. "I have a hard time understanding what 'street fraud' is. The only thing that comes to mind is gypsies <...> I will be pleasantly surprised if you can show me one gypsy who earned his money. We'll put it in a museum."*

*Later, in 2016, Tygin stated that "the religious traditions of the Roma population do not involve toilets, and all the physiological processes of life are traditionally performed outside. This causes a negative reaction from neighbors and introduces the danger of spreading infectious diseases."<sup>152</sup>*

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<sup>149</sup> Interview with R., a resident of Shishino Village in Belgorod Oblast, 2017.

<sup>150</sup> From the website idelreal.org, article by V. Meshcheriakov "Aleksandra Tygina prosiat otvetit' za tsygan." of 18 February 2017. Available here: <http://www.idelreal.org/a/28309474.html>

<sup>151</sup> From the website of the Tatar-inform news agency of 13 November 2013. Transcript of a speech made by head of Zelenodolsk District A. Tygin at a meeting of the Council of the Assembly of the Peoples of Tatarstan. Available here: <http://www.tatar-inform.ru/news/2013/11/13/382786/>

<sup>152</sup> From the website idelreal.org, article by V. Meshcheriakov "Za tsygan otvetil". Available here: <http://www.idelreal.org/a/28320141.html>

In January 2017, local human rights defenders filed a request with the RF Office of the Procurator General to check Tygin's statements for compliance with Article 282 of the RF Criminal Code "*Incitement of hatred or enmity, debasement of human dignity*," but the Office did not find any violations in Tygin's statements about Roma people.<sup>153</sup>

In August 2015, there was a large-scale outbreak of acute viral hepatitis A in Zelenodolsk District, with clusters in Nizhniye Vyazovye and Aysha. In both cases, managers at the Zelenodolsk office of Rospotrebnadzor (Federal Service for Supervision of Consumer Rights Protection and Human Welfare) rushed to accuse the Roma of everything by stating that the centers of the outbreak were dense Roma settlements: tabors in the villages of Aysha and Nizhniye Vyazovye. According to Roma people, however, the epidemic started before cases were discovered in the tabors. Even so, local authorities upheld the opinion that the Roma tabors were the epicenters of the virus. These statements spread quickly through the local media and were the cause of the blatant persecution of all Roma people manifested in denial of access to local hairdressers, stores, and other public places, including schools.

*"First several people in Sviyazhka fell ill, but they weren't from the tabor. They said in the newspapers and on TV that the epicenters of the hepatitis were the Roma settlements in Aysha and Nizhniye Vyazovye. It was shocking! Several cases of tuberculosis were discovered in the oblast late last year. Roma were also accused of being the main spreaders. In fact, only several Roma people fell ill, and they were infected after the start of the epidemic."*<sup>154</sup>

Many Roma connect these events with the start of their harassment by the district administration, which was first expressed in an attempt to deprive several dozen Roma of their parental rights in early 2016 and then, several months later, in an attempt to evict them from their homes and tear down the houses that a court found to be illegal structures.

*"Since 1986, when we arrived in Kazan, we haven't had any problems. But everything changed with the arrival of Tygin. The start of all this coincided with the start of his work, but his threats became serious two years ago, when there was a hepatitis epidemic in the oblast. Since then, we have seen open persecution. People came from the Sanitary and Epidemiological Service. They checked the entire tabor; they forced us to have tests several times a year after that. At the same time, only five children — two 17-year-olds and three younger children — actually had hepatitis. They said in the newspapers and on TV that the epicenters were the Roma tabors in Aysha and Nizhniye Vyazovye. Quarantine was introduced in the tabor. We weren't allowed to go to the store, to the hairdresser, or to any other public places. And the children weren't allowed to attend school, of course. Several cases of tuberculosis were discovered late last year. Roma were also accused of being the main spreaders. After this, Tygin stated that he would not allow Roma people to live on his land and that we should leave for Mariy El. Late last year, there were attempts to deprive many people of their parental rights, but they weren't successful. Now they have apparently decided to deprive us of our residences."*<sup>155</sup>

## **DISCRIMINATORY TREATMENT OF ROMA FAMILIES, VIOLATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS**

In January 2017, the media published the minutes of a staff meeting at Zelenodolsk City Hall signed by Alexander Tygin. The meeting was held on 12 December 2016. Among other things, the minutes read: "*Organize efforts with the Department of Child Welfare to remove minor children living in residences whose utility bills are in arrears, report on this weekly.*"<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> Online business newspaper Biznes online of 29 March 2017, article about the results of the Procurator General's check of A. Tygin's statements about Roma people. <https://www.business-gazeta.ru/news/341369>

<sup>154</sup> ADC "Memorial" interview with V., a resident of Aysha, 22 February 2017.

<sup>155</sup> Interview with A., a resident of Aysha, 2017.

<sup>156</sup> The broadsheet newspaper Vecherniaia Kazan' of 12 January 2017, article by N. Vasil'yeva "V Tatarstane iz semei dolzhdnikov za "kommunalku" izymaiut detei". Available here: <http://www.evening-kazan.ru/articles/v-tatarstane-iz-semei-dolzhdnikov-za-kommunalku-izymayut-detey.html>

A year prior to this, V., a woman from Aysha, came to ADC “Memorial” for help because a case had been opened to deprive her of her parental rights. The complaint was initiated against her by teachers from the local school, who stated that her children come to school disheveled and unprepared for classes. As a result, the administration of Zelenodolsk District initiated checks of fire safety, sanitary and epidemiological safety, and so forth. After these checks, child welfare authorities filed several suits in court to deprive several Roma in Aysha and Nizhniye Vyazovye of their parental rights. Later, during the trials, these Roma started to be charged with failing to pay their utility bills, which, in the opinion of Tygin, is a ground for depriving parents of their rights to children.

*“In court, representatives from child welfare were asked what complaints they had. They said that the respondents had not paid for electricity and gas, that their homes did not meet fire safety requirements, but the judge noted that no one can be deprived of parental rights for failing to pay for utilities.”<sup>157</sup>*

*“They harped on the fact that the children weren’t being raised properly because they were skipping school. The fire safety authority gave an opinion that the heating stove in the house was not safe — there should have been a metal plate near it, but there wasn’t, even though the mother asserted the opposite. No photographs were submitted to the court. The absence of a metal plate near a heating stove is not a ground for removing children from their family and depriving them of a mother. The Zelenodolsk City Court took the mother’s side and denied the claim.”<sup>158</sup>*

Before the checks, the female population of the tabors was subjected to unfounded persecution by police officers. This persecution was expressed in widespread, repeated detentions and document checks. The official reason for the detentions was suspicion of fraud, but the first thing the officers did upon detention was check the place in passports where number of children is listed and copy information out of there. The women who were detained believe that this was done mainly to find families with minor children.

*“My friends who were with me and I were detained several times right on the train platform, when we got off the commuter train. The official reason was a document check, but the same officers detained us multiple times. They copied the pages of our passports where number of children is listed. They asked if we work, where are husbands were. Anyone who didn’t have documents was detained and taken into the precinct to establish identity. I myself asked why they were detaining women, what we had done that was so bad that we could be endlessly tortured. One officer told me that their supervisors had given an order to check Roma women.”<sup>159</sup>*

*“We can’t even walk to the market normally. My wife was detained several times with other women when they were going to buy groceries. The police see a Roma woman and start right in: ‘Your documents? Where do you live? What do you do? Do you have children?’ Even if you have documents, they still force you to go to the precinct. They hold you there three to four hours and then release you. They ask the same questions a hundred times. When you ask why they have these questions and why you are being detained, they respond that that’s the way it has to be.”<sup>160</sup>*

These incidents fall under the concept of racial and ethnic profiling in the work of law enforcement authorities, which is banned in accordance with the norms of international law and is incompatible with its provisions, such as the right to live a life free from racial discrimination, the right to equality before the law, the right to freedom and personal inviolability, and the right to the presumption of innocence.<sup>161</sup>

Since early 2016, courts in Zelenodolsk District of the Republic of Tatarstan have considered approximately 15 cases related to the deprivation of parental rights of Roma parents. About ten of these cases were brought against residents of Aysha and five against residents of Nizhniye Vyazovye.

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<sup>157</sup> Interview with V., a resident of Aysha, 2017.

<sup>158</sup> Interview with attorney Rushana Kamalova for the Idel.Real project. Available here: <http://www.idelreal.org/a/28251832.html>

<sup>159</sup> Interview with T., a resident of Nizhniye Vyazovye, 2017.

<sup>160</sup> Interview with B., a resident of Nizhniye Vyazovye, 2017.

<sup>161</sup> Articles 2, 4, 5, 7 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.



The claimants lost all these cases because of their failure to prove the circumstances of the case. Representatives of the child welfare agency attempted to appeal these decisions with higher courts, but their appeals were also denied.

In parallel with this, local residents and human rights defenders say that in late 2016 the administration initiated a case to tear down illegal structures in both tabors. See below for more on the problem of forced evictions.

## FORCED EVICTIONS AND THE DESTRUCTION OF ROMA SETTLEMENTS

During a January 2017 visit to a dense Roma settlement, an ADC “Memorial” expert uncovered cases where houses were demolished in **Plekhanovo, Tula Oblast** — one of the largest Roma settlements in Russia with approximately 300 families. In many dense Roma settlements, thousands of people live in hundreds of homes. The population of these so-called “tabors” grows rapidly, new housing becomes increasingly compact, and the authorities do nothing to make it possible to legalize new housing or register residents.

The absence of any documents that could confirm the Roma people’s right to the ownership of the houses they have built themselves is the direct result of a state policy from Soviet times (government order in 1956) that forced the Roma population to settle in certain places. These places, however, were generally not specified in writing. In fact, it was rare that the right to use the land was ever confirmed by written acts. To this day, the acts which do exist serve as the only documents providing evidence of the Roma’s right to use the land, but they are not enough to start the registration procedure.

Over the ensuing half century, the tabors grew rapidly, but they were never allocated any additional land. Meanwhile, the introduction of private ownership of land made the inhabitants of these haphazard settlements “illegals” in their own homes.

Thus, there have been two stages of discrimination against Roma in the RF—first during Soviet times in the form of violating the traditional way of life of nomadic peoples, which was criminalized in the 1956 order, and later in contemporary Russia, where Roma have not been able to legalize their residence in their own homes.

A typical example is the conflict between the administration of **Tula city** and the settlement’s Roma population: city authorities started to threaten to demolish structures four years ago, and later a conflict arose about use of a gas pipe by the settlement’s residents.<sup>162</sup> On 15 March 2016, workers from the gas utility shut off the gas supply to the entire settlement. This resulted in indignation on the part of the local population and a response from the administration expressed in its decision to demolish about 120 Roma residences, each of which was home to large families of five to eight people. After the demolition, which took place between March and May of 2016, several hundred tabor residents, including the elderly and children, were left without a roof over their heads.

*“When they cut off the gas in the tabor in March, everyone started to panic. Women came out on the streets. People from the administration came and started talking about demolition. We asked them to help us register our houses, but they refused and said would allow the land to be registered only after they took down the homes. I was personally rejected three times. The first conflicts with the administration started in March, and by summer, by June, they started demolition. They tore down my house on Sverdlov Street on July 6. The demolition continued until August. They tore down over 120 homes during that time. It was a nightmare. Adults and children were left without a roof over their heads.”<sup>163</sup>*

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<sup>162</sup> The Roma had to cut into the gas pipe because of the banal inability to do anything legally: deeds to Roma homes in this settlement, which had stood for almost 50 years, were never properly drawn up. The homeowners do not have the appropriate documents. Without these documents, it is impossible to connect to the gas line.

<sup>163</sup> Interview with Z., a resident of Plekhanovo, 30 January 2017.

According to local residents, the police officers and OMON troops, who provided armed support during the demolition, acted extremely harshly and applied force against the local population. Several video reports published in the media serve to confirm their words.

*"They came early in the morning, when everyone was still sleeping, and gave residents one hour to pack. Then they threw everyone out of the house, cordoned the house off with a living wall, started up their equipment, and began the demolition. The atmosphere in the tabor was terrible on those days. The women were screaming, the children were crying. They wouldn't even allow us to go back to the demolished houses, to take whatever was still intact. They loaded everything into dump trucks and drove away. They didn't allow us to take anything—not planks, not bricks, nothing. They hauled it all away."<sup>164</sup>*

The families whose homes were demolished were not given any compensation or suitable temporary housing. They all had to move in with neighbors and relatives. People who couldn't find a place in a home just built sheds from whatever materials they could find on the spots where their old homes stood. Some people still live in these sheds.

*"Fifteen people lived in our house for several months after the demolition, because they had nowhere to go. There wasn't enough space for everyone, so some people lived right on the street and slept by a fire. Anyone who could went to relatives in other cities. At that time, they said on television that everyone whose home had been demolished had been placed in temporary housing, that our children were being given food and water. Journalists from the main national TV stations came here, filmed the houses that were still standing, and then said on television that we were all fine. But they didn't show the crowd of hungry, homeless children who had nowhere to go from the rain."<sup>165</sup>*

*"Hundreds of people were left without homes. Our guard, who's also Romani, said that they were given another option of moving into a hotel, but for money. But no one agreed to that either. Instead, they built sheds made of fiberboard and other improvised materials; they now live in these sheds."<sup>166</sup>*

As the cold set in, people felt the absence of gas heating more strongly. Every shed built by the Roma on the spots of their demolished homes has makeshift heating stoves, but it is very hard to keep the sheds warm because of the thin walls and uninsulated cracks.

These makeshift stoves have caused several of these sheds to burn down. There was not enough material to build proper stoves, so the chimneys on some of them led out of windows instead of the roof. This meant that sparks flew right into the structures, which then caught fire. Five of these structures have burned down since October 2016, when the cold season started.

The local school also lost its gas supply at this time. According to teachers, the local administration did not consider their request to provide separate gas heating for the school building and bought several electric steam boilers instead. The substation that feeds that settlement cannot withstand the high electricity usage of these boilers, so failures happen several times a day and the entire settlement loses electricity. Thus, the installation of these boilers failed to solve the heating problem and affected the supply of electricity to the school and the entire settlement.

Roma people lived relatively peacefully in the settlement of Kosaya Gora, Tula Oblast from the 1980s until 2016. However, immediately following the demolition of the homes in Plekhanovo in the fall of 2016, the Tula forestry administration filed a suit in court concerning this tabor.

*"Everything started in July. Forest rangers came and said that our homes here are illegal and that they would do what they could to have them demolished. After this, police and OMON officers came to the settlement several times. They came in the mornings, broke into the houses, and demanded documents from the residents. We gave them what we had. They copied everything down and left. Then we learned that they had opened cases on six homes. A court decision to demolish these six homes came in December, and we're waiting for them to come tear them down in the spring."<sup>167</sup>*

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<sup>164</sup> Interview with Z., a resident of Plekhanovo, 30 January 2017.

<sup>165</sup> Interview with P., a resident of Plekhanovo, 2017.

<sup>166</sup> Interview with a teacher from a tabor school, 2017.

<sup>167</sup> Interview with Baron of the Kosaya Gora settlement V. Rakovich, 31 January 2017.

Around the same time, demolitions took place in a Roma settlement in neighboring Orel Oblast. Of the 16 homes located in the Northern District of Orel, eight were torn down between July and August 2016. They all housed large families.

Part of the settlement was bought by a Belgorod construction company to build a multistory residential complex.

*“Our homes were located on opposite sides of the street. As it happened, the homes on one side were registered, and the homes on the other weren’t. In the spring, the city administration filed a suit regarding these homes, and the court found that they were illegal structures. People came from the administration and threatened that we would have to pay for the excavators and garbage removal after the demolitions. They just wanted to leave us with nothing. But then a construction company bought this land and promised to compensate us for the demolition. In the summer, an engineer came with OMON troops. They threw us out of our homes with our children and started tearing down the houses. At first, they demolished four houses. The company paid them 500,000 rubles and offered them one one-room apartment. Then, in August, they took another four houses down. I lived in one of them. But the company didn’t pay anything. They initially asked us to wait until they sold the apartments in their new building, but that happened several months ago, and we haven’t received anything.”<sup>168</sup>*

Right now, four of these families are living with relatives or in rented apartments, since they do not have the ability to start the process of registering and building their own homes.

The situation surrounding Roma settlements in the Republic of Tatarstan also appears unsettled. Roma settlements in Aysha and Nizhniye Vyazovye (Zelenodolsk District) are also under threat of demolition, while the local administration has organized a persistent campaign of harassment against the Roma population. Local human rights defenders link this to the 2012 appointment of Alexander Tygin as head of the district.

The city court received a claim from the local executive committee, which stated that 17 of the 20 Roma homes violated city planning laws and that the government wanted to evict the residents and demolish the buildings.

According to Tygin, one reason the administration decided on demolition was the “regular signs of outrage from Aysha residents, who are angry that the Roma people are violating not just the laws of Russia, but also of good neighborly relations.”<sup>169</sup>

The Roma asked if they could buy the land next to Aysha, but their request was denied; they connect this with discrimination:

*“First, they tried to take our children away from us because we supposedly weren’t able to create conditions for their lives and development, and now they want to take away our homes. Where’s the protection of the rights of the child that the child welfare cited when they tried to deprive us of our parental rights? And why isn’t this agency now protecting their rights when they will soon end up on the street?”<sup>170</sup>*

A similar problem exists at the Nizhniye Vyazovye settlement on the other side of the Volga River. In late summer 2016, representatives of the local and district administrations came to the tabor and informed the local population that they would file a claim with the court regarding four homes if the residents did not agree to dismantle these homes themselves. The Roma complied. However, in the fall, the village mayor Foat Nazmieevich Shamsiev pronounced an ultimatum: tabor residents had until August 2017 to register their unregistered homes or the administration would file a lawsuit to have the houses demolished and their residents evicted from the tabor.

Residents of Nizhniye Vyazovye also made several attempts to obtain permission to build houses and asked for land to be allocated to them for this purpose, but the district administration never even tried to meet them halfway.

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<sup>168</sup> Interview with R., a resident of the Orel settlement, 2017.

<sup>169</sup> From the website [idelreal.org](http://www.idelreal.org) of 20 February 2017, article by V. Meshcheriakov “Za tsygan otvetil.” Available here: <http://www.idelreal.org/a/28320141.html>

<sup>170</sup> Interview with V., a resident of the Aysha settlement, 2017.

*"We said: fine, we bought 1200 square meters in Safronovo, which is right next to Aysha, and drew up the deed, but Tygin won't give us permission to build there. He says, go wherever you want, but you're not going to live there. We even promised to have an area for dumpsters, to bring in electricity and water at our own expense. I personally drew up the deed through the registration chamber, but they never gave permission. I have personally tried to set up appointments with him several times to find out the reason for the rejection, but he has never received me once."<sup>171</sup>*

Tabor residents believe that it is very possible that the administration will adopt a decision on demolition in the future. They say that Roma settlements in Perm also currently face the threat of demolition, even though 22 out of 44 residential structures there were demolished in 2014. That demolition took place at night. According to local residents, OMON officers arrived at the tabor after midnight, woke the residents up, and threw them out of their homes and onto the street. The demolition continued until lunchtime the following day. Tatyana Margolina, the human rights ombudsman for Perm Krai, attempted to dispute the legality of the administration's actions at the prosecutor's office, but she was not successful. The demolition of Roma homes in the neighboring microdistrict of Chapayevsky started in 2016. This process may be continued in 2017.<sup>172</sup>

## **DISCRIMINATION AND SEGREGATION OF ROMA CHILDREN IN RUSSIAN SCHOOLS**

The separation of children in schools by ethnicity is one of the cruelest forms of discrimination. Roma children must deal with segregation and poor-quality education in schools in many regions throughout Russia. This violates their constitutional rights to non-discrimination and education and damages their ability to integrate, which is often the cause of the low standard of living and marginalization of the entire Roma ethnicity. Segregation in Russian schools takes on many forms: for example, many Roma children are placed in special remedial classes for children with limited intellectual and other capacities. This is done on the basis of tests that are mainly taken by Roma people. However, all the children are given the same diagnoses, which are generally social deprivation and bilingualism. Roma children are also placed in separate so-called "Roma classes" that only include Roma children. They are also frequently subjected to segregation outside classrooms. For example, they are not allowed to use common play yards or cafeterias, and they are not allowed to participate in school holidays. Also, there have been cases where children were transferred to distance learning. Finally, statements made by teachers in the segregated education system make it patently clear that these teachers expect less success from Roma students or don't believe that they can learn at all. Therefore, they have low requirements for these children.

Out of the ten schools in Tula, Penza, Kazan, Orel, and Volgograd visited by ADC "Memorial" experts in the first half of 2017, only two have Roma children studying in mixed classes. Of the remaining schools, one was an entirely Roma elementary school on the territory of the tabor in Plekhanovo, while the other seven all had separate "Roma classes."

The Plekhanovo elementary school, which was created specifically for instructing Roma children, is located directly on the territory of the tabor. It currently has 160 students from grades 1 to 4. Children of other nationalities do not attend this school, which means that children later have trouble moving to middle school, where they are faced with an unfamiliar and seemingly hostile environment. After completing grade 4, children must move to school No. 17 for further study. This school is located several kilometers from the tabor. However, many children simply stop their studies and stay home because they fear being among unknown children on the one hand and facing the open disdain of the teachers on the other.

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<sup>171</sup> Interview with D., a resident of Nizhniye Vyazovye, 2017.

<sup>172</sup> Report from the news channel Ural-Inform Perm. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xvBIY4\\_uBUk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xvBIY4_uBUk)



*“After finishing fourth grade, children move to another school — School No. 17 — for grades 5 and up. But they’re isolated as soon as they get there and only attend the afternoon session. They don’t perform very well there, unfortunately. Parents say that they won’t allow their children to go there because they are treated so badly. Many children don’t want to go there, and they come running back to us, begging us to take them back. Sometimes, out of the kindness of our hearts, we let them sit in on classes. They dread going to the other school because they can sense the ill will. There have been incidents where they were thrown out for some offense that they may not have even committed. If something happens there, the Roma are always to blame.”<sup>173</sup>*

One student at School No. 17 said that their classes start after lunch and last until four or five in the afternoon. Three or four teachers work with them, and one of the teachers is the homeroom teacher. This student said that Roma children rarely see Russian children and do not even know them, since they attend class separately. When he was asked why he wasn’t in school, he said that he didn’t want to go there because he was afraid that he would be beaten up.

School No. 17 currently has several dozen children in grades 5 to 7. Most of them do not want to continue their studies because they feel excluded after the tabor school, and also because of tradition, in accordance with which they must start working at quite a young age and have certain responsibilities that deprive them of the opportunity to attend school.

An egregious example of segregation was found at a school in the village of Aysha, Zelenodolsk District, Republic of Tatarstan, where a special first grade class known as “ts,” which is only for Roma children, has existed for several years. It currently has eight students. Another few children attend grades 2, 3, and 4.

*“This year we registered eight people for first grade. All the children are the same age — seven. In grades 2 and 3, the children generally disappear and don’t attend school, and I can’t say exactly how many of them are students now. There are five children in grade 4. In grade 5, we transfer all of them to homeschooling. We give them assignments, they study them and then come to take exams. Right now, we have seven remote students in grade 5, three in grade 6, and two each in grades 7 and 8. No one continues beyond this. Not one Roma student has completed nine grades over the entire course of my time here.”<sup>174</sup>*

Local residents say that teachers make decisions to separate students or put them in distance learning in conjunction with parents. At the start of every school year, the school holds a meeting with tabor residents where they decide what form of study their children will have. Parents generally always agree for their children to attend classes separately from the other students and say that they basically do not care where and with whom their children attend school. However, surveys have shown that they are very concerned about the level of knowledge their children attain in the local school. They believe that it is extremely low: even after several years of schooling, many children are illiterate and have no command over the very basic skills that children acquire in elementary school.

*“Students in Plekhanovo seem to be taught well, but that’s not the case here. Here they teach just so that the children are registered. Half of our students are still illiterate. I mean, they even had a New Year’s tree separately from all the other children. The school gave the others presents, but didn’t give our children any. We collected money ourselves, bought candy, toys, so that they could have a normal holiday like all the other children.”<sup>175</sup>*

In March 2016, the prosecutor’s office issued a recommendation to the head of the executive committee of Zelenodolsk District in connection with the existence of class “ts” at the middle school in Aysha. The actions of the school principal were found illegal, and an order was given to dissolve class “ts.” (“Tsigane”) separate “Roma class,” but in the fact that this class only had five students. This is a violation of the federal law “On Education in the RF” and SanPiN 2.4.2.2821-10 “Sanitary and Epidemiological Requirements for the Conditions and Organization of Instruction in General Education Schools,” under which classes in village schools must have at least 14 students.

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<sup>173</sup> Interview with a teacher at the tabor school, 2017.

<sup>174</sup> Interview with M.P. Nikishina, a teacher at a school in Aysha, 2017.

<sup>175</sup> Interview with the grandmother of one of the students, 2017.



The anti-Roma campaign that was promoted by the local government after epidemics of hepatitis and tuberculosis in the village of Aysha also affected the tabor in Nizhniye Vyazovye. The local school did not show any signs of segregation. However, because the tabor faced scrutiny from the sanitary and epidemiological service in the new academic year, many children were not allowed to attend class because they did not have the required vaccinations.

*"Our school is very good, the children like to study there. But this year, many children did not start first grade, since they hadn't received certain shots. After the hepatitis started several years ago, our children always have to get vaccinations to attend school."<sup>176</sup>*

The school in Nizhniye Vyazovye is only one of two schools where we noted that administrators and teachers are making efforts to overcome segregation and implement an integrative approach. At the second school (Middle School No. 9 in Penza), children from the neighboring tabor have been integrated with the other children for many years. There are currently 150 Roma students in grades 1 to 11 at this school. Over the past 10 years, the school has graduated nine to 13 Roma students annually. This school is also known for the Russian-Roma football team it created, which has had success at annual district competitions.

The experience of this integrated school in Penza (an oblast center in central Russia) shows that it does not take much effort to ensure the successful instruction of Roma children with other children, provided that administrators and teachers have a non-discriminatory attitude.

The situation is completely different at the S.E. Kuznetsov school, which is located in the village of Chemodanovka, Bessonovskiy District, Penza Oblast. Fifty-three children from a tabor of Wallachian Roma attend this school. The parents of children who attend this school very much want their children to be placed in classes with everyone else, but instead they are placed in separate "Roma classes" because of their low level of preparation. Nominally, this relates to grades 1 and 2, but these classes also include children whose parents enrolled their children after they turned eight, i.e. children who missed the deadline for enrolling in first grade. Thus, children who are nine, 10, and 11 are in these classes as well.

A similar situation has developed in Volgograd schools, for example in the village named after Maksim Gorky. Only 40 students attend School No. 140, which is the closest school to the Roma tabor. Roma children started attending this school relatively recently—they started enrolling in first grade just three years ago. Now there are three grades with Roma children. Sixteen to 17 children are in grades 1 and 2, while five are in grade 3. All these children are taught separately from the others. During a conversation with the school's principal E.L. Gordiyash, we were able to clarify that the school administration forms these "Roma classes" illegally and without approval from anyone. After a regular class has a certain number of Roma students, these students are removed from the class and taught separately.

*"Naturally, our records show that they are in general classes, because that's the way it's supposed to be, but if a class gets at least 15 Roma, then we put them in a separate class where they learn together."<sup>177</sup>*

Aside from "Roma classes," school administrators also arranged for a special "Roma table" in the school's cafeteria, where Roma children use tableware intended only for them.

*"Our school is very young, we have new classrooms, a large separate gym. The building's in good repair. As disadvantaged children, all our Roma children receive free meals. We even have a separate table and separate tableware for the Roma children."<sup>178</sup>*

The school's principal does not conceal her disdain for Roma students:

*"You can't do anything with Roma children. They're very poor students. They're not interested, and, indeed, what's the point of attending school if they're going to leave after grade 6 anyway? In March, our children from nine classes took a practice test that they will have to take at the*

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<sup>176</sup> Interview with M., a resident of Nizhniye Vyazovye, 2017.

<sup>177</sup> Interview with E.L. Gordiyash, principal of School No. 140, 2017.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

*end of the year. Over 50 percent got twos [on a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the highest — Trans.] And these aren't Roma children. They're the children who have been here the whole time, who we have cultivated since first grade, to whom we have given several years of our lives. And what will happen with the Roma children? They'll never pass this exam in their lives."*<sup>179</sup>

Some of the children from this village go to a different school (No. 15), which has 59 Roma children who are all in "remedial" classes. They are placed in these classes after being processed by a special medical-pedagogical commission, which "diagnoses" all Roma children with delays in psychological development. There are eight of these classes in grades 3 through 8. Eight people are listed as students in grade 8, but only three students actually attend class. As in School No. 140, children here eat separately from Russian children in the cafeteria and, on top of this, they are scheduled to eat at a different time.

Roma at Ovsyannikovo Middle School in Orel are also taught separately. There are currently two "Roma classes" in the school — in grade 2, which has 16 children, and grade 3, which has 12 children. According to school principal Maya Alekseevna Frolova, they were not able to enroll enough students for a first-grade class, and no one has made it to fourth grade. There will be one first-grade class this year, which will have 16 Roma students. It is obvious that teachers in this school treat Roma students with bias:

*"All the Roma children at our school study separately from the others, because their level is, how should I put it, lower than the level of other children. Not one Roma child has completed even nine grades for the entire time I've worked at this school. The highest grade they've reached is sixth grade. But that's extremely rare. They mainly complete four grades and then their parents marry them off or move to another city."*<sup>180</sup>

Thus, structural discrimination against the Roma population in the Russian Federation does exist: most children are excluded from the process of receiving a quality education, and no more than one percent earn a high school diploma, even though school is mandatory for all children in the country up through eleventh grade; illiterate and poorly-educated people are not able to follow complicated bureaucratic procedures, which means that some of the requirements for registering housing and paying for access to water, gas, and electricity are violated; dense Roma settlements are notable for their poverty and low standards of living in comparison to surrounding villages, while the large-scale demolition of Roma homes and the loss of their only housing leads to homelessness and loss of personal documents and registration for place of abode; without registration, people lose all their social rights, and ethnic profiling during police operations makes them particularly vulnerable, which is accompanied by conflicts with the law, the stigmatization of the entire people, and racial prejudice.

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<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> From an interview with M.A. Frolova, principal of Ovsyannikov Middle School, 2017.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## WE CALL THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT TO:

**With respect to discrimination-related legislation, develop comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation to ban all form of discrimination and introduce a clear definition of racial discrimination adequate to international standards and UN CERD.**

**Bring to an end, by all appropriate means, including legislation as required by circumstances, racial discrimination by any persons, groups or organizations by public officials. Adopt state policies that would prevent racial discrimination by state authorities. In particular to:**

- Monitor, investigate, prosecute and punish any public incitement of racial discrimination on the part of national or local authorities;
- In ethnically diverse regions and localities, monitor recruitment practices in public institutions with an aim to prevent discrimination on the basis of ethnicity.
- Put an end to ethnic profiling by law enforcement officers that results in frequent detentions without substantial reason and repeated dactiloscopic expertise of Roma community;
- Put an end to harassment, persecution and prosecution of NGOs working on protection of the rights of ethnic minorities, indigenous peoples, non-citizens and other vulnerable discriminated groups.

**On the particular situation in Crimea, taking into account Resolutions of UN General Assembly 68/262 (2014) and 71/205 (2016) and the decision of International Court of Justice on provisional measures with the case Ukraine v. Russia (19 April 2017):**

- Duly investigate reports of ethnic profiling, discriminatory practices and ill-treatment in peninsula and on the de-facto border with Crimea;
- Put an end to ethnic prosecution and enforced disappearances of Crimean Tatars in the annexed Crimea;
- Repeal the judicial ban (decision of the Supreme Court, September 26, 2016) of the Representative Body of Crimean Tatars (Mejlis) as an extremist organization.
- Put an end to any form of harassment, persecutions and prosecution of Crimean Tatars and Ukrainians, including allowing their community members to exercise freely and unconditionally right to assembly and association, their cultural rights, the right to self-representation and to receive education in mother tongue.
- Bring to an end the practices of illegal surveillance of religious institutions, including the practice of setting of video-camera's in mosques in Crimea, prevalent on the peninsula since 2014 along with unlawful searches in mosques and massive detentions herein;
- Take measure against the stigmatization of the Crimean Tatar people and not allow it in the media; counteract the creation of the image of "enemy and traitor" against Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars.

**Adopt and implement a state program of comprehensive support for Russia's Roma population aimed at overcoming structural discrimination that includes positive measures on documentation and the exercise of rights to housing, a high-quality education, employment, and access to medical and social assistance. In particular, the authorities must:**

- Allocate plots of lands to needy families with many children in accordance with current laws.
- Facilitate the registration of the place of residence of members of Roma community, even in cases when their homes are not registered;

- Put an end to police operations aiming at disconnecting Roma settlements from gas and other resources.
- Monitor and take measures to stop propagation of hatred of Roma people in the media.
- Put an immediate end to the practice of forced evictions. If resettlement is unavoidable, alternate housing equipped with modern conveniences must be provided as quickly as possible and compensation must be made for losses and emotional damages.
- Adopt measures to fight racial segregation (often latent and/or illegal) of Roma children in schools;
- Require from elementary schools and preschool institutions to draw up a compulsory plan of activities for the purpose of effective and successful integration of Roma children into preschool institutions and elementary schools;
- Create opportunities for the preschool preparation of Roma children along with additional Russian language classes in pre-school and school curriculum. The Roma language must be included to at least some degree in the school program; and opportunities for adults who did not receive an education on time must be created.

**Adopt immediate and effective measures, particularly in the fields of teaching, education, culture and information, with a view to combating prejudices which lead to racial discrimination and to promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship among nations and racial or ethnical groups. In particular:**

- Encourage initiatives that foster extra-curriculum inter-community activities among children of different ethnic origins, including establishment of platform to share cultural experiences and organise sports events.
- Monitor and take measures to prevent incitement to, or acts of, discrimination in schools, promote inclusion in society through a curriculum which ensures the principles and moral values of equality within the scope of social equity.
- Accept children of foreign citizens in Russian schools regardless of their status or whether or not their parents have a registration.
- Immediately stop persecuting or otherwise subjecting teachers, staff members at schools and cultural workers to discriminatory practices ranging up to dismissal for political reasons, under the pretext of belonging to a non-Russian ethnical group or “fighting religious extremism”, return people fired for this reason to their jobs and compensate them for emotional damages;
- Training of school personnel in needs of specific groups, effective working practices and cultural understanding;

**Implement its obligations to protect from discrimination internal migrants and non-citizens. In particular to:**

- Facilitate the regularisation of the situation of vulnerable groups arriving to Russia from Ukraine (refugees, including Roma communities) and ensuring the realisation of their social and economic rights.
- Reject plans to exclude the family members of migrants from mandatory health insurance; provide effective state monitoring of compliance with workplace conditions for migrants;
- Fight illegal employment practices, especially in the run up to the World Football Championship 2018;
- Fight explicit illegal discriminatory practices, including public expression thereof, in public spaces related to housing, education and health services.

**Amend the existing anti-extremist legislation and measures to fight extremism in line with the recommendations of the Venice Commission, make it an effective tool for fighting manifestations of racism and xenophobia related to violence, and to avoid unjustified restrictions of basic human rights. In particular to:**

- Amend legislation on hate crimes and related activities, including organizing and financing as well as public incitement to hatred, etc. to ensure that legislation prioritizes bringing to justice those who are responsible for dangerous crimes against the person. The internal policies and regulations of law enforcement agencies should reflect the same priorities. Investigators should take into account the severity of the threat to the society when evaluating public incitement;
- Issue a decision on legal norms limiting freedom of speech to bring their implementation in line with 2012 Rabat Plan of Action on the prohibition of advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred. In particular, ensure that courts and law enforcement agencies assessing the level of public threat of statements not only consider their content but also the context, style and suitability for their audience, whether they incited others to break laws, the speaker's personal authority and other circumstances;
- Instruct public officials not to publicly express intolerance or disrespect in regard to any group based on race, skin colour, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief. Civil service legislation should include effective sanctions against such actions;
- Rule out punishment by imprisonment for statements and actions not related to incitement to violence and discrimination, including denial of Russia's territorial integrity, abasement of human dignity on the basis of ethnicity and other characteristics, etc.;
- Stop the practice of court bans on books and other materials for 'extremist content' and dispense with the ineffective Federal List of Extremist Materials;
- Revise internet filtering policies to ensure greater streamlining and transparency in countering extremism; put an end to extrajudicial procedures on blocking access to materials deemed to have 'extremist content';
- Law enforcement agencies' reports on countering extremism should be divided into three categories: measures taken against illegal public statements, involvement in banned organizations and groups and hate crimes. This would put an end to the practice of inflating counter-extremism statistics due to prosecutions for statements rather than acts of violence;
- Cease blocking of bank accounts of those included in the Rosfinmonitoring list of individuals involved in or suspected of involvement in extremist or terrorist activity.

**To take effective measures in counteracting hate crimes. In particular to:**

- Change the crime reporting system so that a suspected hate motive can be recorded at any stage of the criminal procedure, including at the outset of a criminal investigation;
- Train law enforcement personnel in the detection and prevention of offenses motivated by racial and xenophobic hatred;
- Ensure that regular police, and not only specialized law enforcement units, investigate hate crimes;
- Publish official hate crime statistics, disaggregated by type, regions, and the number of victims. Data should be based both on court decisions and the number of criminal cases opened;
- Ensure that the information collected by non-governmental organizations monitoring racist groups is routinely used by law enforcement officials.



# ANNEXES

## CRIME AND PUNISHMENT STATISTICS

Data as of May 2, 2017 г.

### Statistics of Racist and Neo-Nazi Attacks in Russia (with categorization of victims)

	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008		2009		2010		2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		2016**		2017**	
<b>K — killed, B — Beaten, wounded</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>B</b>
<b>Total*</b>	50	219	49	419	66	522	94	625	116	501	94	443	44	421	27	213	20	196	24	206	36	134	12	96	10	74	3	10
Dark-skinned people	1	33	3	38	2	32	0	34	2	26	2	59	1	28	1	19	0	26	0	7	0	15	0	6	1	0	0	0
People from Central Asia	10	23	18	35	17	60	36	95	57	133	40	92	20	86	10	38	8	38	15	62	14	30	5	7	2	22	0	2
People from the Caucasus	15	38	12	52	15	72	27	77	22	71	18	78	5	45	8	18	4	15	3	28	3	14	0	8	2	1	0	1
People from the Middle East and North Africa	4	12	1	22	0	11	1	22	0	15	0	2	0	2	0	5	0	2	0	1	0	6	1	3	0	0	0	0
From other countries of Asia	8	30	4	58	4	52	9	76	9	40	14	37	3	19	0	15	0	5	0	7	1	5	0	2	1	4	0	0
Other people of "non-Slav appearance"	2	22	3	72	4	69	9	67	13	57	9	62	7	104	1	26	1	15	0	32	2	8	0	10	2	8	0	1
Members of subcultures, anti-fascists and leftists	0	4	3	121	3	119	8	174	3	103	5	77	3	67	1	40	1	57	0	7	0	16	0	17	0	7	1	3
Homeless ***	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	4	1	4	0	1	3	3	3	6	2	2	3	13	1	3	8	1	1	2	1
Ethnic Russians ***	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	22	3	12	0	7	1	8	1	9	0	5	0	3	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jews ***	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	9	0	6	0	3	0	3	1	2	0	0	0	2	0	1	2	1	0	3	0	0
Religious groups ***	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	9	0	6	1	2	0	22	0	24	0	10	0	21	2	12	0	18	0	20	0	1
LGBT ***	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	7	1	6	0	0	0	3	0	3	0	12	2	25	0	9	0	9	1	4	0	0
Others or not known	10	57	5	21	21	107	3	30	2	25	1	24	3	31	1	11	0	9	2	8	1	12	1	7	0	4	0	1

\* This table reflects not the "actual identity" of victims, but rather the identity given to them by the attackers. In other words, if a Slavic person was taken for a Caucasian, he would be registered in the category "people from the Caucasus". This table does not include victims in Republics of North Caucasus and victims in Crimea prior to 2016.

\*\* The data is still far from complete.

\*\*\* Murders or attacks on homeless people, which we or the law enforcement bodies suspect to be committed by an ideological motive, are included in the tables since 2007. Besides that, we know about 10 murdered homeless people in 2004, 5 murdered and 4 beaten in 2005, and 7 murdered and 4 beaten in 2006. Ethnic Russians, Jews, Religious groups and LGBT were included into Others before 2007.

We have not included victims of death threats. In 2010 we have reports about 6 persons who received such threats and in 2011 — 10, in 2012 — 2, in 2013 — 3, in 2014 — 2, in 2015 — 4, in 2016 — 8.

## GUILTY VERDICTS FOR “CRIMES OF AN EXTREMIST NATURE”

In addition to the incitement to hate and crimes, the substance of which is directly related to the concept of “extremism,” this table also includes sentences for hate crimes. We can evaluate the sentences as a fully or largely appropriate, or as a fully or largely inappropriate; sometimes, we are unable to determine the extent of its appropriateness. Three numbers in each column refer to sentences that we consider appropriate, inappropriate and undetermined, respectively.

Year	Number of convictions				Number of offenders convicted and punished				Convicted offenders who received suspended sentences or were released from punishment			
	Violence	Incite-ment	Vandal-izing	Participa-tion in a group*	Violence	Incite-ment	Vandal-izing	Participa-tion in a group*	Violence	Incite-ment	Vandal-izing	Participa-tion in a group*
2004	9/0/0	3/0/0	-**	3/2/0	26/0/0	3/0/0	-	3/2/0	5/0/0	2/0/0	-	9/0/0
2005	17/0/0	12/1/0	-	2/4/8	56/0/0	15/2/0	-	2/18/19	5/0/0	6/0/0	-	17/0/0
2006	33/0/0	17/2/0	-	3/1/3	109/0/0	20/2/0	-	15/1/3	24/0/0	7/1/0	-	33/0/0
2007	23/0/0	30/1/1	3/0/0	2/0/8	65/0/0	41/0/5	5/0/0	4/0/27	18/0/0	12/0/0	2/0/0	23/0/0
2008	36/0/0	49/2/1	6/0/0	3/0/4	110/0/0	70/3/0	7/0/0	10/0/14	21/0/0	27/3/0	6/0/0	36/0/0
2009	52/0/1	58/3/0	10/0/0	5/12/2	130/0/2	77/4/0	19/0/0	9/25/2	35/0/1	35/1/0	8/0/0	52/0/1
2010	91/0/0	76/8/3	12/0/1	9/7/6	297/0/0	87/9/5	21/0/1	34/7/14	120/0/0	38/5/4	5/0/1	91/0/0
2011	62/1/3	76/6/1	9/0/0	12/7/7	194/4/7	84/7/1	15/0/0	26/12/19	75/4/1	34/2/1	4/0/0	62/1/3
2012	32/2/2	91/3/1	6/0/0	4/8/2	68/4/3	96/10/1	7/0/0	7/22/10	11/0/2	21/5/0	1/0/0	32/2/2
2013	32/1/0	133/7/9	8/0/0	7/8/6	55/1/0	126/7/10	10/0/0	8/16/11	15/0/0	17/3/3	1/0/0	32/1/0
2014	22/0/4	154/4/5	4/0/0	6/8/10	47/0/6	153/4/7	6/0/0	14/21/22	7/0/1	16/2/0	0/0/0	22/0/4
2015	24/1/0	205/14/8	9/1/0	10/15/3	58/1/0	206/15/8	14/1/0	24/43/6	12/0/0	42/5/3	2/0/0	7/1/0
2016***	19/2/0	181/15/5	5/1/0	6/19/2	42/2/0	192/15/5	4/1/0	19/37/0	5/0/0	86/9/2	0/1/0	13/1/0
2017***	2/0/0	54/4/2	3/0/0	0/6/1	4/0/0	53/4/2	4/0/0	0/19/4	0/0/0	28/2/1	0/0/0	0/5/0

\* This refers to participation in an «extremist community» or an “organization, banned for extremism,” or similar anti-terrorism articles.

Data on sentences issued to members of a number of Islamic organizations has been only partially tabulated at this time.

\*\* The hyphen means that the data for this period has not yet been collected.

\*\*\* The data is still far from complete.

**Anti-Discrimination Centre «ADC Memorial»**

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ADC Memorial, CrimeaSOS and SOVA Center, together with FIDH (International Federation for Human Rights) reported to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) blatant problems of racism in Russia and in the territories de-facto controlled by the Russian government.

A new form of discrimination was analyzed in the report, namely the persecution of ethnic Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars, primarily caused by military intervention and annexation of Crimea in 2014.

■ ■ Representatives of these ethnic groups face serious human rights violations — forced disappearances, torture, illegal detention based on their ethnicity, as well as limitation for speaking and studying their native languages, practicing of religion and culture” — commented Evhenia Andreyuk, Ukrainian Human Rights defender, vice-coordinator of CrimeaSOS.

Practicing Muslims in general suffer from persecution related to unsubstantiated allegations of their connection to religious extremism and radicalism or even terrorist groups. Thus, in addition to Crimean Tatars, persecution affects residents of the North Caucasus and many millions of migrant workers from Central Asian countries. Regular repressions against religious organizations and groups paired with ethnic profiling by the police results in multi-layered discrimination.

■ ■ Many Caucasians who are Russian citizens suffer from “Caucasus-phobia”: they cannot rent housing, get a decent job, their access to education or social services is hampered. The situation is even harder for non-citizens, who are seen as “foreigners” on the basis of religion, country of origin, and citizenship” — says Alexander Verkhovsky, head of the SOVA Center.

Although the statistics shows the decline in hate murders over the recent years, in comparison with 2002-2012 when their number had reached its peak, human rights defenders warn against the consequences of state-sponsored spreading of fear of migrants and Caucasians used in political struggle in Russia.

■ ■ Propaganda has created an “image of the enemy”, state television stations are regularly intimidating the audience with stories about “the hand of the West” and the conspiracy of neighboring countries against Russia” — says Marceau Siviude, Director of Operations at FIDH.

Moreover, the official data portrays an incomplete picture of the scale of hate crimes in Russia since investigators often do not qualify hate crimes as such, but rather as “murder” or “damage to health”.

It is important to emphasize that the measures designed to fight extremism are often inadequate or even violating the right to freedom of expression.

Organisations defending minorities and indigenous people from discrimination. Many such NGOs were declared “foreign agents” while the representative body of Crimean Tatars was declared an “extremist organization” and thus banned.

In their alternative report prepared for the 93rd UN CERD session scheduled for early August to examine the official report provided to the Committee by the Russian authorities, defenders brought to the attention the issue of xenophobia against Roma, including discrimination by law enforcement agencies.

■ ■ Ethnic discrimination manifests itself in such practices as segregation of Roma children in schools, evictions of Roma settlements contradicting international law, anti-Roma campaigns in local media and brutal police behavior” — says Stefania Kulaeva, head of ADC Memorial.

Finally, the report recommendations call upon the Russian government to stop state discrimination against a number of ethnic groups, to amend contradictory anti-extremist legislation violating the freedom of speech, adopt measures in order to render anti-extremist law enforcement practices compliant with the international law and to cease oppression of the civil society.