

# Xenophobia, Freedom of Conscience and Anti-Extremism in Russia in 2014

**A collection of annual reports  
by the SOVA Center for Information and Analysis**

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This collection of reports summarizes all the major areas of work addressed by the SOVA Center for Information and Analysis in 2014, in a similar fashion to collections in previous years.

There are three reports on themes which have become traditional for the SOVA Center in this collection: The first report addresses radical nationalism and hate crime, and the efforts of government and society to combat these phenomena. The second report addresses problems relating to freedom of conscience in contemporary Russia. The third report addresses the misuse and abuse of 'anti-extremism' measures. The reports are updated versions of original texts on the SOVA Center website.

The appendix provides details about hate crimes and the prosecution of such crimes. All data were compiled at March 7, 2015.

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*Vera Alperovich, Natalia Yudina*

## Calm Before the Storm? Xenophobia and Radical Nationalism in Russia, and Efforts to Counteract Them in 2014

### Summary

Since the beginning of 2014, the political and militant activity of Russian nationalists, along with life of Russia in general, revolved around the events in Ukraine – the “Maidan,” and then the war. Curtailing of the anti-migrant campaign in late 2013 became another important factor for the nationalists. The shift of attention toward Ukraine has only reinforced the sharp decline in popularity of the anti-migrant theme – always the principal nationalist issue.

Nationalists tried to compensate for lack of demand for their anti-migrant rhetoric by addressing the newly relevant Ukraine-related issues, but failed, because of a deep split on this subject in the Russian ultra-right movement. There were many possible dividing lines related to one’s position regarding the “Maidan,” Ukrainian nationalists, annexation of Crimea, the DNR and LNR, and Russia’s more active participation in the war. Yesterday’s allies often found themselves on the opposite sides. As a result, many right-wing associations have lost some of their activists; entire movements abandoned their long-time coalitions; organizations, which had collaborated for years, turned against each other. The level of passions, typical for a war, led to mutual accusations (of “pro-Bandera position,” “serving the interests of the Kremlin,” or something else), which tended to be harsher than usual.

Such a serious crisis in the movement, complete prevalence of the Ukrainian theme in the media, and, possibly, the official “anti-fascist” rhetoric (also related to Ukraine) had an extremely negative impact on all kinds of traditional far-right activities: actions “against ethnic crime” and other rallies fell in number, the raiding activity became less regular and prominent, the “Kondopoga technology” was practically abandoned, and the “Russian March” was a failure.

The Russian nationalist movement “has lost its voice.” The nationalists, who support the “Russian Spring,” are merely repeating lines that can also be heard on national television, while those who oppose it are afraid to speak loudly enough, and are uncertain how to act when, contrary to their usual self-image, they are not representing the majority.

The views of opponents of the “Russian Spring” are much more convincingly and actively expressed by the liberal opposition, which brought thousands of people out to the streets during their “Peace Marches.” In addition, the grassroots support toward the “Russian Spring” during 2014 and early 2015 started to involve structures that seriously compete with the nationalists. The latter can only participate in the activities of these pro-government movements, and even then no prospects are guaranteed. At this time, only a minority within the nationalist movement have followed this direction.

The majority of grassroots nationalists still reject direct cooperation with the authorities and, in general, are oriented more toward violence than toward political actions. However, even in this respect a slight decrease was observed.

In 2014, the far-right criminal activity was lower than a year earlier, although the number of murders ended up being higher. The “ethnic outsiders” – natives of Central Asia and the Caucasus – still constituted the principal group of victims, but violence for the category has decreased. Meanwhile, the political violence is rising. In addition to traditional neo-Nazi attacks against informal youth movements and anti-fascists, there were several cases of attacks by pro-government nationalists against those deemed a “fifth column.”

The observed quantitative reduction in violence (to the extent that cannot be explained by the usual lag in data collection) is likely to be temporary. Most likely, this difference can be explained by the fact that a number of ultra-right militants have temporarily shifted their attention to the events in Ukraine, and some of the more aggressive ones even left to participate in the hostilities.

Drop in the level of violence can't be explained by improvements in law enforcement practice, since, unfortunately, this practice has not improved. The disparity in favor of propaganda-related (rather than violence-related) prosecution is only increasing.

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that, for example, members of the St. Petersburg neo-Nazi group NS/WP went to prison during the period under review. In addition, the law enforcement vigorously prosecuted leaders and activists of several notorious nationalist organizations (the “Russians,” Restruk!, Attack (*Ataka*), the Russian Runs and some others). Unfortunately, in many of these cases, the incidents and articles for the criminal charges were selected at random, and politically motivated persecution can be suspected, because all these people were in strong opposition to the current Russian government, and, frequently, to its course of action in Ukraine.

The number of sentences for propaganda was, traditionally, several times greater than all the other convictions. As usual, the offenders were found primarily among social network users and prosecuted for sharing various xenophobic materials; however, some well-known right-wing radicals, such as Dmitry “Beshenyi” (Mad) Yevtushenko, Maxim “Tesak” (the Hatchet) Martinskevich and others, were convicted as well. While penalties for propaganda are usually quite adequate – most offenders are sentenced to mandatory or corrective work – in general, this practice cannot be called reasonable or effective.

The Federal List of Extremist Materials grew somewhat less vigorously than before, but with the same number of errors and repetitions. In addition, the authorities actively used a system of judicial restrictions on access to Internet content that was deemed “extremist.” Restrictions are also imposed in extra-judicial manner in accordance with “Lugovoy’s Law.” However, these registries are maintained just as haphazardly and with about the same share of inappropriate decisions as the Federal List. Meanwhile, the enforcement of “Lugovoy’s Law” has clearly demonstrated that extra-judicial blocking of websites for the purpose of preventing riots inevitably leads to arbitrary enforcement and abuse of power.

Thus, we can not say that the government was successful in countering radical xenophobia and nationalism in 2014. Positive quantitative indicators resulted from a changed set of circumstances, and these changes, in and of themselves, carry a very serious potential threat.

The shift in the official Russian policy and propaganda toward greater traditionalism, authoritarianism and militarism creates a breeding ground for nationalist ideology. The above-mentioned new movements in support of a somewhat more radical version of the official rhetoric are expected to provide serious competition for traditional right-wing groups. Using largely similar ideological notions, they command greater resources and have a chance to absorb part of the Russian xenophobic majority once the Ukrainian conflict declines in relevance, and ethno-nationalist agenda once again becomes popular.

Thousands of Russian citizens (not only nationalists), who have participated in the war in Ukraine, also present a major potential problem. After the end of the conflict, or even earlier, many of them, having gained combat experience, will not only return to Russia but may also want to engage in political activities. Such activities could only be radical, including (even most likely) nationalist.

Meanwhile, the crisis of existing nationalist movement will be resolved one way or another. In particular, new age cohort of activists could play a role.

Taken together, these observations suggest a significant increase in activity of right-wing radicals in Russia in the medium term, rather than their decline. However, this increase will likely present us with a new picture of radical nationalism.

## Criminal Manifestations of Racism and Xenophobia

### Systematic Racist and Neo-Nazi Violence

In 2014, at least 27 people were killed and about 123 people were injured as a result of racist and neo-Nazi violence; 2 people received serious death threats. These numbers do not include victims in Crimea and the North Caucasus republics and victims of mass brawls. This data shows that the number of racist and neo-Nazi attacks dropped in 2014, while the number of murders rose. In 2013, 23 people were killed, 203 were wounded or beaten, and 10 received death threats<sup>1</sup>. The data for 2014 is far from final<sup>2</sup>; usually the numbers grow about 20% in the course of the following year. It is also possible that, on the background of official rhetoric about “Ukrainian fascists,” activities of domestic ultra-rights are being covered up to a greater extent than usual. Mass media pays less attention to them as well. It is also possible that, due to the events in Ukraine, there actually was a drop in racist violence; many nationalists temporarily switched their attention to the events in the neighboring country, and quite a few representatives of the militant ultra-right travelled there in order to participate in the hostilities.

In the past year, attacks occurred in 26 regions of the country (compared to 35 regions in 2013). Moscow (13 killed, 42 injured), St. Petersburg (3 killed, 10 injured) and the Krasnodar Territory (1 killed 10 injured)<sup>3</sup> still topped the list. In addition, significant number of victims were reported in the Novosibirsk Region (9 injured), the Moscow Region (1 killed, 8 injured), the Sakhalin Region (8 injured), the Voronezh Region (6 injured)<sup>4</sup> and the Perm Territory (1 killed, 6 injured). The Voronezh Region and the Sverdlovsk Region also appeared in our 2013 statistics. In comparison to the preceding year, the situation has improved in Chelyabinsk, Omsk Region and Samara Regions. The data for the other regions mentioned above has not changed significantly.

Compared to 2013, our statistics came to include new regions (Arkhangelsk, Irkutsk, Kostroma, Leningrad, Nizhny Novgorod, Ryazan, Sakhalin, Tomsk and Tula Regions, as well as the Republics of Karelia and Tatarstan, and the Jewish Autonomous Region.). At the same time, a number of regions left our charts

<sup>1</sup> Data as of March 7, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> For example, our annual report for 2013 reported 21 dead, 178 injured and 9 death threats. See: Vera Alperovich, Natalia Yudina, *The Ultra-Right Shrugged: Xenophobia and Radical Nationalism in Russia, and Efforts to Counteract Them in 2013* // SOVA Center. 2014. 17 February (<http://www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/publications/2014/02/d29004/>).

<sup>3</sup> The Krasnodar Territory has been a hotbed of ethnic tension for many years.

<sup>4</sup> The Voronezh Region showed up in our statistics in 2013, 2008, 2007 and 2005.

(Volgograd, Ivanovo, Kaliningrad, Kirov, Lipetsk, Omsk, Samara, Smolensk, Tambov, Tver, Chelyabinsk Regions, Trans-Baikal and Kamchatka Territories, as well as the Republics of Buryatia, Mari El, and Mordovia, and the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Region). Unfortunately, we cannot confidently declare an improvement of the situation in the regions, since information about such attacks is, likely, just not reported.

### Attacks Against Ethnic “Others”

The largest group of victims is traditionally those, perceived by the attackers as “ethnic outsiders.” We recorded the total of 102 victims of ethnically-motivated attacks (compared to 163 in 2013). Information on this particular group is most difficult to obtain, because the victims of such attacks usually shy away from publicity and rarely contact the police, community organizations or the media. In the overwhelming number of cases, even the names of the victims remain unknown.

Migrants from Central Asia traditionally constituted the largest group of victims with 12 killed and 23 injured (vs. 14 killed and 61 injured in 2013). In addition, 10 victims (2 killed, 8 injured) were of unspecified “non-Slavic” appearance, usually described as “Asian,” so most likely, migrants from Central Asia constitute the vast majority of this group as well (this group numbered 31 injured victims in 2013). Many victims – 3 killed and 14 injured – came from the Caucasus region (vs. 3 killed and 27 injured in 2013).

The number of attacks against dark-skinned people has doubled to 13 injured victims (vs. 7 in 2013). For the most part this information was gathered thanks to Moscow Protestant Chaplaincy, which has been systematically tracking this kind of attacks, and to the Civic Assistance Committee, which has opened a special hotline for victims or witnesses of hate crimes<sup>5</sup>.

The cases of openly anti-Semitic attacks are quite rare in our statistics, simply because Jews are not that easy to spot in the crowd. However, the anti-Semitic rhetoric within the right-wing radical segment of the Internet shows no signs of decreasing; the Jews have been a principal target of hate speech for many years, and this fact indicates a potential threat of violence. In the past year, a violent incident of this kind took place on the night of December 1 – 2 in the Ramensky District of the Moscow Region – Shlomo (Fedor) Romanovsky, a student of Yeshivat Torat Chaim, was severely beaten, when returning to his religious seminary from Moscow.

<sup>5</sup> Maria Rozalskaya, *You Will No Longer Be the Silent Majority* // Mediazona. 2015. 9 January (<http://www.zona.media/agenda/molchalivym-bolshinstvom/>).

There are also some known cases of attacks against other “ethnic aliens” under xenophobic slogans – against Palestinians in Voronezh (6 injured), Gypsies in the Ryazan Region (4 injured), a native of Bangladesh and a citizen of China in Moscow, two Japanese nationals in the Moscow Region, and citizens of Kyrgyzstan in Moscow and Irkutsk. Ethnic Russians also became victims of attacks motivated by ethnic hatred – we know about the 5 injured people in Moscow and Rostov-on-Don.

In the year under review, attacks against lone passers-by as well as cases of gang attacks against the “Caucasians” were reported. The most notorious example was an attack against “non-Slavic” visitors of “Master Pizza” pizzeria in Krasnodar on the night of May 10 – 11. At least eight people, suffered injuries in the aggressive attack by the gang of masked young men; one person – 25-year-old Adyge Timur Ashinov – died in hospital. Possible criminal underpinnings of the incident do not cancel out its racist nature. The far right raids on commuter trains and subway cars (so-called “white cars”) also continued throughout the year. We know of at least five such actions by right-wing radicals in 2014.

Speaking of ethnic attack cases we usually discuss organized violence, but domestic xenophobic violence never disappears as well. However, the dynamics of this violence cannot be evaluated even approximately, due to its outstanding latency. We record about ten such attacks each year.

### Attacks Against Political Adversaries

The number of the right-wing attacks against their political, ideological or “stylistic” adversaries almost doubled in 2014 (15 injured vs. 7 in 2013)<sup>6</sup>. The victims included hardcore and rock music fans in Novosibirsk, members of informal youth movements in Yekaterinburg, punks in St. Petersburg, and participants of anti-fascist activities and rallies in Moscow.

Despite the almost complete cessation of street war between neo-Nazi and militant anti-fascists, such attacks do occur. However, information about such incidents still often doesn’t reach the media and civic organizations or is silenced.

Here we also need to point out people battered “by association” – those, who tried to stand up for the “non-Slavs.” For example, one of the female passengers on a Moscow suburban train in Khimki tried to stand up for a man, who was being beaten up in the car, and suffered injuries as a result. The people on the streets, who “dared” to show their disapproval of the behavior of the ultra-right,

<sup>6</sup> These attacks peaked in 2007 (7 killed, 118 injured) and has been declining slowly ever since; it dropped abruptly in 2013 (7 injured) after a number of leaders of the antifascist movements gave up their political activity or left the country fearing government persecution for participation in the protests of 2011–2012.

could also become victims of attacks. Thus, eight young men on Prospect Mira in Moscow attacked a passerby, who reprimanded them for using the Nazi salute.

In 2014, we were faced with a new kind of political violence by right-wing radicals – attacks against those whom they considered “national traitors” or the “fifth column.”

Most prominent in this category are the actions of activists of the National Liberation Movement (*Natsionalno-Osvoboditelnoe Dvizhenie*, NOD), led by Duma Deputy from the United Russia Yevgeny Fyodorov. In June, the NOD activists tried to disrupt the Congress of Intelligentsia, held in the House of Journalists in Moscow. Not only did they picket the House of Journalists holding posters, but also sprayed gas inside the building. Maria Katasonova – a participant in the provocation – later posted about it on the social network VKontakte. In August 2014, NOD activist Sergey Smirnov beat up Arseny Vésnin, a journalist from *Ekho Moskvy*, in St. Petersburg, when the latter was covering a rally in support of Ukraine<sup>7</sup>. Finally, in December, the NOD members attacked a picket of the Solidarity (Solidarnost) movement in Sokolniki Park in Moscow. Police detained an activist known as Gosha Tarasevich (Igor Beketov) at the scene.

The Other Russia (*Drugaya Rossiya*) also became active in its fight against the “fifth column”; they disrupted a concert by Andrey Makarevich in Moscow’s House of Music on the day of the Jewish New Year in September. A group of young men sprayed pepper gas while shouting “Makarevich is a traitor, sold his Motherland!”<sup>8</sup> In October 2014, police arrested Oleg Mironov (born in 1987, native of the Komi Republic) on suspicion of disrupting the concert.

A group of about 10 people carrying the flags of the Donetsk Peoples Republic (DNR), “Novorossiya”, the National-Bolshevik Party (a “limonka” grenade in a circle), and “SERB”<sup>9</sup> attacked participants of the oppositional Peace March on September 22 in Moscow. Russian Orthodox activists, in particular,

<sup>7</sup> After A. Vesnin filed a complaint, the police found the actions of the attackers fall under Article 144 of the Criminal Code (“impeding the legitimate activities of journalists with violence”), but the Investigative Committee, where the journalist’s case was referred, found no crime in this case. S. Smirnov was brought to administrative responsibility under the Administrative Code Article 20.1 (“petty hooliganism”)

<sup>8</sup> On August 12, 2014, Andrei Makarevich went on a humanitarian mission to Donbass at the invitation of President of the Ukrainian Volunteers Fund. The musician gave a concert in the town of Svyatogorsk for refugees from Donetsk and Luhansk. This caused a negative reaction in the Russian media. Concerts of Makarevich were canceled in several Russian cities, including St. Petersburg, Novosibirsk and twice in Samara.

<sup>9</sup> Russian Liberation Movement “SERB” (South East Radical Block) is led by above-mentioned Gosha Tarasevich.

head of the Corporation for the Orthodox Action (*Korporatsiya pravoslavnogo deistviya*) Kirill Frolov also participated in the attack.

### Attacks Against LGBT or Homeless People

The number of attacks against members of the LGBT community (8 injured) decreased significantly in comparison with 2013 year (2 killed and 25 injured).

This decline in homophobic violence is partly explained by the fact that 2013 was a year of an active homophobic campaign, and LGBT activists made themselves noticeable as well. Throughout almost the entire year, the latter group engaged in protests against the bill to ban “homosexual propaganda;” right-wing radicals of all stripes came there to beat up the protesters, and their actions were de-facto condoned by the police.

The LGBT movement organized fewer actions in 2014. However, these events were hardly safer for the participants. Over the past year, we recorded attacks on participants of the LGBT events as well as on participants in other actions, who carried LGBT symbols.

LGBT non-protest events also faced challenges. For example, a group of “Orthodox activists” led by Dmitry “Enteo” Tsorionov and chanting “Moscow is not Sodom!” pelted with eggs the security guard and the Sakharov Center building in Moscow, where the LGBT community event was taking place in October. In September, supporters of the Duma Deputy Vitaly Milonov twice tried to disrupt the opening of the annual LGBT Queerfest festival in St. Petersburg.

Statistics for this group also include the victims of “pedophile hunters” from the neo-Nazi project “Occupy Pedophilia”<sup>10</sup>.

Victims of attacks included not only members of the LGBT community, but also those perceived as such: two girls in the St. Petersburg metro, whom an attacker took for lesbians, and teachers and students of the school of English in Irkutsk, who celebrated St. Patrick’s Day and were dressed “*in historical costumes, particularly in kilts,*” so they were “*taken for persons of non-traditional sexual orientation.*”

Unfortunately, we receive no information or are unable to establish any details about the majority of such attacks. For example, a video of two young people being beaten up with their attackers shouting homophobic slurs surfaced online in early 2015. It was clear from the context that the incident took place on May 1, but even establishing the location proved impossible.

<sup>10</sup> More details in V. Alperovich, N. Yudina, *The Ultra-Right Shrugged...*

The number of attacks against homeless people was greater in 2014 than in the preceding year with 6 killed and 1 wounded (vs. 3 killed and 2 injured in 2013). The brutality of these attacks is just appalling. For example, an attacker in Birobidzhan (“*motivated by hatred against people leading a vagabond lifestyle*”) doused the victim’s clothes with gasoline and set them on fire, then kicked a homeless man down the stairs with his foot.

Unfortunately, such attacks take place much more often than we know, since we only record the cases, in which the hate motive was already recognized by the prosecution. Alas, this seldom happens.

### Violence Motivated by Religion

The number of religion-based xenophobia victims was lower than in 2013, but the attacks were more violent, with 2 killed and 12 injured (vs. 21 injured in the year before).

Jehovah’s Witnesses, who constituted the largest group among the victims, have been subjected to a government-organized repressive campaign for the past 6 years. In 2014, at least 11 followers of the Jehovah’s Witnesses doctrine were injured; at least 12 were injured in 2013.

Islam as a religion and Muslims as a religious group are constant targets of xenophobic attacks in social networks. However, Muslims per se (that is, as members of a religious group, not as “ethnic outsiders”) rarely become targets of xenophobic violence. This kind of violence was recorded in 2014, when a woman passerby, dressed in traditional Muslim clothes (a long dress and a headscarf) was beaten up in Moscow.

Other victims include parishioners and a nun of a Russian Orthodox church in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, shot by a “pagan” motivated by his “*hostile feeling against Abrahamic religions, particularly Christianity.*”

### Other Kinds of Right Radical Violence

The police stepped up its efforts to protect popular public spaces during the holidays. Perhaps that is why the Airborne Forces Day on August 2 – traditionally featuring mass attacks by drunken paratroopers, including openly racist ones – was more subdued than in the preceding year. However, August 2, 2014 did not pass completely incident-free: two former paratroopers beat a citizen of Côte d’Ivoire in Tomsk, and paratroopers in St. Petersburg tried to take away a flag from an LGBT activist, who, as in 2013, came out to the Palace (*Dvortsovaya*) Square. However, after only a few seconds, the gay activist was taken into police custody and put into the departmental car, which quickly pulled up. Two paratroopers were detained, and the crowd prevented the OMON riot police from arresting the others involved in the incident. At least 10 people were injured on that day in 2013.

The raids of the ultra-right in search of “illegal migrants” continued throughout the year, although, compared with the preceding year, their number was much more modest (on the political dynamics of these raids see below). These “raids” did not always proceed peacefully despite the fact that the police was often present, and occasionally even acted as a partner. On July 20, activists of the National Socialist Initiative (*Natsional-sotsialisticheskaya initsiativa*, NSI) destroyed one of the shops in the area of Primorskaya and Pionerskaya metro stations in St. Petersburg; on September 21 nationalists seized fruit from fruit sellers of “non-Slavic appearance” in Primorsky shopping center and threw into trash. In Syktyvkar, members of the organizations Frontier of the North (*Rubezh Severa*) and Guestbusters-Komi (Guestbusters is a project of the “Russians” movement) found out the addresses of 13 apartments, in which migrant workers were registered, affixed Guestbusters stickers on the apartment doors, photographed the doors with stickers on them, and published the images and the addresses on the Frontier of the North website. Given the aggressiveness of some members of the organization and visitors to their site, we view these actions as dangerous.

Explosions and arson that targeted government buildings continued in 2014. On the night of April 20 (Hitler’s birthday)<sup>11</sup>, nationalists threw two “Molotov cocktails” at the police station in Cheboksary; a prosecutor’s office in Chelyabinsk was set on fire on April 21. In early April, unknown people tried to set fire to the building of the Primorsky regional Court in Vladivostok. However, this last case of arson was likely associated not with Hitler’s birthday, but with the fact that the court at that time was considering the case of the notorious Primorye Guerillas (*Primorskie partizany*) – a group, popular among the ultra-right.

## Vandalism

In 2014 vandals, motivated by religious, ethnic or ideological hatred, were less active than the previous year: in 2014 there were at least 53 such acts of vandalism in 35 regions of the country, compared to at least 71 in 35 regions in 2013.

Most acts of vandalism in 2014 had a pronounced ideological character: the desecration of memorials to soldiers killed in the Great Patriotic War, monuments to the fighters of the Revolution, Lenin’s monuments, etc. – 17 incidents in total,

<sup>11</sup> We know at least two racist attacks that happened around April 20. Makhmadkarim Dzhailov, a citizen of Tajikistan, was stabbed on April 18 in Moscow, and a crowd of young men attacked two representatives of a youth subculture on April 23 in Yekaterinburg.

including 4 cases of arson. In 2013, there were 7 such incidents. These numbers do not include isolated cases of the swastika graffiti on buildings or fences.

The Orthodox sites take the second place, with 10 of them attacked by vandals in 2014, including two cases of arson. A year earlier, the Orthodox facilities suffered the largest number of attacks (32 cases).

Sites of new religious movements are the third on this list, with 8 cases, all of them – buildings owned by Jehovah’s Witnesses (vs. 12 in the preceding year). They are followed by Muslim sites (7 incidents, including 3 cases of arson vs. 9 in the preceding year); Jewish with 5 sites (vs. 9 in the preceding year). In addition, five government buildings and the protestant church Word of Life (*Slovo zhizni*) came under attack. Thus, the number of attacks on all religious sites decreased in comparison with 2013.

The number of the most dangerous acts (arson) was rather small and amounted to 19% (10 of 53) versus 19 of 72 in 2013.

The situation in the regions showed some changes. In 2014, acts of vandalism were reported in new regions (Trans-Baikal and Khabarovsk Territories, Ivanovo, Kaliningrad, Kemerovo, Orenburg, Rostov, Saratov, Tambov, Tver, Tyumen Regions, and the Republics of Kalmykia and Udmurtia). On the other hand, a number of regions (Altai and Stavropol Territories, the Jewish Autonomous Region, Novgorod, Ryazan, Sakhalin, Sverdlovsk, Smolensk, Tomsk, Tula, Ulyanovsk Regions and the republics of Kabardino-Balkaria, Adygea, Karelia, and Komi) appeared in our statistics on 2013, but not this year.

The geography of vandalism largely coincides with the geography of racist violence (in 17 regions), but xenophobic vandalism spreads wider (35 regions) than violence (25 regions).

## Public Activity of Ultra-Right Radicals

### Position on the “Ukrainian Question”

The main issue, setting the tone for the far right in 2014, was, of course, the developments in Ukraine. Almost immediately after the conflict in the neighboring country began to gain momentum, a split emerged among the nationalists, dividing them into those, who supported the “Russian Spring,” and those who opposed it.

The first category includes leaders of most nationalist movements: Konstantin Krylov and Vladimir Tor (National Democratic Party, NDP), Dmitry Bobrov (NSI), Stanislav Vorobyov (Russian Imperial Movement,



*Russkoe imperskoe dvizhenie*, RID), Igor Artyomov (Russian All-National Union, *Russky obshchenatsionalny soyuz*, RONS), Andrey Savelyev (Great Russia, *Velikaya Rossiya*), Vladimir Kvachkov and Yury Yekishev (People's Militia in the Name of Minin and Pozharsky, *Narodnoe opolchenie imeni Minina i Pozharskogo*, NOMP), Kirill Barabash (Initiative group for the referendum "For a responsible power," *Initsiativnaya gruppa provedeniya referendum* "Za otvetstvennuyu vlast," IGPR "ZOV"), Eduard Limonov (the Other Russia, *Drugaya Rossiya*), Alexey Zhuravlyov (Motherland (*Rodina*) party), and others.

They all share the idea that the conflict in Ukraine has ethnic-national character (the Russian South-East of the country against the Ukrainians of the center and the West); they support the annexation of Crimea to Russia and the attempts of activists in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine to win their independence. At the same time, the overwhelming majority of the leaders of the ultra-right movements, which supported "Novorossiia," (with the exception of pro-government organizations such as the Motherland (*Rodina*) party and the People's Council (*Narodny sobor*)) pretty soon agreed that the Russian policy in the Ukrainian issue has been dictated not by the desire to protect Russian citizens of the South-East, but by political and/or mercantile interests of the country's leadership and of President Vladimir Putin personally. However, opinions on more exact character of these interests vary widely – some people think that Putin used the situation in Ukraine, to curtail political freedoms in Russian; others – that he started the war to provide justification for the difficult economic situation and raise his rating; yet others believe that the purpose was to create a negative image of nationalists per se (via the Russian media campaign against the "fascists" in Ukraine) and to put pressure on the "Russian movement" in Russia, etc. As always, there were some conspiracy theories; the most popular conspiracy theory is the one in which the Russian President and the West (the West is occasionally replaced by the "global oligarchy") have secretly agreed to divide Ukraine into spheres of influence, so that Russia gets Crimea, while the EU gets the rest. Notably, in the immediate aftermath of the annexation of Crimea and referendums in the Luhansk and Donetsk regions, some right-wing leaders were far less critical and even found themselves supporting the Russian president (the case of the NDP and, with some reservations, the Other Russia), however, by the second half of the year, they clearly changed their viewpoint and declared that Putin had betrayed "Novorossiia."

The second group – the opponents of the "Russian Spring" concept – includes the Moscow leaders of the "Russians" (*Russkie*) Ethnic-Political Association (Dmitry Dyomushkin, Vladimir Basmanov, and – as far as we know

– Alexander Belov), the National Democrats' (*Natsionalnye demokraty*) leader Semen Pikhtelev (this movement is also part of the "Russians" Association); leader of the Russian Right Party (*Rossiyskaya pravaya partiya*) Vladimir Istarkhov, leaders of the National Democratic Alliance Alexey Shiropaev and Ilya Lazarenko, ex-leader of the "Russian Runs" (*Russkie probezhki*) in St. Petersburg Maxim Kalinichenko, former member of the "Restrukt!" political council Roman Zheleznov, leader of the Slavic Force in St. Petersburg Dmitry Yevtushenko, and others.

Representatives of this wing generally believe that the Russian authorities artificially insert the issue of ethnicity into the conflict, whereas in reality the differences are ideological in nature – people, who want to build their independent national state stand against Russia's supporters, who long for paternalism and are nostalgic for the Soviet Union. This group of nationalists does not approve of the war in Ukraine and believes that the conflict has been artificially inflamed by the Russian political regime in its attempt to ruin the relationship between the "fraternal countries" of Russia and Ukraine and to prevent a neighbor from building a nation-state out of fear of "export of the national revolution." The incorporation of Crimea into Russia is either not welcomed at all, or welcomed with great reservations, since the political regime in Russia is viewed as anti-Russian. Therefore, it is assumed that the Russians living in Ukraine are better off either staying in the country striving for democracy, or acquiring independence<sup>12</sup>.

The autonomous ultra-right activists, whose numbers far exceed the number of supporters of specific nationalist movements, also found no consensus on Ukraine. In this group we noticed a three-way split, rather than a two-way split observed in the right-wing organizations and described above.

The first clearly identifiable subgroup consists of those who support the struggle of self-proclaimed DNR and LNR, feeling solidarity with their inhabitants along ethnic lines. This group of the ultra-right activists is extremely negative toward the Ukrainians, who are often referred to as "ukro-turks" and "ukrops" and accused of hatred against the Russians and of being the puppets of the Zionist oligarchic government, which have seized power in Kiev after the Maidan.

Opponents of "Novorossiia" are also well represented among the autonomous ultra-right, and constitute the second subgroup. They view residents of the Ukrainian South-East as "sovoks" (*Homo Sovieticus*) and "vatniks" (a derogatory nickname derived from a cheap cotton-filled winter coat), who are trying

<sup>12</sup> More about the positions of the leaders of the ultra-right organizations on the "Ukrainian issue" in V. Alperovich, *Ideological Battles of Russian Nationalists on Ukrainian Fronts // Russia Is Not Ukraine: Contemporary Accents of Nationalism*. Moscow, SOVA Center, 2014. pp. 292–305.

to prevent healthy nationalist forces from building the national Ukrainian state, instead pulling their region into the embrace of the anti-national Putin regime. Similarly to the leaders of ultra-right organizations that refuse to support the “Russian Spring,” these right-wing activists claim that the Russian government policies are putting an end to good relations between the two “brotherly” nations, and thus, from their point of view, betraying the Slavic unity.

The third relatively large group views the events in Ukraine as a showdown between “ukrops” and “vatniks,” in which they don’t support either party. Representatives of this group either believe that this conflict should be of no interest to nationalists, who live in Russia and have their own problems to deal with, or welcome the losses of both sides, since they eliminate future enemies of the Russian nation-state, which will be built after the “White Revolution.”

It is quite difficult to judge which of the above points of view predominates, but an analysis of posts on the far-right groups, forums and social networks shows that the number of those, who support neither party in this conflict, is gradually increasing, largely due to the influx of the former “Novorossiya” supporters. Many users write that they no longer see the DNR and LNR as “the Russian Riot,” but only as people, who want to leave one oligarchic regime in order to come under the wing of an even worse oligarchic regime.

In general, the far-right segment of the Russian Internet has been gradually reducing the amount of attention to the subject. Apparently, the nationalists experience the “Ukraine fatigue”; in addition, moderators of social network groups and ultra-right forums are likely trying to avoid bringing up these topics, so as not to provoke squabbles between their readers.

### Consequences of These Differences for Nationalist Organizations

Difference of opinions resulted in a serious split among the leaders of ultra-right organizations, leaving yesterday’s allies on the opposite sides. For example, leaders of the NDP and the “Russians” Association accused each other of betrayal. Thus, the Association lost one of its constant allies, but this was not the worst loss of 2014 for the “Russians.” In September, the RID and the NSI from St. Petersburg left the ranks of the Association, denouncing the “*anti-Russian and openly Russophobic*” position of its leadership in connection with the events in Ukraine<sup>13</sup>. In the fall of 2013, D. Bobrov even started building

<sup>13</sup> Joint Statement by leaders of the RID and the NSI on the situation with the “Russians” Ethnic Political Association // Official site of the People’s Nationalist Initiative (*Narodnaya natsionalisticheskaya initsiativa*). 2014 September 12.

a branch of his organization in Moscow, hoping, apparently, to enlist support among the Moscow activists of the “Russians,” not satisfied with the position on Ukraine adopted by the Association’s leadership.

Departure of the RID and the NSI de-facto completed the disintegration of the Association; some supporters of the RFO Memory (*Pamyat*), dissatisfied with the expulsion of their leader Georgy Borovikov, left the “Russians” as early as 2013, and the RONS left in early 2014, before the Ukrainian events took the front stage (Artyomov believes that cooperation with the Association is not an efficient strategy for his movement)<sup>14</sup>. As a result, by the end of September, the “Russians” were reduced from a broad coalition of various right-wing movements to a union of only two previously banned organizations, namely the DPNI and the Slavic Union (*Slavyansky soyuz*). The arrest of Alexander Belov in October clearly did not improve the situation, depriving the Association of its most popular leader, in addition to all those, who chose to leave the organization, have been expelled, or were on the run.

The news about Belov’s money laundering for a banker from Kazakhstan and his connections with Kazakh nationalists provoked yet another round of malevolent comments about the “Russians” on right-wing websites and forums. Of course, the arrest also drew attention to the movement, and a number of nationalists expressed sympathy for Belov; of course, Belov’s associates consider the case against him to be political and declare that he was “captured” in advance of the “Russian march.” However, none of this inspires mobilization among supporters, and the news on the case are met with indifference.

It would be somewhat premature to declare that the “Russians” Association has completely lost its significance, because the movement still commands many activists in the two capitals, as well as in the regions. However, the Association clearly failed to uphold its status of the key far-right organization in 2014, and may no longer be able to get this status back.

Moreover, the “Russians” were facing problems with their regional colleagues as well. For example, in October, the Russian Khimki movement announced that

<sup>14</sup> *I accepted the offer from Ethnic Political Association representatives, known to you, to become a member of their Political Council for the sole purpose – to make the system of interaction between the RONS and the “Russians” more compact and efficient. It worked out well during the period of relatively active work of the Russian Opposition Coordinating Council from November 2012 to May 2013. All my subsequent attempts to get a real cooperation with the Association regarding the RONS actions (Russian Machine of Truth, the work of the RM Organizing Committee, fall 2013 elections, activities of agents provocateurs in the Russian movement, Russian language in the national republics, and so on) showed a nearly complete ineffectiveness.* See Igor Artemov Left the Political Council of the “Russians” Ethnic Political Association // Official website of the movement Russia Will be Freed by Our Efforts. 2014. May 8.

its activists (who, similarly to the NSI and the RID, did not support the position on Ukraine taken by the Association's Moscow leaders) were terminating their affiliation with the "Russians"<sup>15</sup>.

However, the "Russians" Association was not the only organization plagued by internal discord between leaders and activists due to difference in opinions on Ukraine. For example, a number of the NDP supporters left the party due to disagreement with its leadership stand on the "Ukrainian issue"; the leaders of Novosibirsk, Murmansk and Khanty-Mansi regional offices of the Other Russia, as well as some of its rank-and-file activists, have reportedly left the party in disagreement with Eduard Limonov's new strategy. R. Zheleznov was expelled from "Restrukt!" for his support of the Right Sector (*Pravyi Sektor*), then went to Ukraine and joined the Azov battalion to fight on the side of the Kiev government. In July, the Russian Run movement in St. Petersburg declared that Maxim Kalinichenko had no further connection to them, since the organization "did not and still does not support the Maidan, Bandera, the Jewish Ukrainian government and the Anti-Terrorist Operation in Donbass."<sup>16</sup> Surely, there were other conflicts as well, which simply never became public.

However, we can also point to some examples of the ultra-right trying to turn the "Ukrainian issue" from a dividing factor into the unifying cause. For example, the movement "For Novorossiia!," founded in April in St. Petersburg in order to provide joint support to the resistance movement of South-Eastern Ukraine<sup>17</sup>, included the local branch of the Motherland (*Rodina*) party, the NDP and the RID. Under different circumstances, such an alliance would have looked very strange, since the Motherland is a pro-government party, while the NDP and the RID are in the opposition; moreover, the Motherland and the RID advocate for the Imperial Russian model, while the NDP support the nation-state model and ardently oppose authoritarianism and imperialism. It is unlikely, however, that this joint movement was ever successful and productive – we saw no information on joint actions or events, and, by the time of the Russian March, the NDP referred to the Motherland exclusively as "Stalinists"<sup>18</sup>. Apparently, the coalition did not work out.

<sup>15</sup> Dear Subscribers. We would like to inform you that the Russian Khimki organization discontinues its activities as part of the "Russians" Ethnic Political Association // Russian Khimki. 2014. 2 October.

<sup>16</sup> Official Declaration of the Russian Run Organizers Group in St. Petersburg // Russian Run! St. Petersburg. 2014. 10 July.

<sup>17</sup> A Community Movement "For the New Russia!" Established in St. Petersburg // Politicus. 2014 April 25.

<sup>18</sup> In Response to Numerous Questions about the Russian March in St. Petersburg - Information // The National Democratic Party (NDP), St. Petersburg. 2014. 30 October.

Another such alliance, known as the Battle for Donbass, which emerged in June following a Moscow rally of the same name, proved to be more stable<sup>19</sup>. This coalition includes the Right-Conservative Alliance (*Pravo-konservativnyy alians*, PKA), the Eurasian Youth Union (*Evrasiyskiy soyuz molodyozhi*, ESM), National Patriots of Russia<sup>20</sup>, members of the Permanent Council of the National-Patriotic Forces of Russia (*Postoyanno deistvuyushchee soveshchanie natsionalno-patrioticheskikh sil Rossii*, PDS NPSR) coalition, Yegor Prosvirnin's online project *Sputnik and Pogrom* and other groups. The coalition has primarily focused on holding public rallies in support of "Novorossiia" and participation in corresponding actions of other movements. In and of itself, this alliance is not very interesting, being so obviously situational and narrowly focused on support for residents of South-Eastern Ukraine. However, it provided a good example of the little-known activists successfully using the circumstances to break through into the public view. Their very first action was quite noticeable (despite being organized by Alexey Zhivov, a board member of the PKA – an organization that was little known outside the nationalist circles) due to the mainstream agenda chosen for the meeting – a demand that the Russian army enter Ukraine in order to support "Novorossiia." As a result, an action not only managed to attract several thousand people – an almost unprecedented number for nationalist events, with the sole exception of the annual Russian March – but also got a favorable coverage of the rally in the national media, including federal TV channels. Despite the fact, that the goodwill of the authorities and the media toward the action evaporated fairly quickly, A. Zhivov created a good foundation for future advancement of his organization, secured some notoriety, and obviously intends to continue using the brand name "Battle for Donbass."

There are also other examples of how the Ukrainian theme contributed to the political advancement of the far right. For example, Alexey Khudyakov, a former activist of the Young Russia (*Rossiia Molodaya*) and the current leader of the Shield of Moscow (*Shchit Moskvyy*), as well as Pavel Rudomyotov, a former activist of the Russian National Unity (*Russkoe natsionalnoe yedinstvo*, RNE) in Moscow, an organizer of the Sober Runs (*Trezvyye zabegi*) and of the Brotherly Path (*Bratskiy Put*), were able to join the committee of public support for the South-East of Ukraine in the Federation Council.

<sup>19</sup> Battle for Donbass was preceded by other attempts, such as the announcement of the "Russian Spring" Coalition. See: Russian Patriots Come Together to Help the South-East of Ukraine, Creating a "Russian Spring" Coalition // *Russkaya narodnaya liniya*. 2014. 14 March.

<sup>20</sup> A mini-organization created by Alexey Zhivov and later headed by Mikhail Butrimov, who is currently also heading the Moscow branch of Sergei Baburin's "Russian All-People's Union" party.

Another far-right coalition took shape in Moscow in late December under the name “Russian National Front”. It includes such organizations as Andrey Savelyev’s Great Russia party, Yury Yekishev’s NOMP, Vladimir Filin’s movement For Nationalization and De-Privatization of Strategic Resources of the Country, Kirill Barabash’s IGPR “ZOV,” Sergey Kucherov’s Russian People’s Council (*Sobor Russkogo Naroda*), S. Vorobyov’s RID, the Union of Orthodox Banner Bearers (*Soyuz pravoslavnykh khorugvenostsev*) led by Leonid Simonovich-Nikshich, the Black Hundred (*Chernaya Sotnya*) movement led by Alexander Shtilmark and others. This alliance was created on the basis of the “Russian Action Coalition” (*Russkaya koalitsiya deistviya* (RKD), known mainly for organizing an alternative Russian March in Moscow) and PDS NPSR; it differs from the two coalitions described above in that it does not limit itself only to the subject of “Novorossiia,” although, of course, the alliance declares its support for residents of South-Eastern Ukraine.

The members of this new coalition consider themselves part of the “healthy core of the Russian movement,” after the events in Ukraine had separated the organizations which “turned out to be not national-patriotic, but separatist, anarchist, semi-criminal or even simply bogus”<sup>21</sup>. This coalition is more viable than the “marriage between a snake and a hedgehog,” demonstrated by the Motherland, the RID and the NDP in St. Petersburg — after all, it includes the movements that already have an experience of cooperation; most of them are Orthodox, pro-imperial and oppositional, or meet at least two out of these three criteria. It is difficult to assess its potential stability and mobilization resources on this stage — so far, the Russian May Day and the Russian March, organized by the RKD and its allies, has shown a fairly stable growth in the number of activists, and not only for the record-high 2014 (see below).

Besides the coalitions described above, there are many smaller alliances of lesser-known right-wing organizations, who tried to join their forces for actions in support of “Novorossiia,” but their activity is largely limited to collecting humanitarian aid.

In contrast to the DNR/LNR supporters, their opponents were in no hurry to form alliances, realizing that they found themselves not only in opposition to the official policy and rhetoric (which is quite common for the nationalists), but also in the minority among nationalist organizations. A large number of different online communities for the far right activists, not sharing the enthusiasm for “Novorossiia” or even openly supporting Right Sector, emerged on social

<sup>21</sup> Andrey Savelyev, On Establishing the Russian National Front // Blog of A. Savelyev. 2014. 24 December.

networks, but it seems that no overt attempts to use these communities as a basis for creating a movement, leave alone an organization, ever took place.

## Ultra-Right Public Actions

The Ukrainian events had an undeniable impact in this area as well, de-facto delineating the nature of nationalist public political actions throughout the year.

### “Ukraine-Related” Actions

A substantial share of nationalist rallies in the past year was directly related to the Ukrainian events.

Starting in March-April, when clashes in the South and East of Ukraine acquired a clear and steady upward trend, a number of far-right organizations that supported the idea of a “Russian Spring” engaged in organizing numerous small pickets and rallies in support of the South-East instead of their traditional activities. The NDP, the New Force (*Novaya sila*), the Motherland, the RID, the Other Russia, and almost all other “Russian Spring” sympathizers undertook such actions. In addition to demonstrating their position, their goal was to raise funds and humanitarian aid for “Novorossiia,” as well as to recruit volunteers for joining the ranks of the DNR and LNR combatants. Each action was quite small, but they took place in many regions of the country starting in spring and until the end of the year.

The first relatively major action attended, among others, by representatives of the ultra-right, was a rally in support of the “Russians in Ukraine,” organized on March 10 by the Party of Action (*Partiya dela*) and its leaders Konstantin Babkin, Mikhail Delyagin and Maxim Kalashnikov. We would like to remind here that the two latter activists had previously been the leaders of the Motherland — Common Sense (*Rodina — Zdravy Smysl*) party — a splinter group of the Motherland. The action took place in Novopushkinsky Square and brought together about 500 people. This rally is interesting in two respects. First, it united supporters and opponents of the Russian authorities — the feat that, until recently, had been almost unthinkable; the eternal opposition — activists of the Other Russia and supporters of Ivan Mironov’s ROS — stood side by side with young people in T-shirts that read “Motherland! Freedom! Therefore, Putin!” and with activists of the NOD (headed by Deputy Yevgeny Fyodorov from the United Russia party). Another untypical feature of the meeting was the fact that politicians from both inside and outside of the system shared the stage; actions, where deputies of the State Duma and the likes of Eduard Limonov have a chance to address the audience, do not happen often in modern Russia.

Three other actions of this year — the previously mentioned Battle for Donbass rallies, which took place on June 11, August 2 and October 18 —

demonstrated a somewhat similar pattern. One could find, for example, activists of the oppositional National Democratic Party in odd proximity with the pro-regime NOD, and the speakers included vice-speaker of the parliament Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, as well as leader of the Russian Choice (*Russky vybor*) A. Khudyakov, who previously, as the Shield of Moscow leader, along with his associates conducted illegal raids against migrant residences, one of which ended in a pogrom and Khudyakov's arrest.

Such a "cocktail" produced a wave of criticism against nationalist movements by many ordinary ultra-right activists, who had been involved in the action and had helped to organize it. Critics said that the authorities were using the nationalists to solve their own political problems, and that cooperation with "pro-Kremlin" politicians and movements was totally unacceptable. Notably, during the preparation phase for the second and third actions, many critical online posts remarked on the unacceptability of attending a rally in support of "Novorossiia" together with the "fascists" from the NDP and *Sputnik and Pogrom*. These disputes resembled the ones that flared up in 2012 during the general protest rallies, when one part of the ultra-right movement criticized the other one for cooperation with the liberals while in the liberal ranks there was no consensus on whether it was appropriate to attend rallies together with the nationalists.

In any case, by the fall of 2014, the majority of nationalists, even those initially ready to support Russia's policy regarding Ukraine, came to the conclusion that the authorities "have betrayed Novorossiia" and the problem of potentially attending actions together with supporters of President Vladimir Putin has disappeared on its own. Battle for Donbass was also affected. While A. Zhivov managed to attract several thousand people to the first meeting (according to various estimates, from 2.5 to 4 thousand activists), the last meeting brought together no more than several hundred people (according to various estimates, from 200 to 800 people).

In addition, by the second half of the year, other (pro-government) nationalist movements, became more active and replaced the ultra-right "outsiders" in the role of the principal fighters for "Novorossiia." We are talking about groups like Yevgeny Fyodorov's NOD or Nikolay Starikov's Great Fatherland Party (*Partiya Velikoe Otechestvo*, PVO); later, already in 2015, these parties either joined the Antimaidan coalition, or simply participated in its actions. The NOD was particularly active; it organized the All-Russian Antimaidan campaign in September and the multi-city March for the Liberation of the Russian World on November 3. The NOD and other similar groups for the most part act in support of the "Novorossiia," ardently oppose the West in general and America in particular, are prepared to fight with the "fifth column," and stand for traditionalist values. Notably, the majority of these groups are

similar in ideology to many right-wing organizations, except for two fundamental aspects – unlike most nationalist groups they support the current Russian political regime and open xenophobia is not (or, at least, not yet) as pronounced in their ideology. These differences do not mean that activists with nationalist or even completely far-right views are absent in these groups. One example is "the City" Foundation for the Support of Civil Initiatives (*Fond podderzhki grazhdanskikh initsiativ "Gorod"*) founded by ex-leader of the Young Russia Anton Demidov, who also collaborates with members of the Youth Anti-Drug Special Forces (*Molodezhny antinarkotichesky spetsnaz*, MAS) movement. "The City" Foundation, which participated in anti-opposition actions along with other government-supported movements, sees the fight against aggregation of migrants as one of the movement's main objectives<sup>22</sup>, and the MAS raids have always attracted the ultra-right by their brutality and by the fact that drug traffickers are often not ethnic Russians. Many people with nationalist views, who never found their place in the ranks of the "outside of the system" right-wing organizations, came to support the NOD and the PVO.

As we have said repeatedly, the potential of the nationalist ideology in Russia is very high, but the existing right-wing movements have not been able to use it. They do not have channels to reach mass audience and are too radical for an average xenophobic Russian. Therefore, emerging pro-government movements, such as the NOD, using the "Novorossiia" theme, have a chance to absorb potential activists and displace the "outside of the system" ultra-nationalists. The latter can then choose either to join a mass movement (as was done by the Battle for Donbass coalition, which joined the ranks of Antimaidan) or stand aside and try to compete by attempting to mobilize the nationalist opposition.

Meanwhile, some ultra-right activists organized public events with the opposite agenda. For example, a rally in support of the Maidan was held by nationalists together with members of other political movements on February 16 in St. Petersburg. About 100 attendees included activists from the following organizations: the National Democrats, the Russian Runs, the Progress Party (*Partiya progressa*), the Party of December 5 (*Partiya 5 dekabrya*), the Republican Party of Russia – People's Freedom Party (*Respublikanskaya partiya Rossii – Partiya narodnoy svobody*, RPR-PARNAS), the Ingria movement, and the Movement for the Supreme Council (*Dvizhenie za Verkhovny Sovet*). However, the event was also visited by a group of its antagonists, led by Anatoly Artyukh of the St. Petersburg People's Council, who attempted to disrupt the rally. They heckled the speakers, shouted insults at the attendees and called them

<sup>22</sup> What Are the Issues We Are Helping to Solve? // The Official Website of the "City" Foundation for Support of Civil Initiatives.

fascists. Artyukh also tried to grab the imperial flag away from the ultra-right attendees, arguing that they had no right to it.

A small share of nationalists took part in the Peace Marches in Moscow on March 15 and September 21. The first march included activists from the “Russians,” the RFO *Pamyat*, Russian United National Alliance (*Russky obyedinyonny natsionalny soyuz*, RONA), Svetlana Peunova’s Will (*Volya*) party and a group of right-wing radicals carrying the kolovrat flag. Representatives of the “Russians,” the Russian Right Party, the People’s Will (*Narodnaya Volya*, former *Volnitsa*) and the National Bolshevik Platform (a splinter group of the Other Russia party) were seen at the second Peace March. Quite expectedly, representatives of these movements were labeled “national traitors” and “provocateurs” by “Novorossiia” supporters.

The final attempt to bring nationalists, who opposed the “Russian Spring,” out to the streets took place in May. The Internet became flooded with calls to gather on Manezhnaya Square in Moscow and in other cities of the country for the Russian Maidan. Subsequently, leader of the organizing committee of the Right for European Development party (*Pravye za evropeyskoe razvitiye*) Vitaly Shishkin<sup>23</sup> was named as the event’s organizer, but this was not known when the calls had first appeared.

All major ultra-right and soccer fandom movements declared that they had nothing to do with this event, and many even called it a provocation by the authorities (arranged so no one would attend it, which would have implied that everyone supports the Russian political regime). As a result, only several small groups of right-wing activists gathered on the Manezhnaya Square in Moscow on May 18 and quickly dispersed; no events were reported in other cities.

As far as we can tell, the “Russian Spring” opponents from among the ultra-right conducted no significant Ukraine-related actions after this one, apparently fearing the outflow of their activists and repressive measures from the authorities.

### Traditional Actions

A shift of focus toward Ukraine and the above-described conflicts had a dramatic effect on traditional nationalist events.

<sup>23</sup> V. Shishkin was previously a member of the “Russians”, and headed their Kaluga branch. In 2013, along with a number of activists, he left the Association in solidarity with expelled George Borovikov. Later, he and other associates of Borovikov participated in founding of the Right for European Development party.

As early as the Heroes Day<sup>24</sup> – traditionally, the first nationalist event of the year – it became apparent that actions with agenda neutral towards the “Ukrainian question” were irrelevant and had no mobilization potential.

In 2014, the Heroes Day celebrations were only held in nine cities; the best attended of them, in Moscow, brought together 40 activists from the “Russians” Association and the RFO *Pamyat*. For comparison, the preceding Heroes Day was held in almost 20 cities, and the Moscow event attracted about 100 people.

Organizing their next annual event – the Russian May Day – nationalists already met with difficulties in formulating an agenda. In Moscow, which sets the tone for the marches in the other cities, leaders of the ultra-right organizations had already split into supporters and opponents of the “Russian Spring”; the former wanted to dedicate the May Day to the “Russian Spring,” pointing out that any other topic was irrelevant, while the latter insisted on a neutral agenda, so as not to split the participants by their support of or opposition to the Maidan.

As a result, the disagreements led to three (rather than the usual two – the primary and the alternative) Russian May Days in Moscow.

The first march, organized by the “Russians” attracted about the same number of activists as in the preceding year, that is, about 500 people. Despite the decision to carry out the action under slogans neutral towards Ukraine, the calls to attend it were annotated on many right-wing forums with the description of this event as a march “without Kholmogorov and vatniks,” naturally provoking outrage from the “Russian Spring” supporters. As a result, the nationalist “Novorossiia” supporters labeled the march “Banderite,” and this mind-set only deepened after the event. Many activists were unhappy with the fact that the stage during the rally was mostly occupied by the Maidan supporters: D. Dyomushkin, A. Belov, R. Zheleznov, V. Istarkhov, A. Kolegov, etc.

The NDP and Natalia Kholmogorova’s Russian Social Movement Human Rights Center (*Pravozashchitny tsestr Russkogo obshchestvennogo dvizheniya*, PC ROD) decided to organize their own event; the rally brought together up to 180 people under the slogans in support of the “Novorossiia.” The leaders of the NDP and the PC ROD said that they did not want to participate in the “Banderite march” of the “Russians,” but also did not want to fragment the action, so they scheduled their rally later in the day in order to accommodate activists wishing to attend both events.

<sup>24</sup> The Heroes Day on March 1 was established in memory of the Pskov paratroopers who died in 2000 in a fight in Chechnya. The overwhelming majority of actions on that day are limited to laying flowers to war memorials.

The third event was held in Moscow district of Lyublino by the Russian Action Coalition (*Russkaya koalitsiya deistviya*). Similarly to the NDP rally, this march was dedicated to the support of the South-East of Ukraine and was dubbed “Russian spring – Russian unity” (*Russkaya vesna – russkoe yedinstvo*), emphasizing its differences from the “Banderite” march of the “Russians.” The rally gathered the same number of people as in the preceding year, about 150 activists.

Disputes around slogans for prospective events also went on in other cities, with the same conflicts and squabbles between former allies, as in Moscow. All this discord has led to the first instance of the “Russian May Day” narrowing its geographic spread from 22 cities in 2013 to 20 cities in 2014.

Moreover, the event didn’t happen in a number of cities, where it had been regularly held in prior years, but instead took place in four cities that previously never hosted it – Veliky Novgorod, Irkutsk, Kazan and Ufa. Apparently, the emergent issue of Ukraine provoked confusion and disagreement among potential march organizers in some cities; in the other ones, on the contrary, it prompted nationalists to take to the streets. After all, most regional events are poorly attended (usually fewer than 50 people, and in most cases fewer than 20), and, hence, their existence depends on activity levels and negotiating abilities of only a small number of people. Also, the shrinking and the changes in geography of the march may have been due to the fact that attempts to organize a Russian May Day with an agenda, other than support of Novorossiia, have now met a more active resistance from local authorities.

Thus, the Russian May Day was not particularly successful this year – there was a further fragmentation in Moscow, narrowing of the May Day geography, and lack of growth in the overall attendance.

Another traditional action – the Day of Solidarity with Right-Wing Political Prisoners, observed by the right radicals on July 25 since 2009 – also failed to attract attention. Admittedly, D. Dyomushkin tried to obtain a city permit for a rally on July 26, but failed in his efforts, and, in the end, the “Russians” movement merely engaged in collecting some funds. As far as we can judge, the majority of right-wing activists in the regions also failed to conduct any public actions, limiting their activity to small fundraising meetings, collecting online monetary contributions, or merely advertising the fundraising marathon of the “Russians.” Most likely, the interest in these actions remained low for two reasons. First, the popularity of this particular event has been falling for past several years. While assistance to imprisoned nationalists was one of the most popular and honorable activities in 2009 – 2012, over time (and after several scandalous appropriation of collected funds), this activity has lost some relevance. Quite frequently, organizations, which suddenly started collecting

donations for prisoners, were accused on ultra-right online forums of trying to win a cheap popularity or simply to make money. Most likely, the mechanism for collecting money is already well established, and everyone willing to help is already involved in doing so. The second reason is that, similarly to the Heroes Day, this action simply lost its relevance. Many ultra right activists preferred to collect aid and money not for their incarcerated associates, but for residents of South-Eastern Ukraine – a much hotter and politically advantageous cause.

In order to prevent the loss of their remaining political clout, the “Russians” announced in August the beginning of arrangements for the “Russian March” – the most important nationalist event of the year, traditionally headed by the Association. D. Dyomushkin filed a relevant application package with the Moscow Mayor’s Office two months prior to the action in the hopes to get ahead of everyone else and stake out a place for his organization. As on the Russian May Day, the leaders of the “Russians” chose slogans that were neutral toward the controversial topic of Ukraine, such as “Russian Unity!,” “Freedom and Justice for the Russian People,” “Against the KGB Terror! Freedom to Imprisoned Nationalists!,” etc.

At the same time, preparations were underway for an alternative action by the Russian Action Coalition, dubbed the “Russian March for Novorossiia” a.k.a. “Novo-Russian March.” In October, the organizations planning to take part in the procession signed the Declaration of the Russian March for Novorossiia, which outlined the principal demands that the event was supposed to voice, such as the “recognition for Novorossiia as a state formation,” “investigation of war crimes by the Kiev Junta,” “end to negotiations for surrendering Novorossiia,” etc.

Thus, in September – October, the ultra-right supporters of “Novorossiia” once again, as before the Russian May Day, faced the question of which march to join – a traditional and always much better attended action, organized by the “Banderites” or the march under the “correct” slogans, but, previously, of marginal status.

This dilemma was nearly resolved on its own, after the city authorities refused to approve any of the applications filed by D. Dyomushkin and suggested that he join any of the authorized events. The situation was saved by the NDP, which eventually got a permit for a march in Lyublino. It is worth noting that, apparently, the party leaders initially doubted over which march they should join (V. Tor attended a meeting of the Novo-Russian March program committee), but then apparently decided to go with familiar “Banderites” from the “Russians” Association rather than conspiracy theorists from the Russian Action Coalition.

Despite the fact that the NDP, a “Novorossiia” supporter, ended up as the formal organizer of the march, it still retained the status of a “Banderite”

event; the NDP was overshadowed by the “Russians,” more active in the media and, certainly, more numerous. Other opponents of the “Russian Spring” also planned to attend the march in any case, although the most extreme of them may have stayed away for fear of reprisals or not accepting the avowed neutrality of the march on the “Ukrainian question.”

As a result, the main “Russian march,” held in Lyublino, became the biggest failure of the right-wing movement in recent years. It brought together no more than 2 thousand people, which is about one third of the usual number.

The demonstrators included activists of the “Russians” Association, the RFO *Pamyat*, the RON, the Russian Right Party, the Resistance movement, the Block of Free National-Socialist Societies (*Blok svobodnykh natsional-sotsialisticheskikh obshchestv*), as well as the NSI, the NDI and the Union of Orthodox Banner Bearers. Thus, supporters and opponents of “Novorossiya” marched side by side. The organizers feared possible clashes between the columns, but antagonism was only expressed in a minor verbal sparring. When a marcher with a Novorossiya flag shouted “Novorossiya – be!,” marchers from the neighboring column were heard responding “in the grave.”

This sharp decline in numbers demonstrated an unexpected significance of differences on the “Ukrainian question” for the ultra right milieu, which is generally quite used to disagreements. Both the NDP (when they decided to take part in the organization of the traditional march) and the “Russians” clearly expected that, as in the previous years, the importance of a joint march of all the nationalists would outweigh the differences – in the past, events succeeded in bringing together pagans and the Orthodox, supporters of the Empire and supporters of the nation-state, radicals and more moderate xenophobes. The action ended up being a failure, and “Novorossiya” supporter K. Krylov even felt compelled to explain his participation in the “Banderite procession” on his LiveJournal page<sup>25</sup>.

A much more successful march, organized by the Russian Action Coalition near Oktyabrskoe Pole metro station, was attended by the Great Russia Party, the RNE, the Black Hundred, the Union of Orthodox Banner Bearers, the RID, the NOMP, Volya party, the Russian Runs, ecologists from Green World (*Zelyony mir* – a fragment of former Volnitsa), the IGPR “ZOV,” representatives of Cossack organizations, Orthodox activists headed by Dmitry “Enteo” Tsonionov, and others. Support for “Novorossiya” and advertised (albeit not delivered) participation of former DNR armed formations leader Igor “Strelkov” Girkin<sup>26</sup> allowed the

<sup>25</sup> Konstantin Krylov. What Was the NDP Doing at the Russian March? // Blog of K. Krylov. 2014. November 5.

<sup>26</sup> He refused at the last moment, explaining his refusal by his disagreement with the opposition of the organizers against the current political regime and personally V. Putin.

“alternative group” to double their number of attendees. Their 2014 march attracted about 1,200 people, whereas there were no more than 600 in the preceding year.

It is worth noting that the events were strikingly different from each other in their demographics. While the Lyublino march primarily attracted the radical-minded youth, the vast majority of activists at Oktyabrskoe Pole were people of middle age or even the elderly.

The success of the competing march at Oktyabrskoe Pole does not affect the failure of the action as a whole, and even aggravates it. The fact that the traditional and alternative marches were so close in their numbers of participants emphasizes the presence of a real split in the ranks of the ultra-right, which contradicts the main idea of the Russian March as a general event for nationalists of all stripes.

The total number of attendees for both marches did not even come close to the 2013 figures, when Moscow hosted three events, with the main one, in Lyublino, attracting about 6,000 people, and the two alternative ones combined – about 700. This year’s total is about 3,200 vs. 6,700 in the preceding year. Notable by its absence is the third subgroup of the nationalist community, the largest one that joined neither the Lyublino march, nor their competitors. A certain fraction of right-wing activists has always believed that attending public events leads to nothing but unnecessary attention of the “E”-Centers; this group of people became significantly larger over the past year.

A march in St. Petersburg, which (as in the preceding year) was called not “Russian,” but “patriotic” at the initiative of the action’s organizer Motherland party, was much more successful than the one in Moscow. It was attended by about 1,500 – 1,800 people, more than doubling the 2013 attendance of 800 – 1,000 people. The event was attended by activists from the Russian Harmony (*Russky Lad* – the nationalist wing of the Communist Party), the RID, the People’s Council, the NOD, the PVO and the Black Hundred, as well as by representatives from the Cossack associations and the East (*Vostok*) Brigade.

Similarly to the alternative Russian March in Moscow, this action was intended primarily to show support for “Novorossiya.” The increase in numbers was most likely due to activity of the “inside the system” parties, such as the Motherland and the Communist Party, due to supporters of Deputy Vitaly Milonov and people who shared a more radical version of the official ideology. In addition, new participants of the action clearly displaced part of the traditional constituency; attendance has increased in 2014 despite the fact that, in contrast to preceding years, such notable ultra-right movements of Petersburg as the “Russians” Association, the NDP, the NSI and the National Democrats did not participate in the March.

Many nationalists have labeled the march “handshakeable” (excessively conformist) and refused to participate in it (for example, the NSI chose to



come to Moscow to the Lyublino march), and others did not attend because of its position on Ukraine.

Besides the largest march, two more alternative actions took place in St. Petersburg on November 4, but they were quite small. Pro-Kiev groups collected about 20 – 30 people in Ovsyannikovskiy Garden<sup>27</sup>. Approximately the same number of activists with the imperial flag staged an unauthorized march on Nevsky Prospect. It was organized by Dina Garina, a spokesman for the Association of the Russians of St. Petersburg; “Russian Power for Russia!” was chosen as the main slogan.

It is noteworthy that, in the end, the St. Petersburg nationalists attempted to hold their events, taking into account all possible positions with respect to the events in Ukraine: a “patriotic” march by the Motherland party in support of the “Novorossiya,” the rally “For the Slavic unity” against it, and a neutral march of Dina Garina.

The failure of the two latter actions, and the relative success of the first (but not on the account of its traditional participants), once again illustrates the point that nationalists “outside of the system” have dropped the ball in connection with the “Ukrainian question.” Moreover, the St. Petersburg action by the Motherland and its allies can be considered the first successful attempt by pro-government and relatively moderate nationalists to take over the “Russian March” brand from radical nationalists.

Other regions fared no better than Moscow; the action in any form (including one-person pickets or café gatherings) took place in at least 36 cities, that is, in 13 cities fewer than in the year before. For the first time, the geographical span of the march not only failed to expand, but experienced a setback and almost returned to the levels of 2011, when the march only took place in 32 cities. In addition, there was an attendance problem – with the exception of St. Petersburg, the number of marchers either decreased significantly, or, less often, remained at the 2013 levels. In previous years, despite some fluctuations in attendance, actions in various regions as a whole showed a significant growth trend in the number of supporters. The number of cities that hosted several smaller actions, rather than a single large one, has significantly increased, i.e. the split affected not only the two capitals, but also the regions.

<sup>27</sup> The rally “For the Slavic Unity” included representatives from the Slavic Force North-West, the Russian Right party (V. Istarkhov), the Russian Right Sector, Slavic Force *Nord-West Peterburg*, the Right Link of the “Russians” Association, group of Dmitry “Besheny” Yevtushenko, “Edelweiss”, autonomous National Socialists and autonomous pagans.

In general, the outcome of this march is clear – it was the least successful in recent years not only in Moscow but across the entire country, and so were the other traditional nationalist actions of 2014. Nevertheless, forecasting the end of the Russian March and other annual far right events would be somewhat premature. After all, the Ukrainian theme, which caused so many problems, should begin to lose its relevance sooner or later, and then the Russian right-wing radicals are likely to return to their traditional themes and regain attention of their supporters. Moreover, there are some fears that the change in the Russian official policy and rhetoric toward ever greater conservatism and traditionalism potentially creates a good breeding ground for the integration of the far-right ideology, and, possibly, the nationalists could still manage to receive their political bonus from this whole situation.

### “Spin” on Criminal Incidents

While 2013 set a record in the number of criminal incidents, involving local residents on one side and migrants on the other, that the ultra-right successfully transformed into major political events, the 2014 can be characterized as a year of relative calm in this respect. However, in the first few months, before the events in Ukraine displaced almost all other news, nationalists continued to work on creating the second Udomlya, Pugachyov or Biryulyovo<sup>28</sup>, but without much success.

The first criminal incidents this year, which the ultra-right attempted to “spin” – the death of Astrakhan resident Galiya Borisenko and the murder of 17-year-old and pregnant Anastasia Moskovkina in Biryulyovo District of Moscow – failed to cause a resonance, comparable to criminal incidents of 2013. As a result, the ultra-right managed to conduct small “people’s assemblies” of 100 – 150 people, which didn’t receive much media coverage and, most importantly, didn’t provoke local residents to further actions under xenophobic slogans<sup>29</sup>. Further attempts to conduct actions against “ethnic crime” in January and February were even less successful.

Starting in mid-February, the events in Ukraine began to displace other political news, and xenophobic gatherings came to an end. Only in May, a relevant incident broke through the “Ukrainian blockade” – the death of FC Spartak fan Leonid Safyannikov on May 13 in a fight with two men, one of

<sup>28</sup> More in: V. Alperovich, N. Yudina, *The Ultra-Right Shrugged...*

<sup>29</sup> More in: V. Alperovich, N. Yudina, *Ukraine Upsets the Nationalist Apple-Cart: Xenophobia, Radical Nationalism and Efforts to Counteract It in Russia During the First Half of 2014* // SOVA Center 2014. 14 July (<http://www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/publications/2014/07/d29887/>).

whom was a 25-year-old native of Uzbekistan. On May 15, soccer fans gathered at Pushkino train station and conducted a spontaneous rally near the railway station and a march through the city. Chanting the slogans “Moscow without *churki!*” (*Moskva bez churok*; “churki” being an ethnic slur referring to non-Slavic people from the former USSR) and “Russians, forward!” (*Russkie, vperyod!*), 300 – 500 marchers (according to different estimates) proceeded to a migrant dormitory, where they were stopped by OMON riot police; then they went to the City Administration building. As a result, some market stalls and a construction site were vandalized. The police detained about 60 people. Strangely enough, this story failed to interest far right organizations as a pretext for the next People’s Assembly, despite the fact that the story was widely circulated on ultra-right internet forums and websites, as well as in the conventional media.

Over the next few months, the ultra-right did not even try organizing any large xenophobic gatherings and returned to this kind of activity only in September, and, even then, only in St. Petersburg. Moreover, until December, their actions attracted no more than 40 people. However, the ultra-right of St. Petersburg decided not to give up so easily and held their last event of the year under xenophobic slogans on December 14 – the “March against Ethnic Crime and Corruption,” dedicated to the anniversary of the Manezhnaya Square riots. The march was organized by the NSI leader D. Bobrov, who announced it almost a month in advance of the scheduled date. About 100 – 120 people participated in it (activists of the NSI, the Slavic Force (*Slavyanskaya sila*), the NDP and football fans) – not a bad result, considering the drop in activity levels, demonstrated by the ultra-right during the Russian March. Perhaps, the fact that the event was declared neutral in relation to the situation in Ukraine from the very start ensured a relative success of the action – the organizers even demanded that anyone willing to attend refrain from bringing up this issue, promising to remove participants for breaking this rule.

### Other Activity by the Ultra Right

Traditionally, the ultra-right organize a variety of actions with “social” agenda in an attempt to demonstrate that the nationalists are committed to social improvement. While at the turn of the decade these actions primarily focused on providing assistance, for example, raising funds for orphanages, donating blood, building playgrounds, participation in the defense of the Khimki forest, and so on, in the recent years their focus shifted toward fighting against social evils, such as pedophiles, illegal migrants, shops that sell alcohol to minors, etc. Such actions grew extremely common in 2012 – 2013; they usually took a form of rather aggressive and plainly illegal raids.

Popularization of raiding initiatives rests not only on the fact that the right-wing activists prefer the image of aggressive fighters to the image of Good Samaritans, but also on the media attention. Shocking episodes with beaten and humiliated people bring much more publicity than blood drives.

Formally, any issue can become a theme for a raid, but some fads can definitely be observed – while, in 2012, the most popular raids were the ones against pedophiles (popularized by the “Occupy Pedophilia” movement led by Maxim Martsinkevich), in the year that followed, the nationalists were busy searching for “illegal migrants.” It is worth recalling that, in the second half of 2013, almost all relatively large ultra-right associations created their own raiding groups, and the actions turned from a secondary activity, used to fill the gaps between political campaigns, into a primary focus.

In 2014, however, the raiding initiatives were undergoing a certain crisis along with other traditional ultra-right activities.

Early in the year, before the “Ukrainian question” displaced everything else, raiding initiatives continued to develop and spread throughout the regions. Thus, the Great Russia launched its anti-migrant *StopNelegal* project in Chelyabinsk; new branches of the Guestbusters (a project of the “Russians” Association) appeared in Yaroslavl and Dolgoprudny, and new and old groups announced that they were recruiting activists to search for “illegals.”

However, it quickly became apparent that the media is losing interest. Journalists were much less likely to accompany nationalists, and the ones who did mostly came from little-known or foreign media outlets. The frequency of raids began to decline, and the new groups, focused on regular actions, were no longer sprouting like mushrooms after a rain. However, the nationalists did not want to give up so quickly and tried to rekindle public interest, searching for new themes that can attract attention.

For example, the movement Shield of Moscow (*Shchit Moskvy*) undertook a raid in April with a new agenda of capturing unlicensed taxi drivers. The ultra-right in St. Petersburg and Syktyvkar engaged in searching for “rubber” apartments. Nationalists also conducted non-traditional raids against alcoholism and smoking. For example the “Sober Courtyards” (*Trezyve dvory*) movement in St. Petersburg started patrolling courtyards in order to prevent drinking of alcoholic beverages in public, while the “Clean Park” (*Chisty Park*) activists pledged to rid parks of “drunks and meat-grillers”

Of course, new issues have never fully replaced the usual ones; many far-right groups continued to conduct their traditional raids in search of pedophiles, drug dealers and illegal migrant residences, but these actions no longer achieved wide public resonance.

In addition, several criminal cases were opened in the summer against activists of Restrukt! – the largest and the most notorious movement, primarily engaged in raiding activity (see below); subsequently, the “raiding fervor” of the ultra-right has rapidly faded. This certainly does not mean that such actions stopped altogether, but their number showed a striking decline even when compared to the first half of the year, and they have become much less aggressive and demonstrative. The Russian Sweep (*Russkaya zachistka*) project in St. Petersburg, which focuses on inspecting the shops and checking documents of merchants of “non-Slavic appearance,” provides a good example. While its 2013 raids organized by N. Bondarik brought together several dozen masked young men, often armed with baseball bats, this year, when D. Bobrov’s NSI undertook similar raids, only a few people participated and their behavior was relatively peaceful and polite. Naturally, when such actions do not involve large numbers of people and don’t give the ultra-right a chance to “express themselves” (N. Bondarik’s events tended to resemble an armed raid), they don’t attract much attention or motivate further participation.

Notably, in the second half of the year, against the background of dropping number of raids, the number of previously neglected social assistance actions increased; many nationalists, most likely in response to pressure from law enforcement agencies, chose to return to peaceful, and most importantly, legal activities. Many right-wing associations resumed their blood drives, collection of aid to the poor, voluntary Saturday work, etc. Possibly, the growth in number of such actions was spurred by the fact that the majority of right-wing (and not just right-wing) movements that supported the DNR and LNR engaged in collecting humanitarian aid for “Novorossiya” throughout the year, thus increasing the popularity of “actions of help” as such.

The ultra-right were traditionally active in their infiltration of various sports clubs and other initiatives, especially the ones associated with wrestling, boxing, etc. Last year, “Russian Bench Press” (weightlifting from a prone position) tournaments promoted by the ultra-right gained wide popularity. Apparently, nationalists were attracted by the name of the sport and the low cost of organizing competitions. In 2014, many Russian Bench Press tournaments took place in different cities (Moscow, Astrakhan, Belgorod, Irkutsk, Krasnodar, Kostroma, Nizhny Novgorod, Samara, Slavyansk-on-Kuban, Tver, etc.); the organizers included different groups of nationalists (the Russian Runs, the Resistance, Restrukt!, and others) as well as the clothing brands popular among the far right. These events are often held in various fitness clubs or local gyms and attract several dozen participants and spectators. Similarly to the Russian Runs, the actions are designed to promote a healthy lifestyle and, at the same time, to promote far-right movements and bring in new people.

Roman Zentsov’s Resistance movement, which became somewhat more active in the last year or two, was among the most active organizers of the Russian Bench Press contests. While previously the movement “specialized” on actions of civic assistance, now its activists specifically conduct all kinds of competitions and training. Not all of their activities involve sports per se – many focus on martial training, such as knife fighting or hand-to-hand combat.

Of course, organizing various camps and activist training is a traditional far right activity. The main purpose of these activities is to keep the associates “battle ready,” so the program usually involves training of various combat skills. While previously this kind of far-right activity was generally reserved for the summer season and the winter holidays, now it has become more regular and formalized. Rather than infrequent camp announcements, the right-wing websites and social network groups are now featuring numerous calls to visit permanent schools and clubs, where everyone can learn knife and hand-to-hand combat, urban and forest combat tactics, shooting and weapon-handling skills, etc. Most likely, the growth in activity of various military-patriotic clubs that exist around the ultra-right movement resulted from the escalating conflict in Ukraine and general militarization of the society. Some of these clubs have openly declared that they were training militants to participate in the Ukrainian conflict on the side of the separatists.

In our opinion, sharp intensification of the far-right efforts to involve their actual or potential supporters in such schools and clubs constitutes an extremely disturbing symptom, since it reflects the increased demand for military training. The consequences might be quite serious, because nationalists are prepared to use their combat skills both against their ethnic and ideological “enemies” and against the state.

## Participation of the Ultra Right in the Hostilities in Ukraine

As described above, the developments in Ukraine have become the hottest topic of debate among right-wing radicals. The most determined of them went to the war-torn region in order to “act on their words” and personally take part in the fighting<sup>30</sup>. Russian nationalists are present on both sides of the front line in Eastern Ukraine. We can say, however, that the ultra-right are far from constituting

<sup>30</sup> Yudina Natalia. Beware the Rise of the Russian Ultra-Right // The Moscow Times. 2014. 11 September (<http://www.sova-center.ru/en/xenophobia/reports-analyses/2014/09/d30212/>); Natalia Yudina. Ukrainian Passions of the Ultra-Right // SOVA Center. 2014. 15 September (<http://www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/publications/2014/09/d30505/>).

the largest group of the Russian nationals fighting in Ukraine, For the most part, citizens of Russia, who take part in the hostilities, are not only (and not so much) nationalists, but all sorts of people, including anti-fascists. Many people fighting in Ukraine had never been involved into any prior political activity.

Unfortunately, our information in this area is very spotty, and we are unable to provide even a rough quantitative estimate. Very approximately, actual nationalists fighting for the “Novorossiya” number about few hundred people, excluding the “unregistered” Cossacks. (According to director of the Phoenix (*Fenix*) Center for New Sociology and Study of Practical Politics Alexander Tarasov, about one hundred nationalists, not counting the Cossacks, fought on the DNR/LNR side by the end of 2014.

Russian nationalists, who fight in Ukraine, mostly can be characterized as idea-driven but unaffiliated, and include veterans of the past wars (Chechnya and even Afghanistan), as well as retired military servicemen – i.e. people with combat experience prepared for the war conditions. Some of them have ties to Cossack organizations, especially to the ones active in the regions adjacent to Ukraine. Particularly visible among these are the activists of Nikolai Kozitsyn’s Great Don Army (Vsevelikoe Voysko Donskoe), who seized control in the areas between the DNR and LNR territories, and the Wolves’ Hundred (*Volchya Sotnya*) from the Belorechenskaya village of the Krasnodar Territory, which ceased its activities in the region by the end of 2014).

The Ukrainian events brought to public attention the Russian National Unity (or more precisely, a fragment of RNE that remained loyal to its leader, Alexander Barkashov) – an organization, which involved thousands of young people in the 1990s, but which had done nothing of notice for several preceding years. The RNE is actively campaigning on the Internet to attract volunteers. Online photos depict groups of 15 – 20 armed men in the combat zone wearing the symbols of Barkashov’s RNE (one photo shows the leader’s son Petr Barkashov; another one includes Alexander Kildishov, the leader of the Volgograd RNE branch).

Yevgeny Fyodorov’s NOD is busy organizing and sending volunteer fighters. In the summer of 2014, the Samara NOD branch, under the slogan “Motherland! Freedom! Putin!” and a portrait of Tsar Nicholas II, sent volunteers from the Samara Region to join the people’s militia of the self-proclaimed DNR.

Among other volunteers from Russia seen in Ukraine were activists from the ESM (Alexander Dugin’s followers), Stanislav Vorobyov’s RID, and the NDP<sup>31</sup>. Members of the Other Russia were noticed at the Ukrainian front as well.

<sup>31</sup> This was established when, on February 18, 2015, the Moscow office of the National Democratic Party held a teleconference with Donetsk, which included representative of the St.

Well-known ultra-nationalist website *Sputnik and Pogrom* (whose editorial board also split on the Ukrainian question) and soccer fandom websites called for joining a group of St. Petersburg nationalists (Alexey “Fritz” Milchakov, Dmitry Deineko and others), which left for Ukraine and was later transformed into “Batman” Special Purpose Detachment of the LNR armed formations.

Some nationalists cannot be definitely classified into specific groups. For example, Anton Raevsky<sup>32</sup> from Oryol, who “became famous” when his photos with a swastika tattooed on his chest went public online, was a member of Bobrov’s NSI three years ago, left the group among much drama, then participated in the Black Hundred in Oryol, but was expelled in May 2014 after the group became aware of his “exploits” in Odessa. Next, Raevsky announced an online fundraising campaign in order to buy himself military equipment and ammunition and left for the war. He was wounded in the leg in the summer of 2014 and treated at the Rostov Clinical Hospital.

We know even less about Russian nationalists on the other side. Even the estimates of their numbers vary widely, from 20 to 200 people (according to A. Tarasov, there were about 60 people by the end of 2014, primarily concentrated in the Azov, Aydar, Donbass 1 and Donbass 2 battalions and in two of the Right Sector battalions). Neo-Nazis comprise a substantial part of this group, but it is very diverse, including even supporters of General Kvachkov.

On December 5, 2014, during a meeting with the defenders of the Donetsk airport, President Poroshenko presented a Ukrainian passport to one of the former leaders of the National Socialist Society (NSO) and a former RNE member Sergey “Maliuta” Korotkikh, who fought in the Azov battalion<sup>33</sup> since its very inception, and serves as their intelligence commander<sup>34</sup>. In July, Roman “Zuhel” Zheleznov<sup>35</sup>, a known associate of Maxim “Tesak” Martsinkevich, arrived in Kiev. Mikhail Oreshnikov, who also fled to Ukraine, represents trans-border neo-Nazi group Misanthropic Division. About 10 members of the group are

Petersburg branch Alexander Zhuchkovsky, who was fighting in the DNR armed formations.

<sup>32</sup> Tatiana Vostroilova. Ukrainians Found the “Black Hundred” from St. Petersburg in Odessa // Fontanka.ru. 2014. March 30 (<http://www.fontanka.ru/2014/03/25/166/>).

<sup>33</sup> The choice of Azov battalion by many ultra-right is not accidental, since the backbone of this unit is comprised of neo-Nazis, only Ukrainian rather than Russian.

<sup>34</sup> For more on S. Korotkikh see: A Right Radical Receives Ukrainian Citizenship // SOVA Center. 2014 5 December (<http://www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/news/racism-nationalism/2014/12/d30802/>).

<sup>35</sup> A criminal case against R. Zheleznov was opened in Russia in October 2014 under Part. 3 of the Criminal Code Article 359 (“participation in armed conflict or military action as a mercenary”).

fighting in Azov; previously, the group members took an active part in clashes in Kharkov and other cities.

In December 2014, it was reported that one of the members of the notorious neo-Nazi group Military Organization of Russian Nationalists (*Boevaya organizatsiya russkikh natsionalistov*, BORN) Alexander “Rumyn” (the Romanian) Parinov, who had long been hiding in Ukraine, also had connections with fighters from the Azov battalion<sup>36</sup>. However, Parinov is diabetic and can hardly participate in hostilities directly<sup>37</sup>.

Meanwhile, a photograph of armed fighters, taken on St. Michael’s Square in Kiev prior to leaving for the war zone, surfaced on the VKontakte social network. One of the fighters was nationalist Alexey “Kolovrat” Kozhemyakin,<sup>38</sup> well known in the Komi Republic. Russian right-wing websites reported in late November that Kozhemyakin was leaving for Ukraine, and, on December 13, 2014, he confirmed his arrival to Ukraine in his text “Why are we fighting?”

The Russian far right already suffered a number of casualties in this war. Just a few examples: the RID activist Sergey Yefremov, the NOMP activist from Petrozavodsk Sergey Markov, leader of the Rostov ESM branch Alexander Prosyolkov, head of the Korolyovo DPNI branch Sergey Vorobyov, and activist of the Togliatti Other Russia branch Ilya Guryev were all killed fighting on the side of the separatists; on the other side, we know about the death of Sergey “Balagan” Grek, who had fought in the Azov battalion.

## Counter-action to Radical Nationalism and Xenophobia

### Public Initiatives

Public activity to counter xenophobia and radical nationalism in 2014 remained practically unchanged from the previous year.

<sup>36</sup> Interestingly, his “associate” from the BORN group Maxim Baklagin stated during the court proceedings on February 16, 2015 that in the beginning of the Ukrainian events he sent a petition requesting to send him “to the war” to a penal battalion so he could “atone his crime with blood”, referring to fighting on the side of the self-proclaimed DNR and LNR.

<sup>37</sup> Other members of the BORN also had a history of hiding in Ukraine. Group leader Nikita Tikhonov went there in 2008. Alexey Korshunov exploded on his own grenade in Zaporizhia in 2011. In 2013, Mikhail Volkov was extradited to Russia by the law enforcement of Ukraine.

<sup>38</sup> For more on A. Kozhemyakin see: A Syktyvkar Nationalist in Azov // SOVA Center 2015. 14 January (<http://www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/news/racism-nationalism/2015/01/d31024/>).

On January 19 the traditional All-Russian campaign in memory of Stanislav Markelov and Anastasia Baburova took place in 11 cities in Russia. A year earlier, this event took place in 15 cities. The anti-fascist march in Moscow was attended by about 650 people – the same number as the year before. The action itself<sup>39</sup> went without incidents, but a number of attacks took place in its immediate aftermath<sup>40</sup>.

Protesters in other cities also faced threats and attacks from the far right. In St. Petersburg, nationalists from the Great Russia (Northwest) posted online threats on the eve of the march in connection with the alleged presence of LGBT activists at the event – ostensibly, the LGBT were “*tarnishing the celebration of the Epiphany of Our Lord.*” There were several clashes on Vosstaniya Square between neo-Nazis and event participants. In Perm, the screening of Valery Balayan’s documentary about Anastasia Baburova, “Love Me, Please” (*Lyubite menya, pozhaluysta*), timed to coincide with this date, was cancelled due to threats from right-wing radicals.

From November 9 to November 16, the activists organized the annual International Week of Tolerance under the slogan “Kristallnacht – never again!” timed to coincide with the International Day against Racism and Intolerance. Unfortunately, the commemorative week remained practically invisible to the wider public. Memorial events took place in St. Petersburg, Kostroma and Murmansk, but failed to attract large audience.

The March against Hate, instituted in 2004 after the assassination of scientist Nikolay Girenko by neo-Nazis, took place on October 27. It was attended by 300 to 400 people – representatives of the coalition “For Democratic St. Petersburg,” the Yabloko party, the Solidarity movement, the Heterosexual Alliance for the LGBT Rights (*Alyans geteroseksualov za prava LGBT*) and the RPR-PARNAS. This event was marked by some incidents as well. Before the march a group of six people approached a man, who was holding a Crimean Tatar flag, and said, “*Are you not ashamed to stand with the national symbol of Crimean Tatars in the same column with the LGBT?*” They were removed from the column by Andrey Pivovarov, the co-chairman of the RPR-PARNAS St. Petersburg Branch, but accompanied the procession along the entire route. In addition, five people were arrested “*for smoking in a public place*” and brought to police precinct to be released shortly thereafter.

<sup>39</sup> March in Memory of Stanislav Markelov and Anastasia Baburova Took Place in Moscow // SOVA Center. 2014. 19 January (<http://www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/news/countraaction/2014/01/d28823/>).

<sup>40</sup> For more information see: The Attack Against Participants of an Anti-fascist March in Moscow // SOVA Center. 2014. 20 January (<http://www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/news/racism-nationalism/2014/01/d28824/>).

The “Football People” Action Week, which was organized by the Football against Racism in Europe (FARE) network and took place from 9 to 23 October 2014, is also worth mentioning.

## Criminal Prosecution

In 2014, many changes were introduced to the Criminal Code and other legislation related to counteracting extremist activity. All of them were aimed at toughening the penalties and expanding the scope of responsibility. However, we view most of these innovations as negative, so they are covered in our report on “inappropriate anti-extremism.”

### For Violence

The number of verdicts for violent racist crimes in 2014 was over 30% smaller than in the preceding year. In 2014, there were at least 21 convictions, in which courts recognized the hate motive in 19 regions of Russia (vs. 32 convictions in 24 regions in 2013), according to which 45 people were found guilty (vs. 59 in 2013).

When prosecuting racist violence, the judiciary used the Criminal Code articles that contained hate motive as aggravating circumstance: Article 105 Part 2 paragraph “1” (“murder motivated by hatred”), Article 116 Part 2 paragraph “b” (“battery”), Article 115 Part 2 paragraph “b” (“infliction of a light injury”), Article 111 Part 4 (“infliction of a grave injury”), Article 213 Part 2 (“hooliganism”), Article 119 Part 2 (“threat of murder”), etc.

The Criminal Code Article 282 (“incitement to hatred”) was utilized in four convictions in 2014. In accordance with Resolution No. 11 of the plenary meeting of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation “Concerning Judicial Practice in Criminal Cases Regarding Crimes of Extremism,” adopted on June 28, 2011,<sup>41</sup> the application of Article 282 to violent crimes is considered appropriate if the crimes were aimed at inciting hate in third parties, for example, through public and provocative ideologically motivated attack. The resolution implies that Article 282 should be used in conjunction with another appropriate Criminal Code article, such as “murder,” “bodily harm,” etc.). In such cases, we consider the use of this article in convictions for violent crime to be justified. In three of the convictions, including the verdict to skinheads from the neo-Nazi group NS/WP, which received the most media attention, it was used for isolated

<sup>41</sup> For more details see: Vera Alperovich, Alexander Verkhovsky, Natalia Yudina, *Between Manezhnaya and Bolotnaya....* // SOVA Center 2012. 21 February (<http://www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/publications/2012/02/d23739/>).

episodes of ultra-right propaganda. The fourth verdict, issued in the Stavropol Territory, utilized Part 2 Paragraph “a” of Article 282 (“incitement of hatred committed with violence or threat of violence”) for attacking a passer-by while shouting xenophobic slogans and insults. The attack happened in a public place, and the victim didn’t suffer significant harm.

Penalties in violent crime cases were distributed as follows:

- 7 people received suspended sentences;
- 2 people were sentenced to mandatory labor;
- 4 people were sentenced to correctional labor;
- 1 person received suspended correctional labor sentences;
- 4 people received a custodial sentence of up to one year;
- 8 people – up to 3 years;
- 11 people – up to 10 years;
- 5 people – up to 15 years;
- 2 people – up to 20 years;
- 1 person received a custodial sentence of 24 years.

We only know of two verdicts, which ordered the offenders to pay a financial compensation to their victims for moral harm and medical expenses. Regretfully, we rarely see any reports about such measures. Meanwhile, victims frequently need expensive medical help and have no financial means to cover the expenses; their offenders should face material responsibility for the incident.

As you can see from the above data, 16 % of convicted offenders (7 out of 45) only received suspended sentences. In some cases such decisions could be justified. For example, in 2014, Roman Veits of NS/WP accepted a deal with the investigation and is unlikely to attempt a racist crime in the future. We have doubts about the second verdict issued against a resident of Samara, who threatened his victim with a stationery knife, uttering anti-Semitic slurs. Perhaps, the fact that the attacker had inflicted no actual injuries accounts for this lenient sentence. However, some suspended sentences for openly racist violence seem inappropriately lenient. For example, two neo-Nazis in Novosibirsk, who beat up a native of Armenia and threw him down on the railroad tracks, or three young men in the town of Kasimov in the Ryazan Region, who committed a racist attack against an apartment with Roma residents.

We have to repeat that suspended sentences for violent racist attacks tend to engender the sense of impunity and do not stop offenders from committing such acts in the future.

Nevertheless, the majority of the offenders (31 people) were sentenced to actual prison terms of varying length. Among others, the members of above men-

tioned neo-Nazi group NS/WP “Nevograd” received long terms behind bars. Nikita Tikhonov was sentenced to 18 years in prison for plotting, as a member of the BORN, the assassination of Moscow City Court judge Edward Chuvashov and several other murders. Nikita Tikhonov already received a life sentence in May 2011 for the murder of Stanislav Markelov and Anastasia Baburova<sup>42</sup>. The process against other BORN members, based primarily on the testimony by Tikhonov and his associate Yevgenia Khasis, dragged on for months in 2014; at the time of writing, it has been almost completed.)

In two more cases members of the ultra-right organizations were convicted, but the verdict did not cite the hate motive. A St. Petersburg court sentenced nationalist Alexey Voevodin, who had previously received a life sentence<sup>43</sup>, to 6 years in maximum security penal colony for beating a young man to death; the hate motive was not part of the charge.

Members of ultra-right association Perun Warriors – SS (*Voiny Peruna – SS*) were convicted in Yekaterinburg; they were sentenced to long prison terms for their murder of a homeless person. Earlier, the investigation believed that the murder had been motivated by ideological hatred, but the case was reclassified during the trial, and the ideological motive was excluded.

#### Prosecution of Members and Leaders of Ultra-Right Organizations

In the year under review, law enforcement authorities actively prosecuted activists of the most notorious nationalist organizations. The leaders and members of organizations affiliated with the Restrukt! and the “Russians” movements were most severely affected.

In August 2014, the Kuntsevsky District Court of Moscow found leader of the neo-Nazi Restrukt! movement Maxim “Tesak” Martsinkevich guilty of inciting ethnic hatred with the threat of violence and sentenced him to five years’ imprisonment in a maximum security colony. The charges were based on the fact of publication by Martsinkevich of three videos “Throw churki out! The Election Campaign!,” “Tesak on the movie *Stalingrad* and the situation in Biryulyovo,” and “Tesak on the movie *Okolofutbola*”<sup>44</sup> Such a harsh sentence

<sup>42</sup> For more details see: Vera Alperovich, Natalia Yudina, *The Summer of 2011: A New Set of Neo-Nazi Prisoners and Dreams of the Second “Manezhka”* // SOVA Center. 2011. 5 May (<http://www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/publications/2011/10/d22696/>).

<sup>43</sup> The verdict in the case of the Borovikov-Voevodin gang was issued on June 14, 2011 by the St. Petersburg City Court. Alexey Voevodin and Artyom Prokhorenko were sentenced to life in prison. For details, see: *The Verdict in the Borovikov-Voevodin Gang Case Issued in St. Petersburg* // SOVA Center 2011. 14 June (<http://www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/news/counteraction/2011/06/d21872/>).

<sup>44</sup> More on this case in: V. Alperovich, N. Yudina, *The Ultra-Right Shrugged...*

(five years for three videos) produced a mixed public reaction. Probably, the verdict was issued to reflect “the accumulation of merit” and “taking into account the identity of the defendant,”<sup>45</sup> – perhaps the most notorious neo-Nazi. On November 11, 2014, having considered the cassation appeal, the Moscow City Court reclassified the charges from Part 2 of Article 282 to Part 1 of Article 282 and reduced the penalty for Martsinkevich from 5 years of imprisonment to 2 years and 10 months. Martsinkevich is currently a defendant in at least two more criminal cases<sup>46</sup>.

In addition to their leader, the law enforcement also expressed interest in other activists of the Restrukt!. In June 2014, a criminal case was opened in Moscow under Part 4 of Article 111 (“causing serious bodily injury resulting in death of the victim”), after activists had beaten to death 37-year-old citizen of Azerbaijan Zaur Alyshev, whom they took for a drug dealer<sup>47</sup>. The court arrested three Restrukt! members, suspected in the attack, including 17-year-old Kirill Filatov. After that, the authorities began a large-scale investigation into the activities of Restrukt! activists. On July 13, 2014, the quarters of activists Yevdokim Knyazev (leader of the “Occupy-narkofilyay” movement) and Liza Lyutaya (possibly a pseudonym) were searched in Moscow. On June 28, 2014, the riot police dispersed the Restrukt! conference in Izmailovo concert hall.

Later, all the cases initiated in relation to different incidents were combined into a single court case. The case against members of the Restrukt! movement presses charges against about 20 people, who are accused of attacking vendors

<sup>45</sup> Martsinkevich had been an activist of the NSO, headed the association “Format 18”, recognized as extremist by the decision of Moscow City Court of 20 December 2010. “Format 18” specialized in manufacturing and selling videos that depicted Nazi skinheads torturing homeless persons and Asian migrants. Tesak was convicted in 2008 for nationalistic provocation in the Bilingva club in February 2007, but not for his more serious acts. In 2009, he was convicted again for posting on the Internet a video with staged hanging of a “Tajik drug dealer.” Martsinkevich’s prison term ended on December 31, 2010; he was released, and took up some new “projects,” including the Restrukt! Movement, which quickly started to gain popularity among neo-Nazi youth, and the “Occupy Pedophilia” project.

<sup>46</sup> A criminal case against Maxim (Tesak) Martsinkevich under Article 213 (“hooliganism”) was opened in Moscow in October 2014. The case was based on a video where M. Martsinkevich shaves a young man’s head. In November 2014, another criminal case against Martsinkevich was opened in Moscow under Article 282 Part 1 for writing and publishing the book *Restrukt!*.

<sup>47</sup> According to the information from “Occupy-narkofilyay” (one of the Restrukt!’s sister-movements), on the day of the attack young people were conducting an “anti-drug raid.” Having decided that Z. Alyshev was selling drugs, they handed him over to the police, but he was soon released from the precinct. After that, he was attacked.

of prohibited smoking mixtures, hooliganism and robbery. About 10 people were arrested, and 10 more are under travel restrictions.

Another movement which attracted the law enforcement's attention is the Attack (*Ataka*), founded in the summer of 2013 by several activists, who had left Restrukt!<sup>48</sup>. The Presnensky District Court in Moscow arrested leaders of the Attack movement Stanislav Mityaev and Vladimir Tkach on October 29. In November, three more new suspects appeared in the Attack case – Roman Chernikov, Tomas Paipalas and Sergey Sukhanov. One of them was arrested, another one is under house arrest, and the third one is under travel restrictions. The young people, depending on their respective roles, are facing charges under Part 1 of the Criminal Code Article 282, under Parts 1 and 2 of Article 2821 (organization of an extremist community and participation in it, respectively), and Part 2 of Article 214 (“vandalism motivated by ethnic hatred”). According to the investigators, the suspects participated in organizing the ultra-right Attack movement “*whose main task was the forcible overthrow of the present government in Russia.*” The defenders promoted their ideas via social networks, by disseminating leaflets and by posting stickers.

Ultra-right activists, close to the “Russians” Ethnic-Political Association were actively persecuted as well.

On October 15, 2014, a leader of the “Russians” Association and one of the most famous Russian nationalists Alexander Belov (Potkin) was detained in Moscow on suspicion of laundering money, stolen from the Russian and Ukrainian depositors of BTA Bank of Kazakhstan. Actually, former head of the bank Mukhtar Ablyazov (currently under arrest in France) has been accused of embezzling funds, while A. Belov, according to the investigation, was engaged in laundering some of the money, moved out of the bank<sup>49</sup>. Belov was taken into

<sup>48</sup> In July 2013 the statement of ex-members of the Restrukt! appeared in the ultra-right segment of the Russian Internet, in which they reported about their departure from the organization, which had become a source for Martsinkevich's self-promotion. In addition, the statement asserted that its authors were planning to engage in propaganda of National Socialism and also more actively engage in “social” projects, similar to the “Occupy Pedophilia”, “Occupy-narkofilyay”, etc. The authorship of this statement is now difficult to ascertain, but Vladimir Tkach (as a former political council member of the Restrukt!) and Stanislav Mityaev (as the former deputy head for human resources) were among its signatories. According to our data, the members of the Attack movement took part in raids against illegal migrants, at least one of which was held in collaboration with the police.

<sup>49</sup> More on this case see in: Moscow: Alexander Belov Detained and Arrested on Suspicion of Money Laundering: // SOVA Center. 2015. 16 October (<http://www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/news/counteraction/2014/10/d30455/>).

custody. His associates claim that his detention was politically motivated, and the charges have been fabricated<sup>50</sup>.

Interestingly enough, Alexander Belov is also a defendant in a criminal case, opened in Kazakhstan under Article 164 (“inciting ethnic hatred”) of the Criminal Code of Kazakhstan. According to the investigators, Belov met with representatives of Slavic and Cossack organizations in Kazakhstan in February 2012 and suggested organizing a military training base for young Cossacks in Kyrgyzstan. A month later, according to the investigators, Belov conducted closed training events in Kyrgyzstan, this time for activists of the Kazakh national-patriotic youth organization Ult Azattığı. The group of Kazakhs, sent to Kyrgyzstan, was allegedly put together by member of the Kazakh Popular Front Zhanbolat Mamai, while Stan-TV internet portal, owned by Mukhtar Ablyazov, sponsored the trainings. Allegedly, Belov tried to “*destabilize the situation in the country and create political chaos utilizing the “Angry Kazakh” political technology project, launched upon Ablyazov's initiative, the essence of which is to discredit the current Kazakh government and oligarchic groups in front of representatives of the titular nation*”<sup>51</sup>.

The St. Petersburg group Russian Sweep also didn't escape attention of the law enforcement. On September 26, 2014, the Petrogradsky District Court of St. Petersburg sentenced ultra-right activist Dmitry “Besheny” Yevtushenko (the Slavic Force, the Russian Sweep) to 160 hours of mandatory labor under Part 1 of Article 282. According to the investigation, in 2010 – 2013, Yevtushenko “*repeatedly posted materials aimed at inciting hatred and enmity on the basis of nationality and religion*”<sup>52</sup>. In October 2014, a new criminal case against Yevtushenko was opened under the Criminal Code Articles 282 and 212 (“incitement to mass riots”) for posts on his VKontakte page, which contained “incitement to riots and incitement to hatred against persons of non-Slavic ethnicity or natives of the Caucasus, and against government representatives.”

<sup>50</sup> This is not the first criminal case against Belov. In 2006, a criminal case against him was opened under Art. 282 after the events in Kondopoga. Later, the case was closed for lack of evidence. In May 2009, a Moscow court sentenced him under the same article to one and a half years' imprisonment for speaking at a rally during the Russian March of 2007.

<sup>51</sup> Victoria Kuzmenko. Do Not Make Kazakhs Angry // Russkaya Planeta. 2014. 21 May (<http://rusplt.ru/world/ne-zlite-kazahov-9976.html>).

<sup>52</sup> Earlier Yevtushenko was under house arrest on charges of hooliganism for participating in the Russian Sweep.



Another ongoing court case in St. Petersburg targets another famous St. Petersburg nationalist Nikolay Bondarik, charged under Part 1 of Article 282 for planning provocations on the Kurban Bayram (Eid al-Adha)<sup>53</sup> in October 2013.

Already in 2015, well-known St. Petersburg right-wing activist and one of the principal organizers of the Russian Runs Maxim Kalinichenko and leader of the above-mentioned Rights for European Development Vitaly Shishkin were arrested. Nationalist activist Oksana (Voelva) Borisova was subjected to administrative arrest.

As you can see, all these people and organizations have been widely known and active for a long time. Their actions have also deserved attention for a long time. However, on prior occasions, their acts were almost fully condoned by the authorities. Why did the authorities choose this particular moment to actively prosecute them? The theory that the persecution has to do with the difference from the official position in their views on Ukraine does not quite explain the dynamics. After all, members of these organizations differ in their opinions on the Ukrainian question. The “Russians” and their allies clearly oppose the “Russian Spring” movement, while Restruk! prefers to avoid this subject.

While these nationalists have no common position regarding the government in Ukraine, they all are in clear opposition to the current Russian authorities. So, unfortunately, the political character of the persecution is obvious. For the most part, all these nationalists except Belov, who was under investigation, demonstrated very high level of engagement in 2012 – 2013 related to nationalist raids in search of “illegal migrants” and the “hunt for pedophiles.” As for Belov, the “Russians” movement was playing a leading role among radical nationalist organizations until recently, and still remains quite active – it is possible that the authorities simply decided to neutralize such a dangerous and hard-to-predict force.

Most of these nationalists have been charged under “propaganda” articles of the Criminal Code. On prior occasions, we repeatedly spoke out against prosecuting harmless Internet users, who have no influence among the far right, for propaganda and called for paying attention to the well-known agitators. In this case, we are talking about popular right-wing media figures. However, we suspect that incriminating episodes, and articles for the criminal charges were selected at random; no one seriously analyzed the acts of these people (the ver-

<sup>53</sup> Two St. Petersburg residents claimed that they had become victims of a xenophobic attack, but later confessed to staging it. More in V. Alperovich, N. Yudina, *The Ultra-Right Shrugged...*

dict for Tesak is very revealing – he was convicted for the statements that were definitely not the most incendiary by his standards) and the prosecution was triggered not by their propaganda but by political reasons. The authorities, while solving their possibly quite legitimate political problems, would do well not to forget that legal instruments should be used appropriately and not imitatively.

### **For Vandalism**

In 2014, the prosecution of ethno-religious and neo-Nazi vandalism was less active than in the preceding year – we know of 4 sentences issued to 6 people in 4 regions (vs. 8 convictions of 11 people in 8 regions in 2013).

In all of these cases the charges were brought under the Criminal Code Article 214 (“vandalism motivated by ethnic or religious hatred.”). The verdict for the swastikas in an elevator in Surgut used only this article; the sentence for the desecration of a mosque in the Ivanovo aggregated Article 214 with Article 282 Part 1; in the sentence for arson against a prosecutor’s office in Chelyabinsk Article 214 was aggregated with Articles 280, 213 and 167 (“intentional damage to property”); in the sentence for a series of bombings and arson in Novomoskovsk (the Tula Region) it was aggregated with paragraphs “a” and “b” of Article 244 Part 2 (“desecration of burial places motivated by ethnic hatred”), Article 213 Part 2, Article 30 Part 3 and Article 167 Part 2 (“organization of attempted premeditated destruction of property by arson”).

Uncharacteristically, all of the convicted offenders received custodial sentences ranging from two months to three years. Four people in the Tula and Chelyabinsk regions received sentences for arson and bombings, that is, for truly dangerous acts. The Ivanovo vandal received three years for insulting inscriptions on the Grand Mosque and placing a pig’s head on the mosque fence – perhaps taking into consideration some previous acts committed by this person. The real prison term for the Surgut vandal for xenophobic inscriptions in the elevator, seems debatable, but we may not be aware of all the circumstances of the case.

By the way, the majority of such crimes (desecration of buildings, houses or fences) in the past year, were customarily qualified not as vandalism but as propaganda under Article 282 (see the next chapter). Apparently, the difference is due to the fact that in the above cases the xenophobic graffiti appeared on objects, which, unlike religious buildings or monuments, could not be vandalized. Although, even undisputable acts of vandalism were frequently qualified as propaganda, as it happened in the conviction for “extremist inscriptions” made on a mosque in Udmurtia. Due to the dual nature of such offenses, the decision on a specific article to be used are left to the discretion of law enforcement agents, and Article 282 is better known to the law enforcement and more advantageous in terms of media coverage.

### For Propaganda

The number of propaganda-related convictions has been growing year after year. In 2014, it far exceeded the number of all other extremism-related convictions combined. At least 153 guilty verdicts for xenophobic propaganda were issued in 2014 to 158 people (and one more individual released from punishment due to active remorse) in 54 regions of the country. In 2013, 133 verdicts were issued against 136 people in 59 regions<sup>54</sup>.

The Criminal Code Article 282 was utilized in 136 convictions against 141 people. An overwhelming majority of them (114 people) were convicted under this article only, 13 people were convicted under Article 280 only; 12 more cases involved the aggregation of Articles 282 and 280. One person – the vandal who damaged the mosque in Ivanovo – was convicted under Articles 214 and 280 (see also the chapter on penalties for vandalism). Two more – guilty of arson targeting a prosecutor's office in Chelyabinsk – were convicted under the aggregation of Article 167 Part 2 (“intentional damage to property”), Article 213 Part 2 (“hooliganism”), Article 214 Part 2 (“vandalism”), Article 280 Part 1 and Article 282 Part 1.

Five sentences for nine people involved the Criminal Code articles pertaining to violence in aggregation with the propaganda articles. Such are the cases of the above-mentioned members of the far-right NS/WP group in St. Petersburg (Vladimir Mumzhiyev, Roman Veits, and Kirill Prisyazhnyuk) or of neo-Nazi Gleb Tsyba, who had attacked an anti-fascist in Moscow (see chapter on verdicts for violence).

<sup>54</sup> We cannot claim to know all such verdicts. Sentences handed down in the republics of the North Caucasus and in Crimea are not included in this report. The report data on prosecution of members of extremist communities and banned organizations here and in the next chapter does not include sentences that we consider inappropriate (they are not too numerous and are listed in the relevant report), or legitimate sentences issued under the same articles but not for xenophobic actions and not to nationalists (there are very few of those).

Not taking these reservations into account, let's compare our data to the official statistics. Such statistics has not been published for 2014 (only for its first six months). If we compare the 2013 data according to the Supreme Court and according to SOVA Center (summed across all types of convicted persons and the regardless of the conviction's appropriateness), then the Supreme Court reported 60 convicted offenders under Article 280 (hereinafter – under both parts of the Article, both principal and additional charges), and SOVA reports 28; under Article 282 the Supreme Court and SOVA report 218 and 145 respectively, under Article 282<sup>1</sup> - 18 and 12, under Article 282<sup>2</sup>- 30 and 28. See: Summary Statistics on the Status of Criminal Record in Russia in 2013: Report on number of convicted for all crimes of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation // Website of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation ([http://www.cdep.ru/userimages/sudebnaya\\_statistika/2013/f\\_10-a-osugd\\_po\\_vsem\\_sostavam\\_prestupleniy\\_UK\\_RF\\_za\\_2013.xls](http://www.cdep.ru/userimages/sudebnaya_statistika/2013/f_10-a-osugd_po_vsem_sostavam_prestupleniy_UK_RF_za_2013.xls)); SOVA Center Database (<http://www.sova-center.ru/database>).

In some verdicts, Article 282 was utilized in combination with general nonviolent Criminal Code articles, such as Article 228 (“illegal possession of drugs”) or Article 161 (“robbery”).

Two people were convicted under articles 280 and 2052 (“public calls to terrorist activity or public justification of terrorism”): Roman Solovyov in Lipetsk for the publication of recorded performances by Said Buryatsky and Michael Ture in Moscow for acting as administrator for a website that published news and articles about the activities of Caucasus Emirate (*Imarat Kavkaz*). Somehow, in all the years of our observations, sentences under Article 2052 have been imposed exclusively for radical Islamist propaganda. The verdict, in which the Criminal Code Article 2052 part 2 (“preparation for the public justification of terrorism through the media”) was aggregated with Article 280 Part 1, Article 282 Part 1, Article 2052 Part 1 (“justification of terrorism”) and Article 30 was no exception to this rule; neither was the Moscow case of Boris Stomakhin, the editor-in-chief of the “Radical Politics” newsletter – despite the fact that Stomakhin is not an Islamist, he specifically praised Islamist violence.

At least five verdicts utilized Article 282 for sharing and linking to materials from the Federal List of Extremist Materials.<sup>55</sup> We wrote earlier about lack of standards that allows prosecutors to press either criminal or administrative charges for the same offenses<sup>56</sup>. We do not see these sentences as fully legitimate, because they represent a clear case of an administrative issue that should be resolved by applying the relevant Administrative Code article. However, among the huge number of people convicted of propaganda, many were only guilty of posting a single item, not very dangerous one, but the one not (yet!) included on the Federal List. In such cases it is impossible to apply administrative punishment, only a criminal one. In any case, we view such acts as presenting so little danger, that they are not worthy of law enforcement attention altogether.

The court verdicts for the propaganda cases were distributed as follows:

- 1 person was released from punishment due to remorse;
- 2 people were released from punishment because the statute of limitations had expired;
- 3 people referred for compulsory medical treatment;

<sup>55</sup> Lead singer of the Yarovit band from Tyumen for sharing songs by Kolovrat, a resident of Abakan for the video *Progulki vozle gukovskoi Obshchagi-2* (Walks near the Gukovo Dorm-2), a Kurgan resident for *Katekhizis yevreya v SSSR* (Catechism of the Jew in the USSR), a Yekaterinburg resident for a link to *Mein Kampf*, a Tyumen resident for undisclosed videos from the Federal List.

<sup>56</sup> N. Yudina. Combating Anti-Extremism in the Virtual World in 2012-2013 // Russia Is Not Ukraine: Contemporary Accents of Nationalism. Moscow, SOVA Center, 2014. pp. 178–206.

- 21 people received custodial sentences;
- 13 people received suspended sentences without additional sanctions;
- 32 people were sentenced to various fines;
- 48 people were sentenced to mandatory labor;
- 36 people were sentenced to correctional labor;
- 3 people received suspended correctional labor sentences.

In 2014, convictions that involved real prison terms were delivered in conjunction with the Criminal Code articles other than propaganda. As already mentioned, it was racist violence, arson, etc.

We have strong doubts about the validity of several of prison sentences handed down in the Vladimir, Saratov, Sverdlovsk and Rostov regions for xenophobic videos, anti-Caucasian statements on social networks, as well as racist songs and shouts. However, we do not know all the circumstances in these cases – it is possible that the offenders had prior suspended sentences, or their indictment included other charges as well.

A custodial sentence that we view as exceedingly harsh is the decision of the Butyrsky District Court in Moscow in the case of above-mentioned Boris Stomakhin, sentenced to 6.5 years in prison for publishing several articles on the Internet and in his newsletter. Even considering the fact that his writings indeed contain statements, possible to qualify under the cited Criminal Code articles, and that it was not the first time Stomakhin broke the law (he was sentenced to 5 years of imprisonment under the Criminal Code Article 282 part 1 and Article 280 Part 2 in 2006)<sup>57</sup>, the punishment is excessive, in our opinion, not only because it imposed for “words only,” but also because the audience of the resources, which published the incriminating articles, was obviously small, so the articles presented no significant public danger.

The trend of diminishing share of suspended sentences for propaganda has persisted since 2012. Such sentences represented only 8% in 2014 (13 of 158 convicted offenders). We see this trend as unambiguously positive, since, in our experience of many years, the majority of convicted propagandists do not view a suspended sentence as a serious punishment and are not being deterred from similar illegal activities in the future.

For example, Viktor Korchagin – a famous preacher of anti-Semitism and anti-Christianity and former director of the Vityaz publishing house – received suspended sentence of two years in Moscow for publication and

<sup>57</sup> See: Natalia Yudina, *Using a Sledgehammer to Crack a Nut: Review of the Law Enforcement Practice under the Criminal Code Article 280 in 2005–2010* // SOVA Center. 2010. 25 October (<http://www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/publications/2010/10/d20081/>).

distribution of “Generals on the Jewish Mafia” book by General Grigory Dubrov. We believe that a sentence restricting his professional activities<sup>58</sup> and barring him, at least for a period of time, from acting as a publisher would have been wiser, particularly since this was far from the first time V. Korchagin appeared as a defendant in court.<sup>59</sup> However, the defendant claimed that he no longer served as director of the publishing house and was not engaged in book distribution.

The majority of convicted offenders (119 people) received penalties not involving loss of freedom, which we believe to be more effective, such as fines, mandatory labor or correctional labor.

Following the trend of three preceding years, the propaganda convictions overwhelmingly pertained to online publications (135)<sup>60</sup>. As expected, their share only keeps increasing. The number of convictions for online propaganda in 2014 was over six times greater than the number of convictions for offline propaganda (22). Four cases included both online and offline offenses; these cases are included in both totals and in both breakdowns below.

The materials were posted on the following Internet resources

- Social networks – 120 (VKontakte – 86, unidentified social networks – 28; Odnoklassniki – 6);
- Articles on websites – 3;
- Maintaining website of an organization – 1;
- Forums, comments to articles – 4;
- Blog post – 1;
- Email messages – 1;
- Unspecified Internet resources – 5.

<sup>58</sup> Unfortunately, we only know of one such sentence issued in 2014. A court in Kurgan deprived a local resident of a right to engage in mass media-related activities for 1.5 years as a penalty for xenophobic statements on the building walls. Meanwhile, this is the most effective punishment for people involved in nationalist propaganda professionally in the media, publishing industry, or in the field of education.

<sup>59</sup> V. Korchagin was convicted in 2004, after many years of litigation. He received a one-year suspended sentence, and was released from punishment due to the statute of limitation, without any restriction on engaging in publishing. In April 1995, for similar crimes he was sentenced to a fine of 16 minimum wages, and disqualified from publishing, editorial and journalistic activities for three years, but at that time Korchagin was eligible for an amnesty. See G. Kozhevnikova, *Radical Nationalism in Russia: Manifestations and Responses. Overview of Developments in 2004.* // SOVA Center. 2005. 24 January (<http://www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/publications/2005/01/d3386/>).

<sup>60</sup> We are grateful to an employee of the Public Verdict Foundation for her assistance in organizing information on the Internet-related verdicts.

As you can see from this data, law enforcement officers continue to search for extremism primarily on the VKontakte social network, popular among the Russian youth (including its ultra-right segment). The enforcement mechanism is routine, since page owners have to provide their personal data and phone number during registration, and network administrators easily provide this information upon request from the law enforcement. Thus, the number of convictions related to VKontakte keeps growing.

All the shortcomings of the Internet-related law enforcement remain unchanged. The key issue for the Criminal Code “propaganda” articles, namely, lack of clarifications on quantitative assessment of public exposure, still has not been addressed. This criterion is not even taken into account either in filing criminal charges or in sentencing. Meanwhile, the audience size obviously varied widely from one case to another.

However, it is worth noting that, in 2014, the law enforcement paid attention not only to ordinary and rarely visited social network users, as had been the case earlier, but also to individuals, well-known among the ultra-right. In addition to the already mentioned Dmitry “Besheny” Yevtushenko and Maxim “Tesak” Martsinkevich, propaganda-related convictions were issued to Oleg Gonchar, the head of the South Siberian Cossack District press service from Khakassia, to Nikolay Babushkin, the coordinator of the Russian National Union (*Natsionalny soyuz Rossii*) and administrator of the VKontakte group “The Russian March 2013” from Norilsk, and to the administrator of the Slavic North (*Slavyansky Sever*) VKontakte group in Murmansk. Unfortunately, sentences to such prominent actors are still lost in the rising tide of convicted small-scale social network users<sup>61</sup>.

The genre distribution of the criminal online materials also remained largely unchanged from the year before (one verdict can pertain to several genres)

- Videos and films (including the notorious “The Execution of a Tajik and a Dagestani” (*Kazn Tadjhika i Daga*)) – 48;
- Audio (including the songs by Kolovrat) – 11;
- Images (photo or drawings) – 33;
- Articles or other complete texts (including re-publications of “Mein Kampf”) – 29;
- Statements, comments, forum posts – 26;
- Creating or administering online groups and communities – 2;
- Unspecified – 11.

<sup>61</sup> The convicted offenders of 2014 include three minors.

Similarly to the preceding year, sentences for audiovisual materials predominate (members of the music bands *Trupny yad* (Ptomaine), *Yarovit*, and *O.T.* were convicted among others). This can be easily explained by the fact that audiovisual materials are far more effective propaganda tools than texts. The law enforcement agents could also locate them faster. In addition, linking to videos is technically simple, and the verdicts are mostly issued for links to materials posted elsewhere (e.g. on YouTube). Unfortunately, numerous re-publishers of these videos are the only ones facing responsibility (Tesak’s verdict is something of an exception). Meanwhile, it would have been much more appropriate, albeit more difficult, to focus on identifying those who created and uploaded these videos, or, better yet, on those who committed the crimes demonstrated on the videos – especially when it comes to violence, since such recordings are not always staged. As for the texts, they are almost never available for our review, and the reports by the prosecutors or the Investigative Committee rarely provide sufficient information. It is also notable that individual comments on social networks, or comments to articles/videos yield almost the same number of convicted offenders as publication of original texts.

We view the verdicts related to administering and creating ultra-right groups on social networks as appropriate; these groups are often created specifically in order to coordinate violent activities. Organizing internet communities, which systematically incite to hatred, is, in our view, a much more serious offense than individual posts or re-posts on the users’ personal pages.

There were far fewer (22) convictions for off-line propaganda. They were distributed as follows:

- Graffiti – 11;
- Songs during concert – 1;
- Leaflets – 1;
- Text publications – 1 (B. Stomakhin, who was charged for both online and offline publications);
- Publisher, for distribution of books – 1 (V. Korchagin);
- Public shouts and insults – 3;
- To members and leaders of ultra-right and other groups as well as single activists for specific (but sometimes unspecified) incidents of propaganda – 4.

We have no reason to view these verdicts as inappropriate (although we definitely have doubts about some of them), but we believe that criminal prosecution for the nationalist or racist street graffiti is an excessive reaction on behalf of the society and the state. Such verdicts constitute 50% of those issued

for the “off-line” propaganda (11 out of 22). In other cases, we can agree that specifically criminal prosecution is warranted for xenophobic propaganda in the form of newspaper articles (depending on the circulation), distribution of books, posting leaflets, singing songs or other incendiary public statements (obviously, depending on their content), especially if they occur in the course of an attack.

### Prosecution of Extremist Groups and Banned Organizations

Prosecution under the Criminal Code Article 282<sup>1</sup> (“organization of an extremist community”) and Article 282<sup>2</sup> (“managing activities of an organization banned as extremist”) was slightly less intensive in 2014 than in the preceding year. We know of six such verdicts against 14 people in 4 regions of the country (compared to seven verdicts against 8 people in 7 regions in 2013). We are not including obviously inappropriate verdicts or the verdicts against Hizb ut-Tahrir, which are covered in another SOVA Center report

Article 282<sup>1</sup> appeared in two cases, and was appropriately applied to the founders of ultra-right groups. One of the ideologists and founders of the Northern Brotherhood (*Severnoe bratstvo*)<sup>62</sup> Valery Vdovenko, a former KGB officer, who had previously played an ambiguous role in the history of the Motherland party, was convicted in Moscow. In aggregation with other articles he was sentenced to 2.5 years in prison. Other members of the Northern Brotherhood – Anton “Fly” Mukhachyov, Oleg Troshkin and Petr Khomyakov – were already convicted in 2012 and 2013<sup>63</sup>. In Murmansk, member of White Cross right-wing military-patriotic club Yevgeny Filimonov was sentenced to 2 years and 1 month in penal colony in aggregation with charges under other articles (including violence)<sup>64</sup>.

In other cases the courts utilized Article 282<sup>2</sup>. The best-known verdict was issued in March 2014, when Dmitry Dyomushkin, the leader of the Slavic Force,<sup>65</sup> was sentenced to a fine of 200,000 rubles for continuing the activity of the banned Slavic Union, but was released from payment due to the statute of limitation. It is unclear why the case was under investigation for such a long period of time, and why other charges were dropped.

<sup>62</sup> More on Northern Brotherhood see: Galina Kozhevnikova, Anton Shekhovtsov et al. *Radikalny russky natsionalizm: struktury, idei, litsa*. Moscow, SOVA Center, pp. 231-240 (Radical Russian Nationalism: Structure, Ideas, People).

<sup>63</sup> See See: V. Alperovich, N. Yudina, *The Ultra-Right on the Streets...; The Ultra-Right Shrugged...*

<sup>64</sup> The second defendant in the case of creating of an extremist community, organizer of the Russian March in Murmansk Alexander Valov fled to Ukraine escaping law enforcement agencies in the region. Valov claims that he does not participate in ATO.

<sup>65</sup> The renamed Slavic Union (*Slavyansky soyuz*), banned in 2010.

The article was once again applied to neo-pagan right-wing radical organization Spiritual and Tribal Power Rus’ (*Dukhovno-rodovaya derzhava Rus’*); members of this organization mail their propaganda to various government offices, including prosecutor’s offices, on regular basis. In December 2014, activist of Spiritual and Tribal Power Rus’ Alexander Shiroky, found guilty of racist propaganda, continuing the work of an extremist organization and storage and distribution of drugs, was sentenced in Arkhangelsk to 5 years and 2 months in prison.

Other cases pertain to Islamist associations, directly involved in violence. Five people were sentenced to lengthy prison terms in the case on collaboration with the banned organization Al-Takfir wa al-Hijra in Tatarstan in aggregation with other charges. Five people were sentenced to lengthy prison terms in Bashkiriya for creating a cell of banned Caucasus Emirate (*Imarat Kavkaz*) organization, robbery, theft and illegal purchase of weapons.

Another noteworthy verdict was issued by the Sverdlovsk regional Court against Alexander Yermakov – yet another participant of the Yekaterinburg NOMP cell. He was sentenced under the Criminal Code Article 30 Part 1 in aggregation with Article 279 (“preparation for an armed rebellion”), Article 205<sup>1</sup> (“involving people in terrorist activity”) and Article 222 (“illegal acquisition and storage of explosives”) to 12 years of imprisonment in a maximum security penal colony followed by 2 years of restrictions on freedom<sup>66</sup>.

### The Federal List of Extremist Materials

In 2014, the Federal List of Extremist Materials was updated 47 times, adding 381 items; two items<sup>67</sup> were excluded from the list without changes in numbering. The list grew from 2180 to 2561 positions. However, it must be pointed out that the list was updated less frequently (during the comparable period in 2013 it added 590 items, vs. 522 items in 2012, and 318 items in 2011). The additions are thematically distributed as follows (some items included a variety of materials):

- xenophobic materials by modern Russian nationalists – 198;
- materials by other nationalists – 13;
- materials by ideologues and classics of fascism and neo-fascism – 8;
- materials of Islamist militants and other calls for violence, issued by political Islamists – 93;

<sup>66</sup> The other “Khabarov’s group” participants had been convicted earlier. Leonid Khabarov himself was released on parole in July 2014. More on this case in: V. Alperovich, N. Yudina, *The Ultra-Right on the Streets...* and V. Alperovich, N. Yudina, *The Ultra-Right Shrugged...*

<sup>67</sup> Nos. 2342 and 2343.

- other Muslim materials (Said Nursi's books, materials of the banned organizations, including Hizb ut-Tahrir, many others) – 20;
- other religious materials (Jehovah's Witnesses, evangelicals, etc.) – 9;
- various anti-state materials, inciting to riots and violence (including anarchist materials) – 22;
- extremely radical anti-Russian statements from Ukraine – 1;
- other materials from Ukrainian media outlets and the Internet – 3;
- historical books – 1;
- the Orthodox fundamentalist materials – 3;
- partial copies of the Federal list itself – 1;
- materials, obviously banned by mistake – 1<sup>68</sup>;
- materials that could not be classified – 6.

At least 284 out of 379 positions (with two deleted ones taken into account) were items found on the Internet (vs. 333 out of 590 the year before).

Unfortunately, all the deficiencies of the List, described in our every report, still persist, and working with it has long been impossible.

New items were added haphazardly with numerous bibliographic, grammatical and spelling errors. Occasionally, items were described in a way that makes them impossible to identify. For example, it is unclear what material has been added to the list as No. 2518 – it is described as “*object number 3 (from file MgISO-Re9hs.jpg) posted by the username “Igor Vladislavovich” on VKontakte social network on the website www.vk.com at the URL http://vkontakte.ru/id8925421.*” Many items consist of huge lists that include different types of materials and are impossible to navigate. Occasionally, materials were obviously added to the list simply by mistake. For instance, only an error or court oversight could explain adding the demotivator “Russia for Cats” (clearly a parody) as No. 2234. Meanwhile, the fact that the List also includes scholarly articles by Sebastian Shtopper on the history of World War II guerillas in the Bryansk Region once again suggests that courts do not pay attention to the content of items they ban; likely, neither do prosecutors.

Courts keep adding to the list the same books in different editions, or the same online materials, published on different sites – their content is identical, but

<sup>68</sup> For example, No. 2498 (“Information materials contained in the article “Muslim Brotherhood” on the website <http://ilgid.ru/politics/brothers.html>, which represent an information resource of the Muslim Brotherhood (Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun)) (decision of the Tazovsky district court of the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous District on July 28, 2014) contains a critical and rather formal description of the Muslim Brotherhood.

formally they are different, and have to be considered separately. At least eight duplicate items<sup>69</sup> were entered in 2014, bringing the total number of duplicates to 88.

Some items, such as materials of Jehovah's Witnesses or books by Said Nursi, have been recognized as extremist inappropriately.

The electronic address (URL) of a resource is intentionally distorted prior to being added to the list. Thus, the list essentially represents a collection of dead hyperlinks. Obviously, the Ministry of Justice does not want to advertise extremist materials, but in this case the agency's actions end up being simply meaningless.

### Banning Organizations as Extremist

The Federal List of Extremist Organizations, published on the Ministry of Justice website<sup>70</sup>, added three entries in 2014.

The first two were inappropriately banned religious organizations: the “Faizrakhmanist” group in Kazan, recognized as extremist by the Sovetsky District Court of Kazan in Tatarstan in February 2013, and “The Muslim religious organization of the Borovsky village in the Tyumen District of the Tyumen Region” recognized as extremist by the Tyumen regional Court in May 2014.

The third case was a far-right organization – “The Community of Indigenous Russian People of Shchyolkovsky District in the Moscow Region,” – recognized as extremist by the Shchyolkovo City Court in February 2014. The organization was known as the organizer of Shchyolkovo “Russian Runs;” it was also collecting humanitarian aid “for the residents of Luhansk and Donetsk republics.” The prosecutors based their claims on the statement in the Charter of the Community that reads “*the organization is part of the territory of the Rus' state formation within Russia*”.

In November 2014, the Supreme Court recognized five Ukrainian right-wing organizations as extremist; Right Sector, Ukrainian National Assembly – Ukrainian People's Self-Defense (*Ukrainskaya natsionalnaya assambleya* –

<sup>69</sup> Videos *Zlaya Rossiya* (Angry Russia), *Kiborg – slava Rossii* (Cyborg – the Glory of Russia), *Kolovrat – nasha strana* (Kolovrat - Our Country), *Nastavlenie sester* (Instructing Our Sisters), the film *Rossiya s nozhom v spine – 2* (Russia with a Knife in Its Back- 2), the Kavkaz-Jihad website, *Istoriya prorokov* (History of the Prophets) book by Osman Nuri Topba, *Krasnaya Kabbala* (The Red Kabbalah) book by Georgy Klimov.

<sup>70</sup> The official name is: A List of Community and Religious Associations and Other Non-profit Organizations, with Respect to Which a Court Decision Was Made and Entered into Force on Liquidation or Ban on Activities on the Grounds Stipulated by the Federal Law “On Combating Extremist Activity.”

*Ukrainskaya narodnaya samooborona*, UNA-UNSO), the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (*Ukrainskaya povstancheskaya armiya*, UPA), the Brotherhood (*Bratstvo*) and Stepan Bandera All-Ukrainian Organization “Trizub”<sup>71</sup> (added to the list in January 2015). We view this decision as declarative and motivated by the current political situation. Of course, elements that meet the definition of extremist activity can easily be found in the activities of these Ukrainian organizations. Technically, this ban is legal. However, it is doubtful that significant number of activists from these organizations can be found in Russia and are engaged in extremist activities in Russia, so this ban can hardly be called expedient.

Thus, at the time of writing, the Federal List of Extremist Organizations includes 41 organizations (not including the ones recognized as terrorist), whose activities are banned by the court and punishable under the Criminal Code Article 282<sup>2</sup>.

## Other Administrative Measures

### Mass Media Activity of Roskomnadzor

Regretfully, the media supervision, conducted by the Federal Service for Supervision in the Sphere of Telecom, Information Technologies and Mass Communications (Roskomnadzor) was no longer publicly reported in 2014. Roskomnadzor stopped posting the list of warnings for violations of Article 4 of the Law on Mass Media on its website – including those relating to the “prevention of extremism” and issued to the founders or the editors-in-chief of specific media outlets. However, we know of at least six Roskomnadzor warnings to media outlets (to internet resources Polit.ru, Business Online, BFM.ru and Mediazona for publishing information about “people’s assemblies” in support of Navalny; to Novaya Gazeta for publishing an article “If Not West Then Who Are We” by Yulia Latynina, and to the *Ekho Moskvy* Radio Station – for the show *Svoimi Glazami* (Eyewitness) on the subject of military activities in the Donetsk airport. In addition, the editorial board of the *Dozhd* (Rain) TV channel received a “preventive letter,” signed by the Deputy Head of Roskomnadzor, in connection with the survey about the blockade of Leningrad, announced by the channel during its live broadcast on January 26, 2014. We consider all of these warnings inappropriate, and 2014 became a record year in term of the “inappropriateness share” in Roskomnadzor activities, surpassing all our previous years of observation (see out report on “inappropriate anti-extremism”).

<sup>71</sup> For more details see: Vyacheslav Likhachev, *The Right Sector and Others: the Radical Nationalists and Ukrainian Political Crisis of Late 2013 - Early 2014 // Russia Is Not Ukraine: Contemporary Accents of Nationalism*: Moscow, SOVA Center, 2014. pp. 230–275.

The closing of newspapers for extremism are extremely rare, but one newspaper was, nevertheless, closed under anti-extremism legislation in 2014. The Moscow City Court shut down the *Svoimi Imenami* newspaper on January 15, 2014. In the course of 2013, *Svoimi Imenami* received three Roskomnadzor warnings for distribution of extremist materials<sup>72</sup>, then Roskomnadzor filed a claim with the Moscow City Court requesting the shutdown of the publication. The *Svoimi Imenami* newspaper is a successor of the *K Baryeru* newspaper, closed in April 2011. *K Baryeru*, in turn, succeeded the *Duel* newspaper, which had been closed after a multi-year court proceedings. In April 2014, the panel of judges on administrative cases of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation found no grounds for repeal of the court decision.

### Administrative Prosecution

Administrative prosecution related to “extremism” is not uncommon, and its cases multiply year to year.<sup>73</sup> Unfortunately, prosecutors don’t always inform the public about such measures. Thus, our data is strictly preliminary. It does not include the court judgments that we view as clearly inappropriate (the latter category is covered in our report on “inappropriate anti-extremism.”)

In 2014, we know of 47 cases of penalties under Article 20.3 (“propaganda and public demonstration of Nazi attributes or symbols”), vs. 20 such cases in 2013. Most of these verdicts were imposed for online images that included fascist symbols, uploading materials from the Federal List of Extremist Materials onto file-sharing systems and social networks, sale (including online) of items featuring Nazi symbols (such as SS stripes from the World War II, lapel pins, daggers, helmets, caps, t-shirts), and demonstration of swastika tattoos.

In most cases, the perpetrators faced fines in the amount of 1,000 to 2,500 rubles. Seven people – the 20-year female resident of Nizhnekamsk in the Republic of Tatarstan for posting a video about Adolf Hitler on VKontakte social network, 28-year-old resident of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky for displaying a sticker with a word “Fascist” on his car windshield, a Saratov resident for dem-

<sup>72</sup> In 2013, the warnings were issued for publishing the following materials: “The Red Guards of the Kremlin. Are They Also Masons?” by N.P. Zubkov; “Thinking about the Future. A Letter to Mukhin” by M. Zhasimov, and “An Open Letter to an Enemy of the Homeland and a Traitor of the Russian People” by M. Shendakov. In 2012 – for materials “Looking from Ukraine” by A. Sivov, “Smash the Rat Front!” and “The People Shall Win!”.

<sup>73</sup> Comprehensive statistics on the use of the Administrative Code Articles 20.3 and 20.29 compiled on the basis of the Supreme Court data, can be found in: Natalia Smirnova, *Political Repression in Russia in 2011–2014: Administrative Prosecution // Ovdinfo.org*. 2015. 6 March ([http://reports.ovdinfo.org/2014/adm-report/#web\\_resource\\_2bb4fce43348a4c793d2c41abd5b5721](http://reports.ovdinfo.org/2014/adm-report/#web_resource_2bb4fce43348a4c793d2c41abd5b5721)).

onstrating a rune tattoo, a minor in Chelyabinsk for distributing stickers with swastikas, and three fans of FC Spartak for stickers and t-shirts decorated with swastika – faced five to fifteen days of administrative arrest. In Galich of the Kostroma Region, in addition to imposing a fine, the court ordered an offender, guilty of displaying a swastika tattoo, to wear clothes that cover the tattoo even during the warm season.

We know of 43 decisions under the Administrative Code Article 20.29 (“mass distribution of extremist materials, as well as their production or storage for the purpose of mass distribution”), compared to 41 such decisions in 2013. In all cases, the perpetrators were fined 1,000 – 2,000 rubles for sharing materials from the Federal List of Extremist Materials<sup>74</sup> on social networks.

Two sentences were imposed under the aggregation of both Administrative Code articles mentioned above. For example, a woman from Kovrov in the Vladimir Region was fined for sharing song by the same Kolovrat band via VKontakte.

In two cases, the parents were punished for xenophobia of their minor kids. Parents of a teenager, who posted Nazi symbols on social networks, were fined under Articles 20.3 and 20.29 in Barnaul (the Altai Territory). The mother of a 15-year-old creator of the Internet community “We are simply Russian” in Tula was fined under Part 1 of the Administrative Code Article 5.35 (“failure of parents to carry out their obligations as regards the maintenance, upbringing, education, protection of rights and legitimate interests of minors”).

The court decision against a former kindergarten teacher in Chudovo of the Novgorod Region under Part 1 of Article 5.61 (“insult”) also merits attention. In April, the former teacher started publicly shouting xenophobic insults at a seven-year girl for her “non-Slavic appearance.” The court sentenced her to a fine of 1,000 rubles.

<sup>74</sup> These materials include Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*, V. Istarkhov’s *Udar russkikh bogov* (Strike of the Russian Gods), audio and video recordings of the bands Kolovrat (for the most part), and Korroziya Metalla, songs by Chechen bard Timur Mutsurayev, the videos *Poslednee intervyyu primoskikh partizan* (The Last Interview of Primorye Guerrillas), *Russky, ochnis! Protiv tebya idet voyna* (Russian, Wake Up! There Is a War Against You), *Russkoe soprotivleniye* (Russian Resistance), *Pismo Fatimy mudzhahidam* (Fatima’s Letter to Mujahideen) and several others. Number of items from this huge List, which attract prosecutorial attention, has been gradually increasing, but still remains negligible in comparison with the size of the List itself, once again proving the uselessness of this unwieldy mechanism.

### Prosecutorial Activity on the Internet

In the course of the year, prosecutors gained strength in their fight against extremist content on the Internet, utilizing both new and old mechanisms.

Prosecutors continued to issue warnings to school administrators about the inadmissibility of extremist activity for absent content filtering software on school computers. However, this activity decreased in scope, compared to the preceding year. We know of at least 24 such representations (35 during the similar period of 2013). We repeat that such methods of combating extremism are counterproductive, since the content filtering software distributed by Rosobrazovanie in March 2008 cannot cope with the task, and, in any case, ideal content filters do not exist even theoretically.

However, the principal area of activity has long shifted to blocking access to restricted (or supposedly otherwise dangerous) materials.

Throughout the year, prosecutors continued to send requests to local Internet providers demanding restrictions on access to “extremist websites.” Unfortunately, prosecutors and service providers rarely report on the actions taken, so our data is known to be fragmentary. However, we know of at least 48 such cases in 2014 (vs. 77 in preceding year), not counting obviously inappropriate ones.

While old blocking methods gradually recede into the background, the system of Internet filtering based on the Unified Register of Banned Websites, in operation since November 1, 2012, is gaining momentum with a vengeance. According to preliminary estimates made by the Internet resource Roskoms-voboda<sup>75</sup>, there were at least 128 such resources<sup>76</sup> (out of 1557 entries total) as of January 1, 2015. According to available data (only Roskomnadzor has full information), courts added the following materials to the Register for “extremism” in 2014:

- xenophobic materials by modern Russian nationalists – 61;
- materials by the classics of fascism and neo-fascism – 6;
- xenophobic materials by other nationalists – 1;
- materials of Islamist militants and other calls for violence, issued by political Islamists – 20;
- other Muslim materials (Said Nursi’s books, materials of the banned organizations, including Hizb ut-Tahrir, etc.) – 17;
- peaceful oppositional sites – 1;

<sup>75</sup> See: Register of Banned Websites // Roskomsvoboda (<http://reestr.rublacklist.net/>).

<sup>76</sup> See the updated list: “Extremist Resources” in the Unified Register of Banned Websites // SOVA Center (<http://www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/docs/2014/08/d30056/>).



- Ukrainian media website – 1;
- conspiracy film about September 11, ideology unclear – 1;
- various anti-state materials, inciting to riots and violence (including anarchist materials – 11;
- copies of the Federal List of Extremist Materials website with working hyperlinks – 7;
- online library website blocked because of one item – 1;
- unidentified material – 1.

The number of materials in the register is bound to increase, since we know of at least 24 additional prosecutorial claims filed in various courts with requests to recognize the presence of information, “forbidden for distribution on the territory of the Russian Federation” on a number of web pages and add these resources to the registry; it is unlikely that many of these claims have been rejected.

Thus, starting in mid-2014, a new (in the legal sense) practice emerged in an attempt to circumvent one of the absurdities of the Federal List. The problem is that prohibition of a book, for example, does not automatically mean the ban on its text online – it should be banned and entered in the list separately; moreover, it has to be done separately for each website, as well as for each edition of the same book. In order to avoid endless additions to the list, prosecutors find an online copy or a version of the banned material, petition the court to not ban another item, but to recognize that a particular website (or a page or a group of pages) “*provides information forbidden for dissemination in the Russian Federation*,” which corresponds to the wording of the law on the Register of Banned Websites. These cases are handled using the expedited procedure, in which the Court merely establishes (or pretends to establish) the equivalence of the materials. Next, the decision is sent to Roskomnadzor for implementation.

This practice was soon expanded. Similar decisions were being made about websites, which contained materials not previously banned as extremist, however, the reasons provided by prosecutors, referred specifically to the area of anti-extremist legislation. While the procedure described in the preceding paragraph merely constitutes a “legal trick,” these bans are simply not based on law.

It seems that restrictions on materials, based on the Register, are currently just as meaningless and haphazard as new additions to the Federal List. Some obvious instances of misuse were observed as well. For example, we cannot agree with blocking the *Gramotey* online library due to presence

of one or more extremist materials in it. Restrictions on well-known hate sites, such as *Shturm-novosti* (Storm-news) occur along with restrictions on materials inappropriately recognized as extremist, such as Said Nursi’s books.

The Law on the Register is supplemented by “Lugovoy’s law”<sup>77</sup>, which provides for extrajudicial blocking of websites that contain incitement to extremist actions or riots at the request of the Prosecutor General, but without trial. The Roskomnadzor website added a separate registry to work with this mechanism. By decisions of the Prosecutor General’s Office, 156 resources were blocked under this law in 2014 (167 resources as of February 19, 2015)<sup>78</sup>. They include:

- xenophobic materials by modern Russian nationalists – 19;
- materials of Islamist militants and other calls for violence, issued by political Islamists (videos and statements by Islamist militants, Umma-news, Chechen-news, VDagestan.com, Kavkaz-Jihad, and others and their mirrors) – 66;
- other Muslim materials (Said Nursi’s books, materials of the banned organizations including Hizb ut-Tahrir, etc.) – 9;
- peaceful oppositional websites (*Grani*, *Yezhednevy zhurnal*, and *Kasparov.ru*, and their mirrors; Alexey Navalny’s blog, Appeal to Ukrainian people by Borovoy and Novodvorskaya); however, the Prosecutor General’s office emphasized that in this case it did not use the term “extremism” – 46;
- extremely radical anti-Russian statements from Ukraine, addressed to the Russian audience – 13;
- other materials by Ukrainian media – 11;
- collection of prohibited materials – 1;
- unidentified material – 1.

As you can see from the above list, there are already quite a few cases of misuse in this registry. At least one-third of the registry lists blocked oppositional websites, clearly demonstrating that extrajudicial blocking, based only on suspicion of “sedition,” inevitably leads to arbitrariness, abuse of power, and an attack on freedom of speech.

Meanwhile, it is impossible to suppress mobilization for riots by blocking websites, even though this was the principal motive for the adoption of the

<sup>77</sup> Full name: On Amending the Federal Law “On Information, Information Technologies and Protection of Information.”

<sup>78</sup> See the updated list: “Resources in the Registry of Websites Blocked in Accordance with Lugovoy’s Law. // SOVA Center (<http://www.sova-center.ru/racism-xenophobia/docs/2014/10/d30228/>).

Lugovoy's Law. This point is illustrated by the incidents when the authorities blocked the videos that called for gathering on Manezhnaya Square in Moscow on May 18 to organize the "new Manezhka," or the internet resources that contained information about the meeting places for the Russian March on November 4. In these and other similar cases, multiple online distribution channels were involved simultaneously, so that all this information quickly reached its intended audience. A huge number of such materials still remain completely accessible.

*Olga Sibireva*

## Freedom of Conscience in Russia: Restrictions and Challenges in 2014

SOVA Center for Information and Analysis presents its latest annual report on the freedom of conscience in the Russian Federation.

This report is based on the information gathered in the course of the Center's monitoring activities. The collated materials are available on our website under 'Religion in Secular Society' ([www.sova-center.ru/religion](http://www.sova-center.ru/religion)). References to media reports and links to internet sources are included. In the present report, we only include direct references to sources that are not mentioned elsewhere on the site.

The current report provides some updates concerning the events discussed at greater length in last year's report. We do not aim to compile an exhaustive catalogue of all events connected to religion in public life. Generally, the events we discuss serve to illustrate our analysis of broader tendencies<sup>1</sup>.

We examine the themes and instances of misuse of anti-extremism legislation in a separate dedicated report<sup>2</sup>.

### Summary

2014 saw a continuation of some tendencies highlighted in our previous reports.

The construction of religious buildings remains one of the painful issues, with no fall in the number of conflicts surrounding it. And, while such conflicts occur in many parts of the country, the situation is worst in the capital. In Moscow, the program of building "churches within walking distance" (*khramy shagovoi dostupnosti*) continues, albeit more slowly than its initiators would wish.

<sup>1</sup> O. Sibireva. Freedom of conscience in Russia: Restrictions and challenges in 2013 // Xenophobia, freedom of conscience, and anti-extremism in Russia in 2013. M.: SOVA Center, 2014

<sup>2</sup> M. Kravchenko. Inappropriate Enforcement of Anti-Extremist Legislation in Russia in 2014 See elsewhere in this volume.

Same as in 2013, Muslims are still the most likely group to experience problems in using religious buildings. In 2014, however, they also found construction more problematic than other religious groups. On the other hand, fewer problems connected to premises of worship are now experienced by Protestants.

The legislation known as the “Law on Protecting Religious Feelings” (*Zakon o zashchite chuvstv veruiushchikh*) has not yet seen any use, despite having come into force some time ago. At the same time, the “Orthodox activists” (*pravoslavnye aktivisty*) who aim to protect religious feelings — by physical force if need be — have become substantially more active and have seen some notable support from the law enforcement agencies. Earlier their activity was largely restricted to Moscow; now, however, there are well organised groups in at least two other regions: Novosibirsk and Krasnodar.

Meanwhile, the state seems less than keen to protect the religious feelings of the Muslims protesting against the several regional bans on headscarves in educational institutions.

Broadly, there has been less religious discrimination by officials, but believers have come under more pressure from law enforcement agencies.

## Regulations

### Federal Legislation

On April 2, 2014 the President signed into law new amendments to the Tax Code of the Russian Federation. These amendments affect religious organizations. Those of them that did not have to pay taxes during the reporting period are now exempt from the obligation to submit financial statements.

The law “Amending Article 16 of the Law ‘On the freedom of conscience and religious associations’” (*O vnesenii izmenenii v stat’iu 16 zakona “O svobode sovesti i religioznykh ob”edineniakh*) was ratified by the State Duma on October 8 and signed by the President on October 22. The amendments make provisions for religious services being conducted without the authorities being notified — not only in religious buildings owned by religious organizations but also at pilgrimage sites, on land belonging to religious communes, at cemeteries and crematoria, and in residential premises. Religious ceremonies and gatherings in other places fall under the regulations governing public demonstrations and processions.

The Law “Amending the Federal Law ‘On the objects of cultural heritage of the peoples of the Russian Federation’ and certain other legislative acts” (*O vnesenii izmenenii v Federal’nyi zakon “Ob ob”ektakh kul’turnogo nasledii*

(*pamiatnikakh istorii i kul’tury*) *narodov Rossiiskoi Federatsii*” i *otdel’nye zakonodatel’nye akty Rossiiskoi Federatsii*) was passed by the Duma on October 10 and signed by the President on October 30. The amendments were initiated for by the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC). The new legislation allows municipal authorities to allocate funds to cultural heritage sites owned by religious organizations.

On October 7, 2014, the government’s draft amendments to the Federal Law “On freedom of conscience and religious associations” (*O svobode sovesti i religioznykh ob”edineniakh*) passed a first reading in the Duma. The tabled amendments include an abolition of the requirement that a religious group must exist for at least fifteen years before it may register as a religious organization. The requirement that religious organizations yearly provide information about their continued activity has also been dropped. At the same time, the bill proposes a tougher registration regime for religious groups and a curtailing of the rights of local religious organizations.

In December 2014, the government’s draft amendments to Article 14 of Russia’s Criminal Executive Code, guaranteeing the right of inmates to request a meeting with a priest of their confession, passed a first reading in the Duma. The law obliges the administration of every corrective facility to make available premises where such meetings can take place and religious ceremonies be conducted.

### Regional Initiatives

Religious organizations remained virtually unaffected by the legislative activity within Russia’s federal subjects.

On March 26, the Legislative Assembly of St. Petersburg approved amendments to the law “On holidays and anniversaries in St. Petersburg” (*O prazanikakh i pamiatnykh datakh v Sankt-Peterburge*) and declared June 14 a public holiday — the Day of St. John of Kronstadt. Five deputies (*deputat* — elected representative) raised objections to the bill. Alexandr Kobrinsky, a member of the *Yabloko* [Apple] party, raised the issue of the far right views espoused by John of Kronstadt.

In November, the draft law “On missionary activity in the Pskov Region” (*O missionerskoi deiatel’nosti na territorii Pskovskoi oblasti*), prepared by the region’s Civic Chamber passed a first reading at the Pskov regional Assembly of Deputies. The draft document, among other things, prohibits missionaries from distributing religious literature and audiovisual materials not labeled in accordance with the law.

Under the bill, foreign citizens arriving in the region will have to notify the regional administration of any intent to conduct missionary work. Such work

will be prohibited unless its aims are found to be in agreement with the visitor's entry documents.

### Legislative Initiatives not (Yet) Implemented

A number of legislative initiatives, for various reasons, have not been implemented.

Several draft amendments to the law 'On the freedom of conscience and religious associations' were voted down.

One draft was developed by the Ministry of Justice and put forward for public consideration in November. Among other things, it proposed to oblige religious organizations to separate the accounts of income from foreign funding from those of other sources income. However, the proposal did not stipulate that foreign funding would result in religious organizations being classed as "foreign agents." Work on the draft is now complete, but the bill has not yet (as of early 2015) been put before the Duma.

On September 13, the St Petersburg Legislative Assembly submitted to the Duma its draft amendments to the laws "On the freedom of conscience and religious associations" and "On assemblies, meetings, demonstrations, marches and pickets" (*O sobraniiaikh, mitingakh, demonstratsiiaikh, shetviiakh i piketirovaniiaikh*). The bill, proposing that public meetings and marches near places of worship or religious schools must be coordinated with religious organizations, was promptly rejected on September 16. The government and the Duma both turned it down. In its response, the government noted that such a law would restrict the citizens' freedom of assembly.

Another draft amendment was submitted to the Duma in November: to the law "On Freedom of Conscience" (*O svobode sovesti*), also to the law "On Non-profit Organizations" (*O nekomercheskikh organizatsiiaikh*) and the Civil Code. The draft was prepared by the following deputies: A. D. Zhukov, S. A. Gavrilov, E. B. Mizulina, I. A. E. Nilov, and S. A. Popov. It concerns the founders and the charter capital of religious organizations, and is designed to eliminate some of the problems arising from the changes in the Civil Code. The bill passed its first reading in January 2015.

There are continued attempts to regulate the activity of fortune-tellers and psychics. In June, the State Duma Committee on Health recommended that deputy Ilya Ponomarev's bill proposing controls over the provision of "occult and mystical health services" and limits on the advertising of such services be rejected.

A similar bill, seeking to ban the advertising of services offered by psychics, healers, and fortune-tellers, and to limit the dissemination of information about them in the media and on the Internet, was rejected in October. The draft was put forward by deputy Mikhail Serd'uk of A Fair Russia (*Spravedlivaia Rossiia*). The Legal Administration concluded that the bill "needs a legal-technical revision."

Another bill pertaining to religious freedom, was brought before the Duma by the Communists (The Communist Party of the Russian Federation, CPRF – *Kommunisticheskaia partiia Rossiiskoi Federatsii*) in March. It proposed to amend the law "On Citizens' passports in the Russian Federation" (*O passporte grazhdanina Rossiiskoi Federatsii*), dispensing with machine-readable data (preserving the paper document alone) and adding "ethnicity" and "religion" to the information contained within. In April, the Council of the Duma chose to return the bill to its authors for further work.

In March, it came to light that the working group on the activities of the members of non-traditional religions, Russian-based non-governmental associations of religious nature, and foreign religious and non-governmental organizations operating in Russia (established in the Duma in 2013) is preparing a legal definition of "sects" and, jointly with the Ministry of Justice and the General Prosecutor's Office, a relevant submission to the Supreme Court. The results of the group's work were never made public.

### Problems Relating to Places of Worship

As in previous years, many religious organizations experienced difficulties in both constructing places of worship and using existing facilities.

#### Problems with the Construction of Religious Buildings

Construction of buildings for worship remains one of the most painful issues. Such problems are most often experienced by Muslims and Orthodox Christians.

One especially prominent conflict surrounds the erection of a mosque in Kaliningrad. This conflict has been running for around twenty years and has gotten worse in 2014. In April, the Moskovsky District Court in Kaliningrad invalidated a decree by the head of the municipal administration about the allocation of two plots for the construction of a mosque and revoked the building permit. In June, this decision was upheld by the Kaliningrad regional Court. The region's governor, Nikolai Tsukanov, promised to compensate the community for the outlays on the construction sustained so far.

The Supreme Court refused to consider the Muslim community's complaint. An appeal to Putin personally went unanswered. The Muslim community members decided to take the case to the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR). In late December, the ECtHR registered a complaint by Kaliningrad Muslims against the authorities.

There are continued complications around the construction of a mosque near Pyatigorsk. In 2013, the court ordered the owner to demolish two floors of the unfinished mosque. Then, in May 2014, the authorities of the Stavropol Territory allocated land for the construction of a new mosque in the village of Vinsady. The decision sparked protests by the villagers; however, by July, they had been reassured that the site was not in the village itself but some 25 kilometers away, and the mosque would cause them no inconvenience. An agreement was reached. Yet, by October, the site still had not passed registration procedures, and appeals by the Spiritual Directorate of Muslims (*Dukhovnoie upravleniie musul'man*) were being ignored.

Problems with the construction of mosques were also recorded in other regions. The Novosibirsk city administration revoked its decision to allocate land for the construction of a mosque on Pervaya Gruzinskaya Street, in the wake of protests by local residents. The city's residents also objected to the construction of a mosque in the forest-park zone on Uchitel'skaya Street.

In Ufa, objections to the construction of an Islamic business and leisure center Muslim City were raised by members of the Orthodox parish of the Intercession of the Theotokos (*Pokrovskii khram*), who had a rival claim on the plot.

As in 2013, protests against construction were sometimes supported by members of the far right. For example, protests against the construction of a mosque in Vorkuta that have now been running for several years were joined by the Frontier of the North (*Rubezh Severa*) members who had already been at similar protests in Syktyvkar a year earlier.

A telling story took place in the Nevsky District of St. Petersburg. In October, on the eve of a public hearing about proposed changes to the city plan, some media outlets reported about an upcoming construction of a mosque. The reports were denied by the Mufti of the Grand Mosque (*Sobornaia mechet'*), Ravil Pancheyev. However, calls for a "citizens' gathering" (*skhod*), aimed at preventing the inclusion of the mosque in the city plan, still appeared on far right websites. The police responded by intensifying security on local government premises where the hearings were to take place. This measure proved unnecessary: in the end, the hearing was only attended by local residents – without placards or any other ideological paraphernalia. The matter of the mosque was never raised at all.

In some cases, the difficulties around the construction of mosques were the fault of religious organizations themselves or those entrusted with the management of the project. Thus, in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, the regional Ministry of Property and Land Relations terminated the lease on the land intended for the construction of a mosque. The lease had been concluded back in 2003 with the community fund *Musul'manin* [Muslim]. It was revoked because no construction work had taken place in the intervening time. The court ruled that the fund had to pay 2 million rubles in ground rent.

The situation is similar in Vladivostok: a plot for a Grand Mosque was allocated back in 2012, but no work has taken place. Planning permission had been granted to one community, when another had been fighting for it for ten years.

The Ministry of regional Development of Khakassia has halted the construction of a mosque in Abakan, because the height of the erected building did not match the approved design, and key documentation was missing. If the community submits new plans and gathers the necessary approvals, construction will resume.

There has been no drop in the number of conflicts surrounding the construction of Orthodox churches. As in previous years, the most frequent cause is that the designated site falls within a green space which the local residents want to preserve.

The situation remains problematic in Moscow. Many conflicts have surrounded the implementation of "Program-200" (*Programma-200*) supported by the municipal government. Protests against the construction of modular churches have taken place in Otradnoye, Yuzhnoye Medvedkovo, Ramenki, Perovo, Ostankino, Khodynskoye Pole, Ryazansky, and Losinoostrovskoy Districts. Protests were held both in support and in opposition of the project. Signatures were gathered, and various institutions, petitioned. Some protests were endorsed by politicians, in particularly by members of the Communist Party and Yabloko.

For example, on the instigation of Andrey Klychkov (CPRF), the Moscow City Duma has taken under special supervision the construction of a church in the square on Fyodor Poletaev Street (south-east Moscow). More than 4,500 signatures had been collected in support of preserving the green space and re-locating the project to a different site.

Aside from the churches being put up under Program-200, Muscovites have also been protesting against the construction of a cathedral on the territory of the Sretensky Monastery. The project requires the demolition of several 19th century buildings, and, according to expert opinion, endangers an important 18th century structure nearby.

Many conflicts over the construction of Orthodox churches were recorded in other parts of Russia too. Thus, in St. Petersburg, a group of residents objecting to the construction of a church on the Rozhdestvensky Square petitioned Putin, requesting his personal intervention. A one-man picket was conducted by Sergey Malinkovich, a deputy from Smolninskoye Municipal District.

Two conflicts in St. Petersburg were resolved in favor of those objecting to construction. The city authorities have canceled the construction of a church in the Malinovka Park, after more than 20,000 signatures had been gathered in objection. Instead the eparchy (diocese) would be offered another site. Meanwhile, the protesters against the construction of a 59 metre tall cathedral in the Dolgoozerny Park managed to secure a court ban on the project.

In Ryazan, a conflict flared up around the construction of a church commemorating the fallen seamen in the Park of Naval Glory (*park Morskoy Slavy*) in the Kanishchevo Neighbourhood. Another conflict occurred in Blagoveshchensk, where trees had to be felled in order to construct a church in the Park of Friendship (*park Druzhby*). In Tyumen, the conflict that started in 2013 around the construction of a church in the Komsomol'sky Square continues. The governor has announced that he is happy to move the project to an alternative site, but the Orthodox community is insisting on the square. The residents of Tolyatti have objected to the construction of a metochion (an ecclesiastical embassy – *podvor'e*) of the Church of St Seraphim (*Serafimovskaia tserkov'*) and an Orthodox school in a city square. They would rather prefer the space were used for a sports and recreation ground. In Surgut, the residents opposed a church being built on waste-ground – they felt that, all the public hearings notwithstanding, the decision of the municipal authorities had disregarded their opinion.

In Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, a local protest against the construction of a church got support from the nationalists – an extremely rare scenario, if not a unique one. The pressure group of those opposed to the construction came to include members of the Slavic Union (*Slavianskii soiuz*) and the Russian Commune (*Russkaia obshchina*). In this case, there was no undercurrent of xenophobia to the protest – the activists simply demanded that the construction site be relocated from a playground to “abandoned land.”

Beside those listed so far, we know of only two instances where the construction of religious buildings by other confessions ran into problems. In Yekaterinburg, the locals protested against the construction of a Lutheran church in the Blyukher Park. In Kaliningrad, there are continued complications around the construction of a synagogue. In June, the Kaliningrad regional Court upheld a 2013 ban on construction until the religious organization secures the necessary permit. The lack of documentation is down to the fact that the site lies within a “protective zone” (*okhrannaia zona*). In December, the Arbitration Court of the Kaliningrad Region ordered the officials to issue the permit, but the city administration has already filed an appeal against this decision.

### Problems with Religious Buildings Already in Use

Problems with the use of religious buildings also most frequently affected the Muslims.

The Muslim community of the Belorechensky village near Kislovodsk could not secure suitable legal representation in order to contest the 2013 decisions of the Kislovodsk City Court and the Stavropol regional Court about the demoli-

tion of two mosques in the villages of Belorechensky and Industriya. While the community searched for a lawyer, the appeal time ran out, and the contract for the demolition of the two buildings was put out to tender.

The Sverdlovsk regional Arbitration Court granted the Municipal Property Management Department a permission to evict Rahmat, a Muslim organization, from the premises it occupied. The eviction was justified by various breaches of the tenancy agreement and issues raised by fire and consumer safety authorities (*Gospozhnadzor* and *Rospotrebnadzor*).

In Kazan, the Railway administration closed a station prayer room for Muslims, that had been opened only a few months earlier. It is not clear why.

A Faizrakhmanist commune was evicted from its premises in Kazan. The commune was found to be extremist, and in 2013 the court took the decision to evict. Since then there were two attempts to remove the Faizrakhmanists from the premises, but both times they returned. The third time round, the bailiffs put seals on all the doors in the building.

Several conflict situations connected to the premises used for worship were resolved in favor of religious organizations.

For example, the Krasnodar Territory Arbitration Court ordered the municipal administration of Sochi to transfer the ownership of the House of the Gospel in the Resort of Sochi (*Dom Evangeliiia na kurorte Sochi*) to the Church of Evangelical Christians (*Tserkov' Evangel'skikh Khristian*). They had been using the premises as a meeting house since 1992. The municipal administration had long refused to transfer the ownership of the property to the group and, in 2013, put it up for sale.

In Pervouralsk, Sverdlovsk Region, the authorities tried to secure a court decision to evict a Muslim commune from former barracks in Talitsa. However, in January 2015, the two parties agreed to an out-of-court settlement.

## State Patronage

As in previous years, in 2014, the federal and regional budgets allocated funds for the restoration of religious sites. As a rule, these were intended for the preservation of important architectural heritage sites, making such financing decisions lawful.

In particular, funds were allocated for the restoration of religious sites within the city of Moscow, as well as in Archangelsk, Vladimir, Moscow, Nizhny Novgorod, Vologda, Novgorod, Pskov, Tula, and Tyumen Regions. The bulk of

these funds were destined for the reconstruction of Orthodox sites. However, some moneys were also received by Muslim sites and a Buddhist university-monastery (*datsan*).

Aside from restoration and construction work, the state financed such undertaking as the celebration of an anniversary of the foundation of a monastery (in Yaroslavl Region) or a pilgrimage to the Sacrament of the Magi (*Dary Volkhov* in Kemerovo Region). The Moscow municipal authorities allocated 20 million rubles for the compensation of expenses incurred by the Church in maintaining the St. Alexis Hospital (*bol'nitsa sviatitelia Aleksii*) and the purchase of equipment for the surgery complex.

More than 10 million rubles from the budget of the Republic of Adygeya was allocated for “statutory requirements” (*ustavnyie trebovaniia*) of religious organizations under the “Strengthening international relations and patriotic education in 2014-2018” program (*ukrepleniie mezhnatsional'nykh otnoshenii i patrioticheskoi vospitanie na 2014-18 gody*). The expenses covered included the salary of the clergy: 3,2 million rubles for the Adygea Eparchy and 7 million rubles for the needs of the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Adygea and the Krasnodar Territory. Meanwhile, Russia’s Ministry of Culture has allocated more than 6 million rubles for the development of a virtual tour of Mount Athos in Greece, one of the most revered pilgrimage sites for Orthodox Christians.

Transfer of property continues to constitute another form of support for religious organizations. In most cases, ownership of buildings is transferred to the ROC; however, there are also instances of property being transferred to Old Believer or Muslim organizations. For instance, in the Ryazan Region, the Municipal Council of Kasimov chose to pass the ownership of the premises housing an active mosque and a madrasa to the Muslim community, an outcome the latter had been campaigning for since 2010.

Religious buildings were not the only property to be passed into the ownership of religious organizations. For example, a building formerly occupied by the municipal administration was given to the Gatchina Eparchy as the new episcopal residence.

Sometimes the transfer of a building into the ownership of a religious organisation required a court decision. For example, this was the case with the former Constantinople Metochion (*Konstantinopol'skoe podvor'e*) on the Krapivensky Lane in Moscow. The Department of Municipal Property Management was refusing to transfer ownership to the Church, since it did not consider the property as one of religious purpose. However, the Moscow Arbitration Court ruled that the religious organization did have rights over the

property. One cannot rule out that the court decision will encourage the Church to seek new victories in this direction. At least, the Church has already declared its claim on a residential house near the metochion, the religious purpose of which is far from obvious. If the Church does succeed in gaining ownership of this property, then 13 families will have to be re-housed at the expense of the municipal budget, and the building will have to be renovated.

An Old Believer community of Yekaterinburg failed to secure a transfer of the former Church of the Trinity (*Troitskii khram*), occupied by a TB clinic. Even though the transfer had been agreed by the governor of the Sverdlovsk Region and the Metropolitan Cornelius of the Russian Orthodox Old Believers Church, the regional Property Fund put up the building for auction. This decision was later reversed. New premises were made available to the TB clinic. Still, the transfer never took place. The authorities were ready to pass the church to the Old Believer community, but the Ural Tubercular Research Institute announced that, according to sanitary regulations, religious services cannot be held in a building which had for a long time been used for TB treatment. The Old Believer community does not have the funds to demolish the building and erect a new one. Towards the end of the year, there were ongoing negotiations between the regional authorities, two Old Believer communes, and a construction company regarding possible solutions.

In the majority of cases, the transfer of property to religious bodies passes without conflict, and the authorities find new premises for the organizations being evicted from their habitual location. As before, complexities tend to arise where heritage sites are concerned. The authorities are still willing to sacrifice the interests of cultural institutions to favor those of religious organizations. The museum workers, possibly in the light of the futility of earlier protests, rarely bother to object to their eviction. At least, in 2014, we recorded no protests by museum workers against the transfer of buildings into the ownership of religious organizations.

In 2013, the staff at the Yaroslavl State Historical-Architectural Reserve (*Yaroslavskii gosudarstvennyi istoriko-arkhitekturnyi zapovednik*) described their prospective eviction and relocation from the Monastery of Holy Transfiguration (*Preobrazhenskii monastyr'*) as the “murder of the museum.” Nonetheless, in 2014, the plans to relocate the museum were confirmed and alternative premises were found, a complex of buildings that were formerly a military hospital. The churchware and the icons that are currently museum exhibits will stay in the buildings while formally remaining part of the museum collection. Elena Milovzorova, the Deputy Minister of Culture assessed this situation as “generally very good.”

Politicians have sometimes come out in support of museums. Two such cases were reported in St. Petersburg. One was related to the Arctic and Antarctic Museum (*Musei Arktiki i Antarktiki*) located in the former St. Nicholas Church. Several years ago, it was announced that the building would be passed to the Common Faith (*edinoveriye*) community. Two members of the Federation Council, Artur Chilingarov and Vadim Tyul'panov, made statements in support of the museum. A number of deputies in the Legislative Assembly of St. Petersburg also requested that the museum be allowed to remain in the buildings it currently occupies. In April, the Federal Property Management Agency (*Rosimushchestvo*) suspended the transfer of ownership – but only because the community had not submitted a draft preservation plan (the building is listed as a federal heritage structure). Presumably, the document was eventually submitted, because, by the end of the year, the municipal authorities did take the decision about relocating the museum to different premises in 2016–2017.

In a different case, St. Petersburg deputies supported another museum. Five of them appealed to the governor, Georgiy Poltavchenko, asking him not to allow another transfer of ownership: that of the Blagoveshchenskaya burial vault (*Blagoveshchenskaia Usypal'nitsa*) to the ROC. The transfer had been announced back in 2013. The vault is currently controlled by the Museum of Urban Sculpture. According to the deputies, the transfer violates existing law, because within the vault are 108 memorial stones and sculptures, 68 of them at actual burial sites. In other words, they are an integral part of the building.

Besides the financial help and transfer of property, other forms of state patronage towards religious organizations were observed. The well established practice of designating religious festivals as public holidays continued. Thus additional public holidays marking Muslim festivals were announced in Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Kabardino-Balkaria, Dagestan, and Adygea. Radonitsa (an Orthodox festival commemorating the dead) was declared a public holiday in several regions (including the Krasnodar Territory).

The Moscow Department of Education, in response to a request by the Department of Catechesis (*Otdel katekhezatsii*) of the Moscow City Eparchy, confirmed that the premises of ordinary state schools may be used for parish activities on Sundays. However, the final decision still rests with the school board.

## Protecting Religious Feelings

Over the course of 2014, not one person was convicted of insulting religious feelings (neither under Article 148 of the Criminal Code, nor under Article

5.26 of the Administrative Code). However, there were no fewer complaints of insulted religious feelings than last year. Perhaps, in fact, there were more. All complaints we are aware of were made by Orthodox Christians.

On the whole, this year we registered fewer cases of officials reacting to complaints by religious people claiming that a particular event is insulting than we did last year. It is probable that this is down to event organisers' unwillingness to face a full scale scandal and their greater preparedness to change arrangements at the behest of those most publicly sensitive to insulted religious feelings.

For instance, in the run-up to the premier of *The Hobbit*, the *Svecheniye* [Glow] art group chose not to put up the "Eye of Sauron" fan-art installation above one of the Moscow-City buildings. This decision came immediately after a radio broadcast by Protoiereus Vsevolod Chaplin, expressing concerns that an appearance of a "demonic symbol" above Moscow may bring about negative consequences. At the same time, the organisers of an ice building festival in Novosibirsk, in spite of the protests by the Orthodox community, went ahead with a similar installation.

We did become aware of several cases where the officials pressured the organisers of mass events in the name of protecting religious feelings. Thus in the Tomsk Region, the yearly Solar Plexus festival (*Solnechnoie Spletienie*) near the village of Takhtamyshevo was canceled. Among other reasons (disturbance to local residents, possible damage to environment) one of the officials mentioned the infringement of local Muslim traditions.

In some cases, the authorities would take preemptive steps without there being any complaints, sometimes with peculiar results. Thus, in St. Petersburg, the members of the municipal Committee on Culture responsible for supervising the Battle of the Neva festival (*Bitva na Neve*) at the Peter and Paul Fortress insisted that participants must amend the acts that initially appeared "un-Orthodox." In the end, the organisers were forced to rename a performing piglet from Napoleon to Boris, Western knights were rebranded as Russian *bogatyr*s, the participants of a horseback display got Russian names in place of European ones, the bagpipe orchestra had to change its repertory, jugglers had to perform accompanied by a balalaika, and the jester had to change his costume to that of a 17th century Russian soldier.

The most prominent conflicts motivated by the protection of religious feelings surrounded the tours of several foreign rock bands. Their work was branded as "satanist," amoral, and advocating violence. In the face of pressure from Orthodox activists (sometimes physical), concerts by Cannibal Corpse were canceled in Moscow, Novosibirsk, and St. Petersburg. Cradle of Filth



and Marilyn Manson canceled performances in Novosibirsk. Concerts by Behemoth were called off in Novosibirsk and Vladivostok. Orthodox Christians protested against performances by these artists in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Krasnodar, Primorye, Khabarovsk, Novosibirsk, and other parts of the country. The Slovenian rock band Laibach canceled a planned tour of Moscow and St. Petersburg. On their Facebook page, the band members explained to the fans that the tour was canceled due to the “high political risk of an alarmed response on the part of local ‘Orthodox’ activists.”

Given the nature of the music (these are all heavy metal bands), it is unlikely that the artists are widely known among the Orthodox communion. Therefore, we are clearly talking about well planned actions by “Orthodox activist” groups. Some were attended by elderly parishioners clearly incapable of independently assessing the English lyrics. If in 2013, we reported about such groups conducting organized operations in Moscow alone; in 2014, similar levels of activity were observed in at least two other regions: Novosibirsk and Krasnodar. In Novosibirsk, the activists adopted the violent methods of their Moscow colleagues. One of the concerts was halted after the activists beat up several concert-goers and a security guard who tried to protect them.

Besides disrupting the concerts, members of Orthodox organizations requested that the regional authorities ban “Monstrations” (mock demonstrations), Halloween activities, and other popular events.

The involvement of law enforcement agencies in the protection of religious feelings has been another distinctive feature of 2014. If previously the prosecutors were content to ignore the occasional complaint by the insulted believers, now protesters against the “satanic” rock bands began to call on the law enforcement structures en masse. In several regions simultaneously, the law enforcement agencies took the side of the defenders of religious feelings.

The prosecutor’s office of the Karasunsky District in Krasnodar declined to act on the complaint of the Orthodox Union, demanding the cancellation of a concert by Cannibal Corpse and the declaration of the band’s lyrics as extremist. However, the band was obliged to perform only those songs that had passed linguistic expertise and been found to contain no signs of extremism. The organisers of the concert were issued with a warning regarding the “unacceptability of any changes to the program that may result in the inclusion of a song containing extremist statements or incitements.” An analogous warning was received by the organisers of a Cannibal Corpse concert in Chelyabinsk. The Chelyabinsk regional Prosecutor’s Office demanded that several songs be dropped from the program, and minors be barred from attending. The Prosecutor’s Office of the Oktyabr’skii District in Ufa requested a ban on the

dissemination of the Cannibal Corpse lyrics and their translations on Russian soil on account of them “harming the health and development of minors.” In Novosibirsk, following complaints from Orthodox Christians, the regional Office of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the narcotics police conducted a search at the Rock City club where Cradle of Filth were due to play. (The concert was later canceled.)

In Moscow “Orthodox activists,” mostly from the God’s Will (*Bozh’ia Volia*) faction of Dmitrii (Enteo) Tsonionov, also kept up the good work. Aside from protesting against the aforementioned rock bands (Marilyn Manson’s musicians were even pelted with eggs), they participated in the disruption of various street actions and cultural events. For instance, in April, there was an attempt to disrupt the premiere of Askold Kurov’s documentary film *Children 404 (Deti 404)* about the persecution of LGBT adolescents in Russia. After bursting into the cinema with Sodom-themed placards, they demanded that the film be stopped, given the presence of minors in the audience. In November, D. Tsonionov and several associates damaged two exhibits at the *Tsenzura Shlyu-ha-ha* [Censorship Ho-ho-whore] exhibition organised at the Vinzavod center by Marat Gelman.

In October, three Orthodox activists picketed the home of Aleksey Navalny. They were protesting against a publication of his: he expressed his disapproval of the cancellation of the Laibach concert and jokingly suggested that the band should be awarded the Orthodox Prize (a monetary award). The picketers called on Navalny to “beg for forgiveness of the millions of Russian Christians whose feelings his words had offended.”

Naturally, the activities of the defenders of religious feelings displease a certain section of society. From time to time people try to oppose the Orthodox activists. There are even some counter-protests. In July, there was a demonstration in Novosibirsk following the disruption of rock concerts by Orthodox Christians. The protest was organised by Viktor Zakharenko, the director of the Siberian Tours (*Sibirskie Gastroli*) agency, involved in the preparation of the canceled Marilyn Manson concert. About 300 people joined it. The speakers included Oles Valger, the deputy chairman of the youth wing of the *Yabloko* party, and Ivan Starikov, the deputy mayor of Novosibirsk. Also in Novosibirsk, in November, five people went out on Krasny Prospekt (one of the main streets) with a banner reading “Rockers of Novosibirsk do not object to holy liturgies.” There was a protest against concert cancellations in Moscow. However, all these protests were too small for there to be any real talk of an effective opposition to “Orthodox activists.”

## Disbandment of Religious Organizations and Denial of Registration

Like the preceding review period, 2014 saw the liquidation of several religious organizations. The reasons were extremely varied.

Perhaps the most unusual case is what took place in the village of Reftinsky, Sverdlovsk Region. The parish of the church of the Three Hierarchs (*Trekhsviatitel'skii khram*), the house chapel of a school for troubled teens, was disbanded after about 20 years in existence. The social services followed by the Prosecutor's Office demanded that the church be stripped of its legal body status, citing Paragraph 12, Article 27 of the Federal Law "On Education" (*Ob obrazovanii*). According to this law, "creation and operation of political parties and religious organization within state and municipal education organization are not permitted." It is interesting that the eparchal administration agreed with this demand and itself contacted the school with a request to liquidate the parish. Services in the shrine are allowed to continue, but a different priest has been appointed to conduct them. The former rector has been removed from the position after objecting to the liquidation of the parish.

The Samara regional Court liquidated the local Jehovah's Witnesses group after recognizing it as an extremist organization. The basis of this decision was a fine issued to Pavel Moskovin under Article 20.29 of the Administrative Code, for distributing banned Jehovah's Witness materials at prayer meetings. The Prosecutor's Office had earlier issued a warning to the group. We believe, the decision was unlawful.

The Chelyabinsk regional Court prohibited within the region the activities of a religious organization known as The Horde (*Orda*). The organization, put on the Federal List of Extremist Organizations in 2013, had evidently resumed its activities in some form. The accusations of the Prosecutor's Office, same as before, come down to "psychological impact" on followers and non-traditional medical treatments, among them treatment by pilgrimage to holy places.

It is probably the same organization that was banned in Volchikhinsky District, Altai Territory. The prosecutor's report does not specify the name of the organization, but the same reasons are given for the ban. In addition, it refers to the ban on a similar organization in Kazakhstan, namely the *Ata Zholy* [The Way of the Ancestors] which the Russian law enforcement agencies tend to identify with The Horde. In Ufa, so far a case has only been launched regarding the liquidation of *Ata Zholy*.

The Novosibirsk regional Court banned the religious group Ashram Shambala, because its activities "are connected to violence against citizens, incitement

to refusal of civic duties, coercion to destroy the family, attacks on personhood and the rights and freedoms of citizens, and damage to the morality and health of citizens." The leader of this group, Konstantin Rudnev, was in 2013 convicted under a whole string of articles of the Criminal Code and sentenced to 11 years in a high security penal facility.

A madrasa attached to the Zangar mosque in Kazan was closed for a collection of reasons: the mosque did not have a license to conduct educational activities, sanitary and epidemiological rules were not complied with, and banned book was discovered at the madrasa. The court fined the Imam for 30 thousand rubles under Part 1, Article 19.20 of the Administrative Code ("Exercising Activities Which Are Not Connected with Deriving Profit without a Special Permit (license)"). In addition, he was given a warning about the unacceptability of violating the federal legislation on counter-extremist activity. After the court began the consideration of the case brought by the prosecutor, the mosque administration decided to close the madrasa.

In St. Petersburg, the Krasnogvardeysky District Court, at the request of the Prosecutor's Office, disbanded the St. Petersburg Christian charity fund AGAFE. The disbandment was justified by the violations uncovered by the Prosecutor's Office: misappropriation of funds and three years of failure to submit activity reports. The fund tried to appeal against this decision, but the Trial Chamber for Civil Cases (*Sudebnaia kollegiia po grazhdanskim delam*) of St. Petersburg City Court upheld it.

In Samara, an attempt was made to shut down a kindergarten because of the lack of a license for educational activities. The kindergarten had been founded by the parish of the Church in Honor of the Mother of God "Unexpected Joy" Icon (*khram v chest' ikony Bozh'ei Materi "Nechaiannaia radost"*). The organization failed to obtain the license, because necessary paperwork connected to the premises was lacking. Administrative proceedings were initiated against the kindergarten head-teacher under Article 19.20 of the Administrative Code ("Exercising Activities Which Are Not Connected with Deriving Profit without a Special Permit"). The administration then began to prepare the documents need to obtain a license.

Some organizations tried to appeal against earlier disbandment orders. Two of them failed. Russia's Supreme Court upheld the decision of the St. Petersburg City Court, dated 14 November 2013, regarding the liquidation of the local Church of Evangelical Christians (Pentecostals) known as *Zhatva* [Harvest]. Their disbandment was justified by the absence of a license to conduct educational activities and failure to specify such activities in the organization's charter. In the opinion of the court, the church was involved in educational

activities. Also unsuccessful was the appeal against the decision to disband the Center for Orthodox Education (*Centr pravoslavnogo prosviashcheniia*) in St. Petersburg, taken in December 2013.

A favourable court decision was secured by the Bible Center of Evangelical Christians (Pentecostals) in the Chuvash Republic. The European Court of Human Rights upheld its appeal, quashing the 2007 decision to liquidate the center.

The ECtHR also upheld a complaint by the Church of Scientology regarding the actions of the authorities in St. Petersburg. It ruled that the refusal to register local communes constitutes a violation of Article 9 (“Freedom of thought, religion and conscience”) and Article 11 (“Freedom of assembly and association”) of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

The Church of Scientology in Moscow had secured a similar ECtHR ruling back in 2007 but never succeeded in having the changes to its charter recognised by the authorities. In 2014, Moscow’s Izmailovo Court began the consideration of another complaint by the Scientologists against the Ministry of Justice in connection with the refusal of registration. Simultaneously, the Ministry of Justice appealed to the Moscow City Court, seeking to disband this religious organization on the grounds of its charter violating the law “On Freedom of Conscience.” In December 2014, both trials were temporarily suspended. Moscow City Court adjourned the case until the end of the process in the Izmailovo court. Meanwhile, the proceedings in Izmailovo were halted pending a report by religious studies experts.

## **Discrimination against Religious Organizations and Citizens based on Their Attitude to Religious Belief**

In 2014, discrimination was mostly directed against Muslims and members of new religions. However, instances of discrimination against Protestant organization were also not rare. Notably, pressure from law enforcement agencies was reported more frequently than in earlier years.

The campaign of discrimination against Jehovah’s Witnesses, which began in 2009, continued. In several regions, throughout the year, officials and acting landlords were refusing to make premises available to Jehovah’s Witnesses. For example, in Prokopyevsk, Kemerovo Region, the local administration terminated the lease agreement with Jehovah’s Witnesses on the eve of a religious service. The service was then interrupted by members of the municipal administration and police officers who rudely, with threats, ejected the attendees from the premises. In Ivanovo, the management of the Olympia sports complex

terminated the Jehovah’s Witnesses’ lease, after receiving notice from the Prosecutor’s Office regarding breach of the law “On Physical Culture and Sports in the Russian Federation.” In Archangelsk, the management of the Ilma trade center refused to rent out a conference hall to Jehovah’s Witnesses for an Easter Service – they feared provocation in the wake of “anti-sectarian” leaflets being circulated in the city.

However, just like in the previous years, Jehovah’s Witnesses most frequently faced discrimination while engaged in door-to-door preaching. In particular, police had detained preachers in Moscow, Republics of Bashkortostan and Tatarstan, Trans-Baikal and Krasnodar territories, as well as in the Belgorod, Bryansk, Voronezh, Ivanovo, Kemerovo, Kirov, Kostroma, Leningrad, Moscow, Nizhny Novgorod, Novosibirsk, Orel, Rostov, Ryazan, Samara, Saratov, Tver, Tyumen, Ulyanovsk, Chelyabinsk, and Yaroslavl Regions. As a rule, the arrestees would be brought to the police station, their passport (Russia’s standard internal ID) details would be taken down, and they would be questioned. In several cases, an administrative offense was recorded.

In the Tver Region, the police and officers of Center E (the anti-extremist branch of the Ministry of Internal Affairs) tried to disrupt a Jehovah’s Witness service, claiming that they have information about a bomb in the building. The building where the service was taking place was cordoned off. However, the law enforcement officers did wait until the service was finished before checking the papers of all the attendees. Attempts to disrupt religious services on the part of law enforcement agencies were also recorded in Krachevo, Bryansk Region, in Labinsk, Krasnodar Territory, and in Samara.

In a number of regions, the FSB questioned members of the Falun Gong. For example, three followers of this movement were questioned in Tuva in connection with the screening of Free China: The Courage to Believe, directed by Michael Perlman, in one of the city’s schools. In Abakan, FSB agents searched the office of the general director of the regional IT Center, as he was a Falun Gong member, as well as adjacent rented premises used to hold meetings of the group. A computer was seized during the search, and six members of the community had their passport details taken down. In Nizhny Novgorod, the FSB and Center E raided the premises of a kindergarten the head of which was also a follower of the Falun Gong. Other kindergarten staff and parents were also subjected to questioning.

The Taganrog Prosecutor’s Office shut down early an exhibition entitled “Truth – Compassion – Tolerance.” The event, organized by followers of the Falun Gong, was being held at the House of Culture. The authorities deemed the images on show as intended to discredit China’s political system and form

a negative opinion of it among Russians. Members of the Prosecutor's Office also noted that the Falun Gong symbol, present on many of the exhibits, is a mirror image of the Nazi swastika.

Pressure by the law enforcement forces was also experienced by Muslims. As in previous years, there were frequent reports of police brutality. In one case, Moscow police detained no fewer than a hundred Muslims before the start of Friday prayers at the mosque on the 2nd Frezernaia Street. The detainees were transported to several police stations, where they were held until evening and then released with neither charge nor explanation of why they had been detained. All the detainees were fingerprinted; some were beaten inside the police van.

In the Stavropol Territory, the search conducted at the house of Movlid Aliyev, the Rais-Imam of the village of Yusup-Kulak, Ipatovsky district, so shocked the elderly cleric that he refused to read the Friday sermon and abdicated from his position as Rais-Imam.

Arbitrary police actions have been the cause of progressively more serious confrontations. Members of the congregation of the mosque on Bol'shaya Tatarskaya Street freed a fellow Muslim after a scuffle with the police. Members of the community surrounded the police van where the detainee was being held and demanded his release. When he was not released, they stormed the van. As a result the detained Muslim was released, but those who stormed the van were rounded up by a SWAT team. All were placed in administrative detention. Criminal proceedings were instigated against two people under Article 318 of the Criminal Code ("Use of Violence against the Representatives of Authority").

Bans on the wearing of headscarves in schools have become another prominent form of indirect discrimination against Muslims. The "hijab problem" has escalated in several regions. The most difficult situation is the one that has formed in Mordovia. The conflict whose origins lie here has now spilled beyond the borders of the region. In June 2014, the government of the Republic approved school uniform requirements that prohibited the wearing of religious paraphernalia in schools, as well as the wearing of headgear. In the wake of this regulation, the region's Muslims began to complain of the many instances of discrimination against Muslim girls attending educational institutions. School and college students who wore a headscarf to school were not allowed into class, expelled from lessons and morning line-ups... As a result, some families decided to opt for home education.

The community attempted to challenge the legality of the regulations adopted by the government of the republic. However, the Prosecutor's Office of Mordovia, then the Supreme Court of Mordovia, and then, in February 2015,

the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation upheld their legality. The Muslim community intends to take the matter to the Constitutional Court. People believe that the position of the authorities violates their constitutional right to freedom of conscience and is in breach of the federal law.

Similar problems arose in other regions. For instance, the rector of the N.I. Pirogov Moscow Medical University (*Moskovskii meditsinskii universitet imeni N.I. Pirogova*) issued a decree outlining the external appearance requirements for students'. These, among other things, banned clothing "which indicates a belonging to any ethnicity or religion (including national head-dress)," as well as clothing that "may offend the political(!) and religious feelings of those around."

Muslims deemed this a breach of their rights. Several one-person pickets took place in Moscow. The conflict was eventually resolved. Following a meeting with Rushan Abbyasov, the deputy chairman of the Mufti Council of Russia, the university's chancellor agreed to a compromise, stressing that "the possibility of differences in external appearance on religious grounds must be minimized." Aside from the doctor's white coat and white cap covering the hair (normally worn by Russian medics), female Muslim students were permitted to wear a white neck or headscarf, or a tall collar covering the neck.

A similar directive was issued by the chancellor of the State Medical Academy in Astrakhan. One student complained that, in the wake of the directive, people wearing Muslim dress would be "put on lists," become subjects of reports, and receive "reprimands at a disciplinary committee." The dean of the Overseas Student Faculty justified the directive by the institution's "preference for a secular lifestyle and a businesslike style of dress."

There must, unquestionably, have been other episodes in a similar vein that were not reported, thanks to their smaller scale. Only some incidents become known to us. For instance, at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (*Moskovskii gosudarstvennii institut mezhdunarodnykh otnoshenii*), two young women in headscarves were not allowed to attend an open lecture on Volga Bulgaria. Representatives of the institution also cited the "purely secular nature of education." Meanwhile, the administration of a sports school at the village of Vesyoly of the Rostov Region, threatened to fire a teacher, should she continue to wear a headscarf to school.

As in the previous years, members of Protestant churches also faced discrimination. We are mostly talking about selective law enforcement. The case that received the most public attention took place in Sochi. Alexey Kolyasnikov, the leader of an evangelical group known as The Commune of Christians (*Soobshchestvo Khristian*), was arrested for reading and discussing the Bible

in a cafe. The Sochi Prosecutor's Office launched administrative proceedings against him under Part 2, Article 20.2 of the Administrative Code ("Conducting a public event without filing a notice in the prescribed manner"). In October, the Magistrate's Court found him guilty and fined him 30,000 rubles. In December, the Khostinsky regional Court in Sochi repealed the Magistrate's decision and ruled that the case must be reheard. The new hearing, however, returned the same result. The regional Court of Krasnodar upheld this ruling in January 2015.

In the Samara Region, the pastor of the New Generation (*Novoe Pokolenie*), Pavel Vorobiev, was fined 500 roubles under Article 13.11 of the Administrative Code ("Violating the Procedure for Collecting, Keeping, Using or Disseminating Information about Citizens (Personal Data)"). The Prosecutor's Office, followed by the Magistrate's Court, deemed it a violation that the pastor handled forms filled in by parishioners without obtaining their consent. The leader of the Scientologists in Yakutsk has been subjected to a similar penalty.

In Belgorod, nine school students belonging to the Seventh-day Adventists were not allowed to take their State Final Examinations on account of their religious beliefs. The examination took place on a Saturday, which is holy day for the Adventists. The parents asked the school administration and the regional Department of Education to allow the children to take the examination on a different day. Their request was refused, despite an existing recommendation by *Rosobrnadzor* (the federal body overseeing education) regarding the possibility of moving an examination on account of religious beliefs.

In the village of Duvanovka, Rostov Region, members of the Prosecutor's Office, criminal investigation officers, the Federal Migration Service, and the FSB, without showing their service ID, forced their way into the premises occupied by Evangelical Christians-Baptists (*Evangeliskie khristian-baptisty*) and the organization's center for the treatment of drug and alcohol addiction. Without explanation, they rounded up everyone present and took them to a police station.

On the whole, the authorities look favourably upon the transfer of property to religious organizations – even when this infringes upon the interests of other organisations; however, there continues to exist a bureaucratic bias against the Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church (ROAC). Between 2010 and 2013, this organization lost (through seizure) not only churches buildings but even material objects like sacred relics. In 2014, it lost the last church in its possession, the Church of the Holy Righteous Boris and Gleb. Moreover, the decision was "administrative," i.e. taken without court involvement. In February, the regional Court of Vladimir and then, in July, Russia's Constitutional Court upheld the

decision to seize the relics of St. Euphemia and Euphrosyne of Suzdal that were in the possession of the ROAC. One judge did, however, express doubt over the legality of the seizure. His opinion was appended to the decision of the Constitutional Court. He noted the indeterminate legal status of relics and expressed uncertainty over whether it is at all possible for such objects as relics to be federal property.

Foreign preachers on Russian soil repeatedly experienced problems throughout the year.

Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs yet again refused to grant a visa to the 14th Dalai Lama. Successful application was made conditional to a complete withdrawal from political activity.

A group of US citizens was fined for breaches of immigration law in April in the Altai Territory. Among them were Mormons who had used a puppet theatre as a medium for preaching in Rubtsovsk.

The Border Protection Service of the FSB refused permission to enter Russia to Archbishop of Pavlovskoye and Rockland, Andrey (Maklakov) of the ROAC. The Archbishop is a citizen of the US, where he oversees ROAC parishes. He came to Russia with a valid visa on the invitation of the Hierarchal Synod of ROAC. However, at the Shremetyevo airport he found out that his name is on the "sanction list," along with those of other US citizens. It is unknown, why he was on this list.

### **Protection from Discrimination**

Some of those who experienced discrimination managed to successfully defend their rights, in some cases in court.

Daria Ramazanova, a resident of Kaliningrad, won a lawsuit against a transport company, after a member of its staff refused to serve her and her mother. The two women were asked to leave the bus by its driver on account of their Muslim dress. The young woman wrote a complaint to the company management. After receiving no answer, she took the case to court. The court found the company liable for 22,000 rubles, including the 10,000 RUB of non-pecuniary damages.

Jehovah's Witnesses successfully defended their rights at the ECtHR. In 2014, the court found violation of Article 5 and Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights by Russian authorities after a disruption of worship incident in Moscow in 2006. Russia was ordered to pay 30,000 EUR in compensation (non-pecuniary damages) and 6,000 EUR in court fees.

In Murmansk, the conflict with Jehovah's Witnesses was resolved without court involvement. Following a submission by the Human Rights Ombudsman,

Vladimir Lukin, to the governor of the Murmansk Region, the deputy of the latter, Anatoly Veshkin, agreed to withdraw his 2013 letter to the heads of municipal institutions, where he talked about the “danger” of Jehovah’s Witnesses.

## Insufficient Protection against Defamation and Attacks

We recorded 16 attacks motivated by religious hatred, which is half of what we recorded in 2013. However, there are now more serious injuries. Moreover, we have recorded one double murder motivated by religious hatred. A nun and a parishioner were killed, and another six people were wounded in a shooting at an Orthodox church opened by a local resident in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk.

In Moscow, an attacker stabbed a woman in Muslim dress in the stomach several times. The victim survived.

A yeshiva student was subjected to a beating in the Moscow Region. The attackers made blows to his head, presumably with knuckledusters.

Same as in 2013, the majority of victims – no fewer than 12 – were Jehovah’s Witnesses engaged in door-to-door missionary work. In the majority of cases the victims received no serious injuries; however, there were more cases of substantial harm than in 2013. In the Vologda Region, in a bid to escape his attackers, an 18-year-old Jehovah’s Witness jumped from the first floor of a building. He suffered a concussion, a broken nose, and bruises. In Petrozavodsk an attacker broke a 73-year-old woman’s finger. In most cases, the attackers received no punishment.

The number of acts of vandalism motivated by religious hatred has also halved in comparison to 2013: from 64 to 32. The majority of the affected sites are still Orthodox; however, they are much fewer in number than in the previous year: 10 as opposed to 32. At least three occurrences of vandalism were likely triggered by the construction of Orthodox churches against the wishes of the locals. These took place in the Kosino District of Moscow, in the town of Korolev near Moscow, and in the eastern city of Blagoveshchensk. Cases of vandalism directed at worship crosses (open air Orthodox shrines) numbered four in total, same as last year. However, given the overall decline in acts of vandalism, cross-topping can now be seen as more of a prominent phenomenon.

There have been no newcomers in the second and third place of this anti-championship. There were eight instances (down from last year’s 11) of vandalism at new religious movement sites, all of them belonging to the Jehovah’s Witnesses, and seven at Muslim sites (down from nine). We also recorded five acts of vandalism at Jewish sites (down from 10) and one at a Protestant site (same as last year).

In most cases, human life was not at risk, but there were exceptions. We are aware of two cases of arson at Orthodox churches and two fires at mosques

where the police have not ruled out arson as a possible cause. Shots were fired at the Word of Life (*Slovo Zhizni*) church in the Saratov Region. However, thankfully, no one was injured.

As in previous years, xenophobic material about religious organizations and groups was published in both federal and regional mass media. Mostly these took the form of “anti-sectarian” reporting. We are not aware of any anti-Islamic reporting in the mainstream national media. (In 2013 there was a considerable amount of such material.) The religious organizations that featured in such reports usually tried to clear their name. Sometimes they succeeded.

In November, NTV and Russia-1 (*Rossia-1*) released several “anti-sectarian” reports damaging the credibility of the New Generation (*Novoe Pokolenie*) evangelical movement. Russia-1, as part of the Vesti news program, ran a feature on Alexey Lediaev, a New Generation pastor living in Latvia. The programme asserted that “branches of the new church started opening up all over the place in the wake of Ukraine’s ‘Orange Revolution,’ whose shock troops the coreligionists of Mr Lediaev happened to be.”

NTV dedicated two separate programs to the New Generation: Lords of the Demons, a film with A. Lediaev as the central figure (part of the Profession: Reporter (*Professia – Reporter*) series), and a program entitled An Extraordinary Event about the work of rehabilitation centers run by Protestant churches in Krasnodar and Rostov-on-Don. The reports contained the usual “anti-sectarian” clichés: accusations of extortion, charlatantry, unethical recruitment, the use of psychological trickery...

Following the broadcasts, the Association of Christian Churches and Spiritual Education Organizations (active in the Rostov Region) demanded an apology from NTV’s management.

In Penza, several publications connected the murder of a three-year-old child by her grandmother with the woman’s religious beliefs, mentioning that she had for a number of years attended Word of Life, a “non-traditional” church. A representative of the Russian Union of Evangelical Christians, Sergey Kireyev, appealed to the media outlets concerned to deny or withdraw the information concerning the woman’s religious affiliation. Only two publications responded to his request; the rest ignored it.

In the Kursk Region, a community of Evangelical Christian-Baptists complained to the prosecutor and the mayor about the numerous media reports accusing its members of reluctance to vaccinate their children against measles. The list of media outlets that disseminated the objectionable comments about the Baptists included *Russkaia Planeta* [Russian Planet], NTV, Newsru.com, a local TV channel known as STV, etc.

The dissemination of the *Zaraysky Ekklesiast* [Zaraysk Ecclesiast] newspaper known in the town of Zaraysk near Moscow triggered a complaint to the Moscow regional Prosecutor's Office from the Evangelical Christian Union of Russia (*Rossiiskoe ob"edinenie khristian very evangel'skoi*). The publication that was mentioned in the complaint had published material that did not correspond to fact. Among other things, it had accused the organization of using the Zaraysk Kremlin (a historic fortress) as a prayer center.

In January, Moscow's Savelovsky Court ordered the TV channel Russia-1 to issue a refutation of a story about the Divya Loka center for Vedic culture, aired in 2013, and to compensate the community for non-pecuniary damage.

The ROAC brought a suit against the Suzdal News (*Suzdal' Nov'*) and Vladimir News (*Vladimirskiy Vedomosti*) newspapers. In 2013, they had published offensive material about the organization. In June 2014, the Suzdal District Court issued an interlocutory judgement in this case. The parties had reached a settlement out of court: Suzdal News promised to publish within two weeks a piece prepared by the plaintiff about the history of ROC, how the organization came into being, and its current activities.

However, in December, Vladimirskiy Vedomosti ran a story by Anton Zlobin entitled "Extremism: who 'calls the tune'" (*Ekstremizm: kto "zakazyvaet muzyku"*). It was about Bailiff's Piety (*Pristavnoe Blagochestiie*), a film formally declared extremist. The editorial office of Portal-Credo.ru expressed its outrage at the material which they found offensive to members of the ROAC, at the factual errors therein, and at the slander directed against the portal's staff.

Members of public organizations and individuals also tried to disrupt the legal activities of Jehovah's Witnesses. Such disruption took the shape of both defamation and physical interference.

For instance, in January, in Yershov, Saratov Region, a drunken man burst into a service in progress, shouting insults, brandishing a handle of a shovel, attempting to strike those present, and threatening further violence. In the Krasnodar Territory, the Cossacks interfered with the distribution of Jehovah's Witness literature. In Syktyvkar, the Cossacks accused the local Jehovah's Witnesses of distributing extremist literature and demanded that the police launch criminal proceedings against them.

"Anti-sectarian" actions were conducted by various community organizations in various regions. The Orel Orthodox Initiative conducted an "anti-sectarian" picket outside the House of Culture of the Russian Society of the Deaf. The picket was directed against the activities of the Jehovah's Witnesses in the city and timed to coincide with Evensong commemorating the death of Christ. Several anti-Jehovah's Witness actions also took place in Murmansk.

*Maria Kravchenko*

## Inappropriate enforcement of anti-extremist legislation in Russia in 2014

### Summary

Misuse of anti-extremist legislation, which constitutes the subject of this report, falls into two major categories.

The first one can be described as "excessive implementation," stemming from low quality of the law enforcement training and from the fact that the law enforcement staff is primarily interested in boosting up their reporting statistics, but, most importantly, from poor quality of the anti-extremist legislation that provided increasing opportunities for abuse - for manifestly improper or deliberately disproportionate restrictions on fundamental rights and freedoms. This first category has generally remained quite stable, although abuses that are not curbed have a natural tendency to multiply.

The second category came into existence as a result of deliberate development of suppression mechanisms targeting the oppositional or simply independent forms of activity. This category has become much more pronounced starting in mid-2012 on the height of the protest movement. This report focuses on activities of the federal (and some regional) authorities directed against real or imaginary radical opposition, which, de facto, affected not only radicals (in the broadest sense of the word), but also a number of relatively moderate citizens, including people with no connections to political activism. Unfortunately, the repressive component in legislation and law enforcement in our area of interest did not stop its growth after the decline in the oppositional activity.

The events in Ukraine have given this process a new impetus, still difficult to evaluate in its entirety.

First of all, the course on tightening anti-extremist legislation and expanding the "illegal zone" has become more deliberate. As in the past, new crimes and offenses ("historical revisionism," separatism, and "displaying extremist symbols") were formulated in such a way that their literal application is either impossible or would lead to mass repressions, but, in practice, these rules are applied very selectively. Meanwhile, neither the Constitutional Court nor the Supreme Court shows any readiness to intervene in this situation from the legal perspective.

Second, the authorities have apparently appointed themselves the impossible task of stopping online distribution of information perceived as dangerous to themselves or the society as a whole. While the information in question could, indeed, be dangerous, the mechanisms, used by the state, have been causing excessive damage to the public interest. The use of “Lugovoy’s Law” (an extra-judicial mechanism for blocking Internet sites) illustrates this problem well.

Third, due to Russia’s involvement in the Ukrainian events, a substantial share of inappropriate enforcement of the anti-extremist legislation falls on the statements and actions, which are somehow related to these events. An average “criminality threshold” has dropped again, but this kind of law enforcement failed to reduce the level of aggression in society.

Fourth, the number of inappropriately opened criminal cases based on charges of “inciting hatred” has doubled. Thus, even taking into account the general increase in the number of criminal cases based on various public statements, the share of inappropriate ones among them has clearly increased.

Finally, due to the Ukrainian events, the sphere of “combating extremism” started to overlap with the sphere of protecting Russia’s alleged foreign policy interests, leading to a significant increase in the role of the FSB in fight against extremism.

However, attention of law enforcement agencies was not focused exclusively on Ukraine-related matters. Persecution of religious minorities continued as well. Criminal sentences continued to be imposed for various kinds of intolerant statements, which contained no illegal calls and clearly presented no public danger.

As for positive developments, we could point only to the slowdown in growth of the Federal List of Extremist Materials, which is essentially useless and causes a lot of problems and unnecessary restrictions. As far as we know, the number of charges against the libraries in relation to the List has decreased as well.

However, it should be recognized that numerous problems caused by the existence of the List remain unresolved. This is also true for all other long-standing problems associated with countering extremism. Given the changes in political regime that we are currently observing, the federal government is clearly not ready even to eliminate the most glaring absurdities in wording and practical application of the anti-extremist legislation, leave alone liberalizing it.

## Creation of Regulatory Acts

As expected, legislative activity in our area of interest in 2014 had an overarching theme of fighting against various potential threats of radicalism, and subsequent restrictions on freedom of speech. In this report we only cover the most important developments in this trend.

In February, the bill “On Amendments to the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation (with regard to increasing liability for extremist action)” was signed into law. The law toughens punishments under the Criminal Code Article 280 (calls for extremist action), Article 282 (incitement to hatred and enmity), 282<sup>1</sup> (participation in an extremist association) and Article 282<sup>2</sup> (continuation of activities of an organization, banned for extremism). The fines were increased and the terms of forced labor extended under all articles; the upper limits for prison terms were also raised under three of them (except 282). Prior to the commencement of this law, the crimes covered by the Criminal Code Articles 280 part 1, 282<sup>1</sup> part 2, and 282<sup>2</sup> were considered minor offenses. Now they have been transferred to the category of major and mid-level offenses, with corresponding procedural consequences. The main drawback of the new law is the raising of the upper limit for a prison term – a measure, unwarranted by the practice of anti-extremist law enforcement in Russia. Meanwhile, the increase in fines appears appropriate.

On May 5, 2014 the President signed an anti-terrorism legislation package, proposed in January 2014 by a group of parliamentarians from all four factions. These laws affected far more than just terrorist activities. Below, we outline the innovations related to the issue of counteracting extremism.

The first out of three laws in the package was the law “On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation (relating to improvements in counteracting terrorism).” Prison terms under the Criminal Code Article 212 (mass public unrest) were increased from 4 - 10 years to 8 - 15 years. The wording of the criminal code article was amended; punishment is now stipulated not only for organizing mass unrest, but also for preparing it, while the list of methods used in mass unrest (“the use of firearms, explosives or explosive devices”) was supplemented by “substances and objects that pose a threat to those in the vicinity,” thus expanding the notion of “unrest” in principle. The article was supplemented by Part 4 which criminalized “the acquisition of knowledge and practical skills in the course of physical and psychological preparation” for organizing mass unrest.

Additions were also introduced to the Criminal Code Articles 282<sup>1</sup> and 282<sup>2</sup>. Now they include potential liability (from one to six years of imprisonment) for “*the inducement, recruitment or other involvement of a person*” in the activities of an extremist organization. Such broad formulas criminalize activities of people who are not themselves members of extremist organizations or communities, and it is not clear what should be considered “an inducement to participate,” if the inducing person does not participate in the entity himself/herself.

The “Law on Bloggers” from the same “anti-terrorist package” amended the laws on information and communication to increase the state control over the Internet in order to counter extremism. Service providers now must notify



Roskomnadzor (Federal Service for Supervision in the Sphere of Telecom, Information Technologies and Mass Communications) about the start of their business activity; they must store data about all user activity for six months after the end of providing service and supply this information to law enforcement authorities in cases, specified by law. They must also comply with the requirements relating to certain equipment and software/hardware that facilitates operational and investigative activities. The law also provided a legal definition of the term “blogger” as an owner of an Internet site or page, not registered as mass media, that is accessed by 3,000 or more users on a daily basis. This definition is unclear in all its parts, and Roskomnadzor has been designated to provide clarifications<sup>1</sup>. These “bloggers” must disclose their own actual names; they share the obligations of the mass media but not the rights, and must be listed in a special register. As of early 2015, the register included only about 500 bloggers.

On the same day, the bill “On the Rehabilitation of Nazism,” proposed by a group of members of parliament headed by Irina Yarovaya (“United Russia”), was also signed into law. A new Article 3541 was added to the criminal code; it sets a hefty fine or up to five years of imprisonment for “*denial of facts, established by the verdict of the International Military Tribunal for the trial and punishment of the major war criminals of the European Axis countries, approval of the crimes, specified by the judgment, as well as dissemination of false information on the activities of the Soviet Union during World War II combined with accusations of crimes established by the said judgment, committed in public.*” The penalties vary from a fine (up to 300 thousand rubles) to five years in prison. From our perspective, the law will not help to counteract neo-Nazi propaganda, since all the necessary legal tools have already been provided by the Criminal Code Article 282. Meanwhile, due to the new law’s infelicitous and vague language, it can be used to restrict freedom of expression, especially in historical debates.

A law on combating extremism on the Internet and in finance was signed in June and introduced a new Article 282<sup>3</sup> (financing of extremist activity) into the Criminal Code. The composition of the article is as follows: “*Financing or collection of funds or providing financial services wittingly intended to finance extremist organization, preparation, and commitment of at least one extremist*

<sup>1</sup> Roskomnadzor has, in fact, developed a definition of «user visit» and a rather complicated method for determining the number of visits (number of users) per day. For details, see: Roskomnadzor has developed methodology to identify a “blogger”// SOVA Center. 2014. 10 June (<http://www.sova-center.ru/misuse/news/lawmaking/2014/06/d29705/>).

*crime or support an extremist community or extremist organization*”. Penalties for these offences range from a fine of 300 thousand rubles to imprisonment for up to three years under Part 1 and up to six years under Part 2. Introduction of a new article into the Criminal Code cannot be qualified as inappropriate, but we consider it unwarranted, because providing funds for extremist activities had already been regarded as a form of complicity in extremism.

In its part pertaining to online activities, the law added the words “Information and telecommunications networks, including the “Internet” to the text of the Criminal Code Articles 280 and 282, thus giving the Internet the same status as media outlets<sup>2</sup>. Including this amendment into Article 282 does not effect any actual changes, in Article 280, on the other hand, an online publication moved from Part 1 to a more severe Part 2. In our opinion, equating the Internet to mass media in the sense of Articles 280 and 282 with regard to anti-extremist law enforcement is inappropriate, inasmuch as the information posted online can differ widely in its degree of public exposure and may be intended for a small group of users. We should also note that prosecution for unlawful statements online was practiced quite widely even prior to the adoption of this law.

In the second half of July, the President signed the Law “On Amendments to Article 280<sup>1</sup> of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation,” which further toughens recently introduced punishment for “*public calls for action aimed at violating the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation*” and treats any statements posted on the Internet similarly to statements published via mass media. This article now stipulates penalties ranging from a fine of 100 thousand rubles to five years of imprisonment. We view the entire Criminal Code Article 280<sup>1</sup>, introduced in 2013, as a negative development, and continue to insist that only violent separatism should entail criminal prosecution. Increasing the severity of the article even further, in our opinion, constitutes an attack on the freedom of speech, particularly in view of the inevitable debates regarding the annexation of Crimea.

In November, the President signed the law expanding application of the Code of Administrative Offences Article 20.3, pertaining to banned symbols (i.e. Nazi symbols). The law establishes legal responsibility for propaganda and public demonstration of attributes or symbols of “*organizations, which cooperated*

<sup>2</sup> Changes were also introduced into the law “On combating extremist activity” to the articles, describing the role of the various authorities, including the text of Article 13 of the Law, which stipulates procedural deadlines, associated with recognizing materials as extremist.

*with fascist organizations or movements and cooperate with international or foreign organizations and their representatives who deny the verdict of the International Military Tribunal (Nuremberg Tribunal) as well as national, military or occupation tribunals, based on the judgment of the Nuremberg Tribunal*". As clearly stated in the explanatory memorandum to the bill, this formulation refers to the organizations that use "*symbols and attributes of the Banderite organization in Ukraine*." From our point of view, the law, adopted solely due to foreign policy reasons, is redundant, while its broad interpretation, which seems highly probable, can lead to various legal oddities and inappropriate prosecution. The legislative body de facto delegated the implementation of this law to the government, which has been charged with compiling a list of relevant organizations. Notably, the list still does not exist.

In December, the government introduced to the State Duma a draft bill proposing fines of up to a million rubles for media outlets that propagate extremist materials, incitements to extremist activities, justification of terrorism, and so on. The draft was approved in the first reading in February 2015.

The constitutional court made a number of important decisions in our area of interest in the course of the year. Unfortunately, all these decisions only strengthen the existing trend toward gradual shrinking of civic freedoms.

In mid-September 2014, it became known that the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation refused to consider an appeal against the law "On Information, Information Technologies and Protection of Information." The appeal was filed by director of the Association of Internet publishers Vladimir Kharitonov after his website *digital-books.ru* had been blocked due to having the same IP-address as the website that promoted illegal drugs. Kharitonov claimed that the practice of blocking IP addresses de facto takes away the right to distribute non-prohibited information and constitutes a punishment for the site owners, who committed no infringements against the law. However, the Constitutional Court has stated in its definition that the rights of owners of the websites that happened to be blocked along with the resources that contained banned information, were violated not by including their network address on the register, but by "*improper actions (or inaction) of their hosting service provider*." Thus, the Constitutional Court refused to recognize an error in the law and shifted responsibility onto hosting providers.

In late October, the Constitutional Court upheld the ban on any demonstration of Nazi symbols and symbols similar to them to the point of confusion. The determination was issued in response to a complaint filed by Vladimir Murashov, sentenced to an administrative fine for such acts.

Murashov argued that, in various cultural traditions, symbols and signs in question have meaning not associated with the ideology of Nazism, and, therefore, the ban on their use and dissemination violates his constitutional rights. The Constitutional Court rejected the complaint, not finding any ambiguity in the ban, despite its glaring obviousness. The determination used the following argument: "*In itself, the use of Nazi attributes (symbols), as well as attributes (symbols), similar to Nazi attributes (symbols) to the point of confusion - regardless of their genesis - can cause distress to people whose relatives were killed during the Great Patriotic War, which also entails the right of a legislative body to take measures in accordance with Article 55 (Part 3) of the Constitution of the Russian Federation*." Thus, the Constitutional Court refused to bring any clarity to the issue of interpreting the symbols, and inappropriate prosecution under the Administrative Code Article 20.3 for displaying swastikas and other symbols, regardless of context and objectives of these actions, still continues (see below).

Similarly, the Constitutional Court refused to see any ambiguities in the language and use of the Criminal Code Article 213 (hooliganism), when considering a complaint by Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, member of the Pussy Riot punk band. As Nadezhda Tolokonnikova pointed out, the Criminal Code Article 213 "*disproportionately restricts freedom of expression, allows one to declare a public nuisance what, in fact, is a violation of religious norms, and to establish the criminal nature of acts on the basis of them being perceived as unacceptable by the majority of the population*." The Constitutional Court disagreed with Tolokonnikova's position, stating that "*the challenged provisions of criminal law contain no ambiguity that could cause a person to be deprived of the opportunity to realize the wrongfulness of his/her actions and anticipate eventual responsibility for its commission, and which could prevent uniform understanding and application of the rule by the law enforcement authorities, and can not be viewed as constituting a violation of the applicant's rights*." According to the Constitutional Court judges, in cases when the information is propagated in a manner, based on "*gross and demonstrative neglect toward accepted societal notions of acceptable behavior in particular locations, including religious sites, is devoid of any aesthetic and artistic value and is in and of itself offensive*," such activity falls outside the legitimate scope for freedom of expression. As we see it, the history of use of the Criminal Code Article 213 indicates lack of common understanding of this Article (including the interpretation of the hate motive) among various law enforcement agencies. Regretfully, the Constitutional Court failed to notice this problem as it failed to notice defects in the overall composition of Article 213 in its 2007 edition. The issues pertaining to the extent of exhibited disregard for social norms, or the degree of social danger of

particular incidents of hooliganism, not to mention aesthetic and artistic aspects of an event, are all debatable<sup>3</sup>.

## Principal Targets of Persecution

### The Internet and Anti-Extremism

In 2014, blocking of online content, along with preventing meetings and gatherings, became one of the principal forms of government pressure on the Russian society. Not surprisingly, these two forms of pressure were closely linked. Actually, the government has provided a direct link between them in the form of so-called “Lugovoy’s Law,” signed by the President in late 2013. The law allows the Prosecutor General to request extrajudicial blocking of websites that contain “*incitement to mass unrest, extremist activities, incitement of ethnic and (or) inter-confessional strife, participation in terrorist activity, participation in mass public events conducted in violation of the established procedure*”. From our point of view, the provision of Lugovoy’s Law, which calls for blocking information on activities that have no permits, is inappropriate, because the fact that the event itself has not been permitted gives no grounds to restrict messages about it. A requirement to block information about events, still awaiting a decision on their permit application, is even more inappropriate.

Sites and pages blocked by Lugovoy’s Law are added to a special register on the Roskomnadzor site, created in addition to the existing Unified Register of Banned Websites (covered in our previous report), which, after all, adds materials solely based on court decisions.

According to our sources (only Roskomnadzor has the complete list), the registry of the resources blocked under Lugovoy’s Law contained 156 items by the end of the year, not including mirrors, variant addresses, and sites that were unblocked after they removed the offending content. This “Lugovoy’s Registry” includes resources traditionally covered by such bans as well as sites and pages restricted due to current political demands.

Websites of Islamic militants comprise a third of these restricted resources; there are also about a dozen Islamic resources related to Hizb ut-Tahrir (including its official international and Russian sites), as well as pages with materials

<sup>3</sup> The consistent position of the Constitutional Court in the assessment of anti-extremist norms was, once again confirmed in March 2015; the Constitutional Court confirmed the ban against the swastika and asserting the verity of only one religion // SOVA Center. 2015. 4 March (<http://www.sova-center.ru/misuse/news/lawmaking/2015/03/d31422/>).

critical of Hizb ut-Tahrir for its lack of support for the jihad; also included are about fifteen pages with aggressively anti-Russian Ukrainian texts, and about the same number of pages maintained by Russian nationalists. Some of these pages contain calls for the separation of the Caucasus region, but most of them only display announcements of various meetings and events. In our opinion, if a nationalist event does not involve obviously forbidden slogans, then preventing it or blocking information about it is inappropriate and violates the rights to freedom of assembly and freedom of speech. In cases, where the authorities have reasons to expect violations of the law in the course of an event, they should ensure the presence of law enforcement personnel, capable of preventing illegal actions, rather than prevent dissemination of information about the event itself.

However, the authorities are uneasy about any kind of oppositional actions, and approximately another third of registry is taken by webpages - including blog posts and media announcements - that contain information on such events.

Implementation of Lugovoy’s Law began in late February. In March, on the eve of unpermitted rally near the Zamoskvoretsky District Court in Moscow dedicated to the expected verdict on the Bolotnaya Square case, Roskomnadzor, at the request of the Prosecutor General, added the following popular oppositional resources to the Register of Banned Materials: *Grani.ru*, *Kasparov.ru*, *Ezhednevny Zhurnal (ej.ru)* and the blog of Alexey Navalny (*navalny.livejournal.com*). According to the prosecutors, these websites contained calls for illegal activities and for participation in public events conducted in violation of the established order. The agency did not inform the owners of websites what specific materials they found problematic, so the owners had to go to court in order to clarify the circumstances of the blocking. In three cases out of four the courts have helped to clarify the grounds for the restrictions; the restrictions were upheld in all four cases.

Thus, in the course of the proceedings in the Moscow City Court, it became known that Navalny’s blog had been blocked because of two entries. The first one was dedicated to the events in Ukraine, and, in the end, urged the readers to come out in support of the defendants in the Bolotnaya Square riots case. The second entry also contained a call to the readers to gather near the court, where the verdict in the Bolotnaya Square case was to be announced.

In the case of *Kasparov.ru*, it was discovered that the Prosecutor General and Roskomnadzor had issues with an illustration to the article “The Ukrainian State Property to Be Nationalized in Crimea,” published prior to the Crimean referendum. It depicted an armed man and the text “Crimea, wake up, invaders and their henchmen brazenly steal your money and spoil your cities. Don’t be silent, don’t give up.”

When the court was considering restrictions against *ej.ru*, the representative of the Prosecutor General's Office clarified that illegal information, and, specifically, calls for mass actions without permits, were found in a number of materials related to the Bolotnaya Square case. In addition, the Prosecutor General's Office declared that that it viewed many articles published by this outlet as biased. A quote from an article by Yulia Latynina on clashes with riot police at Bolotnaya Square was provided as an example of illegal information.

The agencies were unable to agree on a common version regarding access restrictions on *Grani.ru*: the Prosecutor General's Office mentioned the calls to participate in unsanctioned actions, while Roskomnadzor invoked the calls for extremist activity. As a result, *Grani.ru* filed an appeal with the European Court of Human Rights.

The next wave of restrictions at the request of the Prosecutor General took place in early August, when access was blocked to several dozen pages, including pages from Russian and Ukrainian media sites, as well as blogs and social network pages of a number of users. The authorities used this method to prevent sharing of messages on the planned "March for Federalization of Siberia" in Novosibirsk. Editorial boards of a number of major media outlets received Roskomnadzor warnings or notifications demanding that the relevant material be removed from their pages. The first item to be blocked was the article "No More Feeding Moscow" by National Bolshevik Platform activist Mikhail Pulin published on the *Novyi Smysl* (New Meaning) web resource; the article contained a theoretical substantiation of the need for such an action. Access to the VKontakte event page for the march was restricted as well. Large-scale blocking of all messages relating to the upcoming march followed next.

Roskomnadzor representative Vadim Ampelonsky explained the decision by the fact that the materials on this action contained "*information about the preparations for an unpermitted mass event under the slogans encroaching on the territorial integrity of the country.*" We view the actions of the Prosecutor General and Roskomnadzor as inappropriate. First, at the time of publication, the permit request had been filed with the Novosibirsk authorities, but no decision was issued. Second, the media did not encourage participation in the action, leaving alone participation in riots; many materials did not even mention the date of the event. Third, the organizers did not come forward with any separatist appeals, but only called for autonomous rights for Siberia within the Russian Federation. However, we do not view attempts to criminalize public discussion on the rights of certain territories, the right to self-determination and even separatist appeals as legitimate. Prohibitive measures can be justified only when applied to calls for violence in support of separatist goals. Note that only one publication was able to challenge the warning - in early 2015, the Central

District Court of Novosibirsk acknowledged that the note on federalization published on the portal *Sibkray.ru* contained no signs of extremism. Most websites removed their materials related to the march. The pages, which kept such materials intact, still remain on the Lugovoy's Register.

The situation repeated itself in the second half of December, when, upon request from the Prosecutor General's Office, Roskomnadzor blocked dozens of sites and individual pages that contained information about a planned rally in support of Alexey and Oleg Navalny in connection with their sentences in the Yves Rocher case. Some of these resources still remain in the registry.

The Unified Registry of Banned Websites, created in 2012, continues to add resources that contain information "*forbidden for distribution in the Russian Federation on the basis of an enforceable court decision recognizing this information as prohibited for distribution.*" Originally, this wording denoted online materials recognized as extremist and then blocked. However, in 2014, courts started to make decisions that the sites were to be entered into the register, without recognizing them as extremist, on the grounds that they contained materials similar to the ones already recognized as extremist (usually, de-facto, the same materials).

By the end of 2014, this part of the Registry contained at least 128 items. We believe that about two dozen of these items were added on questionable or simply inappropriate grounds. The most famous and notorious bans of 2014 are the bans against *jw.org* (Jehovah's Witnesses website) and *nurru.com*, the site of Said Nursi followers. Many sites were only blocked temporarily. For example, in the fall of 2014, Roskomnadzor blocked the Wayback Machine (*archive.org*) – an automatic aggregator of content all over the internet since 1996 - and entered it onto the Unified Registry of Banned Websites. The resource was blocked because it provided access to the video "The Clash of Swords," produced by Islamic State and recognized as extremist. Obviously, restrictions against this extremely useful resource of over 435 billion pages could only be temporary otherwise Russian users would have been the ones punished.

The ban against the Jehovah's Witnesses website revealed a cynical attitude of the authorities toward their own blocking mechanism. Initially, the website was blocked because of the fact that it published texts of the pamphlets, recognized as extremist. In response, the website has installed a server-side filter which does not allow users with Russian IP-address to see these materials – i.e. blocked these materials voluntarily. This gave grounds for annulment of the previous court decisions. However, the Supreme Court was then presented with a note from the FSB that the banned texts could still be found by using an anonymizer

program, which allows its user to bypass any blocks. The Supreme Court found this to be a sufficient reason for banning the entire site.

In the course of 2014, we counted about 22 cases of inappropriate sanctions against Internet providers, forced to block inappropriately prohibited resources. This number is about four times smaller than in the preceding year. This drop in prosecutorial activity is, apparently, related to introduction of a centralized registry. We are aware of six cases of inappropriately imposed fines under the Administrative Code Article 6.17 (violation of the laws of the Russian Federation on the protection of children from information harmful to their health and (or) development). The defenders usually are the owners of cafes and Internet clubs held responsible for absence or imperfection of their content filtering systems.

Schools and libraries still face the brunt of these prosecutorial claims more frequently than other institutions. We would like to remind that all their computers must be equipped with content filtering software that blocks access to prohibited information, including extremist materials. If the system of shielding the user from banned information fails to work properly (and perfect filters simply don't exist), the prosecutor's office issues motions to eliminate violations to directors of educational institutions and libraries, rather than software developers and distributors, and then the "guilty" parties face disciplinary measures.

However, the number of inspections in schools and libraries, and various acts of prosecutorial response based on their results in 2014 comes to only a half of the corresponding number from the preceding year; according to our very conservative estimates, there were 349 cases of sanctions in 2013, compared to 178 cases in 2014<sup>4</sup>.

### Political and Civic Activists

The fight against actions in support of Ukraine and against pro-Ukrainian statements online was the top law enforcement priority in the area of combating extremism in 2014. The fact that the FSB has played a significant role in this process suggests that the authorities were afraid of potential network of agents of radical Ukrainian groups (Right Sector (*Pravyi sektor*) is the group most frequently mentioned in this context), or even guerilla groups. But, in practice,

<sup>4</sup> We are sure that we never find out about the majority of such inspections. Often, we know about the series of inspections being conducted, but the number of warnings and other acts of prosecutorial response is not always reported. In such cases, we counted the entire series as a single instance.

we saw that the counter-action primarily targeted citizens, whose radicalism, at its worst, was limited to irresponsible chatter on the Internet.

With regard to unbalanced rhetoric about the Ukrainian events, our position is as follows: we believe that the extreme severity of the crisis inevitably provokes many people into making extreme statements, not typical for them in a different context. In this situation, it is more expedient not to resort to criminal prosecution, even for the most abrasive texts, unless the constituent elements of the offence are presented in extremely clear and unequivocal manner. This consideration should be taken into account primarily with regard to appeals addressed to citizens or the authorities of another country - in this case, usually, Ukraine. Otherwise, actions of the law enforcement agencies only increase the tensions, already running high in the society.

It should be noted that the first steps of the authorities were related not to criminal prosecutions, but to blocking online information. In early March, several providers in various regions of Russia blocked access to *YouTube.com* for a period of time. Their actions was based on the order to restrict access to the video of an appeal to the Ukrainian people by Valeria Novodvorskaya and Konstantin Borovoy, issued by the Prosecutor General's Office in accordance with Lugovoy's Law. Novodvorskaya and Borovoy called on Ukraine not to surrender Crimea without armed resistance; such resistance, in their view, could make the West to actively intervene in the conflict, prevent further expansion, and hasten the regime change in Russia. As is it usually the case, when restrictions affect a major internet resource, Roskomnadzor and representatives of the Internet service providers later claimed that that access to the entire portal had been blocked by mistake or due to technical reasons. YouTube gradually became accessible to its users once again, along with the video in question.

Alexander Byvshev, a teacher from Kromy in the Oryol Region, became the center of one of the most notorious episodes of prosecution for anti-Russian rhetoric. Byvshev posted two poems - "To Ukrainian Patriots" and "Ukrainian Rebels" on his social network page. Two criminal cases under the Criminal Code Article 282 Part 1 (incitement to racial hatred) were initiated on the basis of their publication. "To Ukrainian Patriots" was recognized in court as extremist. It was written in the wake of the Crimean events, and its content is limited to calling on the Ukrainians to meet "the Moskal gang," which invaded their land, with armed resistance. From our point of view, the author's hostility was based not on ethnic origin of a certain group ("Moscal" is a pejorative term for the Russians in Ukrainian), but on the character of the group's activities. Thus, Byvshev's alleged actions should not be qualified under Article 282. His poem "Ukrainian Rebels," dedicated to Stepan Bandera and his UPA associates and

written in first person on their behalf, speaks about the readiness of Banderites to protect Ukraine from both the "fascists" and the "Moscs". Law enforcement agencies viewed this poem, dedicated to historical events, as an allusion to the current events, and, once again, charged the author with inciting ethnic hatred against the Russians. However, an allegory can not serve as a basis for criminal prosecution.

Another notorious case had to do with the so-called "Russophobia Post" – an anonymous text, which, when shared, became the grounds for prosecution against two people in the Altai Territory. This text, also inspired by the Ukrainian events, was written very abrasively and, indeed, was distinctly anti-Russian (in the ethnic sense). The material contained insults against the Russians, and, most importantly, advocated ethnic discrimination by appealing to the Ukrainian authorities not to grant citizenship to ethnic Russians. However, the question remains unclear whether appeals to the authorities of another country in relation to this country's internal matters should be considered illegal. Andrey Teslenko, an opposition activist from Barnaul, was charged under the Criminal Code Article 280 (incitement to extremist activities) for reposting this text on VKontakte; he subsequently emigrated to Ukraine. The second activist Anton Podchasov, a candidate for the Assembly of Republic of Altai from the RPR-PARNAS party, is facing charges under two Criminal Code articles - 280 and 282.

Konstantin Zharinov from Chelyabinsk was also charged under Article 280, for sharing on his VKontakte page an appeal from Right Sector, addressed "to "Russians and other enslaved peoples," which called for acts of disobedience, creation of guerrilla groups, and so on. According to Zharinov, he quickly removed the post, but it was noticed by the FSB, which initiated a criminal case. Zharinov views the offending post as his mistake, but also believes that the FSB interest in him has to do with his political science specialization in the history of terrorism, on which he authored several books. The character of his other posts indicates that aggressive rhetoric was not typical for him, and his support for the appeal as such is highly unlikely; it is more likely that Zharinov was simply interested in the very fact of its existence. A request from the law enforcement agencies to remove the shared link (in case it was still on his page) would have been sufficient. The Zharinov case came to court in the fall of 2014, but was sent back for further investigation.

Not only individual writers, but also the entire media outlets, faced serious pressure.

An interview with Ukrainian nationalists published in March led to drastic management changes for news agency *Lenta.ru*. Roskomnadzor raised

objections against the material "We Are Not the Armed Forces" - an interview by reporter Ilya Azar with Andrei Tarasenko, a representative of Ukrainian "Right Sector," who declared the inevitability of a guerrilla war in the event of an invasion of Russian troops in Ukraine. The material also contained a hyperlink to an interview with Dmitry Yarosh, the current leader of Right Sector, published on the site of Trident (*Tryzub*), a Ukrainian nationalist organization. Taken in 2008, the interview was dedicated to the Russian-Georgian conflict; Yarosh opposed Russia's policies and predicted a war with "the Moscow Empire" until its eventual collapse. Roskomnadzor issued a warning to *Lenta.ru*. After that, Alexander Mamut, the owner of Afisha-Rambler-SUP holding that included *Lenta.ru*, fired the chief editor Galina Timchenko and demanded Ilya Azar's dismissal. Most of the editors declared solidarity with their dismissed colleagues and left the news agency. We would like to note that, if the interviewee does not resort to direct incitement or open calls for unlawful actions, imposing sanctions for his statements on a media outlet (even in the form of a warning) is disproportionate and inappropriate. Meanwhile, an interview conducted by Azar contained no such appeals. As for the interview with Yarosh, law enforcement authorities had the right to request that the administration remove the link from the site. There was no apparent reason for replacing the editorial board, and it is not surprising that it was carried out, as usual, without any formal involvement of the authorities.

It took the decision of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Karelia to finally remove the warning about the impermissibility of violating anti-extremist legislation issued to the chief editor of Karelian newspaper *TVR-Panorama*. The warning was issued in relation to publication (with the permission of the participants) of correspondence among the members of a war-torn family, in which the relatives from Ukraine and Crimea tried to convince their relative from Russia, worried about their well-being, that the situation in their respective regions was different from the picture, painted by the Russian media. There were no signs of extremism in the correspondence; however, the prosecutor's office claimed that this publication could provoke extremist comments (even if it hasn't so far), and insisted that, since March 18, 2014, when the Crimea officially became part of Russia, "discussing illegality of the Republic of Crimea joining Russia contains signs of extremism."

Meanwhile, the Echo of Moscow (*Ekho Moskvy*) Radio Station and website failed in its attempt to challenge the Roskomnadzor warning about the impermissibility of violating the laws on information and combating extremist activity. The warning was issued for the Eyewitness (*Svoimi glazami*) show with the *Los Angeles Times* correspondent Sergei Loiko on the subject of military

activities in the Donetsk airport, transmitted live on October 29, as well as for a transcript of the same program, published on the *Ekho Moskvy* website. The show was anchored by Aleksandr Plushchev with guests Timur Olevsky from the Rain (*Dozhd*) TV channel and the Los Angeles Times correspondent Sergey Loiko. In the warning, Roskomnadzor indicated that the show “contains information justifying the practice of committing war crimes... aimed at the complete or partial elimination of an ethnic or national group,” and demanded the removal of material from the site within ten days, but never explained which statements by the show’s participants were criminal in nature. From our point of view, the show included no such statements. Moreover, the guests of the show emphasized that ethnic origin and linguistic affiliation played no role in determining one’s choice of the side in this conflict. Probably, the authorities were displeased with the position of one of the show’s guests, who was sympathetic to the Ukrainian side, and the fact that the reporters provided detailed information about the events at the airport.

The movement of Russian troops into Crimea has drawn sharp criticism from activists of the Tatar nationalist movement in Tatarstan concerned about the fate of the Crimean Tatars. Fauziya Bayramova, a Tatar writer, activist, and the leader of Milli Mejlis (the alternative “national parliament”) published on her Facebook page the Statement of Milli Mejlis on the events in the Crimea and Ukraine. It expressed solidarity of Tatar nationalists with the Crimean Tatars’ yearning for independence and disagreement with the policy of the Russian authorities. The statement contained no appeals that could pose any danger in relation to an ethnic group. However, the text, in conjunction with her other text on persecution against peaceful Muslims in Tatarstan, which also contained no signs of extremism, constituted the grounds for charges of inciting ethnic hatred against Bayramova. She received a suspended one-year prison sentence under Article 282; the text was banned.

Another well-known activist Rafis Kashapov, the chairman of the Tatar Public Center, was arrested in Kazan under the same Criminal Code article. He was charged with openly posting four materials on VKontakte. Three texts (the fourth material was a poster with photos of victims of Russian military operations) shared common themes of solidarity with Ukraine and the Crimean Tatars and illegality of Crimea’s annexation, and repudiated the actions of the Russian authorities. The legal expertise found them to contain “*signs of psychological information aimed at inciting hate (enmity) against members of the category “They/Aggressor (“the new unrecognized government of the peninsula,” “Russian punishers,” “Vladimir Putin,” “Russia” “Russians,” “Russian”), identified on a mixed basis.*” We have found no signs of incitement

to ethnic hatred or calls for violence in these materials. As for the criticism against the Russian authorities, we would like to remind that, according to the explanation of the Supreme Court with respect to the practice of anti-extremist legislation<sup>5</sup>, it should not be treated as incitement to hatred and prosecuted under Article 282.

Of all the public actions related to the Ukrainian events, the greatest concern among the authorities was reserved for so-called marches for federalization. The idea of these marches came from regional civil society activists in the late summer, prompted by the Russian authorities’ insistence on federalization of Ukraine. Despite the fact that the idea of secession from Russia was never put forward, the authorities concluded that the marches threaten the territorial integrity of the state, refused to issue permits and consistently blocked information about the events in the media and social networks (see above).

A situation in Krasnodar was especially dramatic, with several people making an attempt to hold the March for Federalization of Kuban. Daria Polyudova, an activist of Rot Front and the applicant on the march permit, was arrested on the eve of the event under administrative charge of petty hooliganism, and then remained in detention as a suspect under Part 2 of the Criminal Code Article 280<sup>1</sup> (public incitement to action aimed at violating the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation committed using the Internet) and Article 280 (public incitement to extremist activity) and spent six months in pre-trial detention. Anarchist Vyacheslav Martynov and psychologist Peter Lyubchenkov, who also become suspects in the case, fled to Ukraine. Interestingly, the final version of charges against Polyudova, brought against her in 2015, charges her not for an attempt to hold such a march, but for several social network posts, not directly related to the march (and not meriting criminal prosecution).

In Moscow, a criminal case under two articles - Criminal Code Article 213 Part 2 (hooliganism committed by a group of people motivated by political and ideological hatred or enmity) and Article 214 Part 2 (vandalism committed by a group of persons motivated by political and ideological hatred or enmity) - was initiated in relation to the action of August 20, 2014, when unknown persons placed a Ukrainian flag and painted a star on the spire of a high-rise building on the Kotelnicheskaya Embankment in Moscow the colors of Ukrainian flag. We do not agree with such qualification of the case, since the object of the alleged

<sup>5</sup> Resolution No. 11 of the plenary meeting of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation “Concerning Judicial Practice in Criminal Cases Regarding Crimes of Extremism” // SOVA Center. 2011. 29 June (<http://www.sova-center.ru/misuse/docs/2011/06/d21988/>).

hatred is completely undefined. As we have mentioned previously, we believe that this action should be viewed as a minor, rather than major, violation of public order - an administrative offense under Article 20.1 of the Administrative Code (petty hooliganism). Subsequently, four Moscow BASE jumpers (fans of jumping from tall buildings with a parachute) were charged and arrested. Later, Ukrainian citizen Pavel Ushevets, a roofer (fan of climbing the roofs) claimed responsibility for the action. He was charged in absentia under the same articles. Moscow roofer Vladimir Podrezov became another defendant, he is in pre-trial detention as well. Despite the fact that eleven forensic examinations, conducted as part of the investigation, failed to confirm any involvement of the four BASE jumpers, and the case has been clearly falling apart, all four of them remain under house arrest. Lawyers for the young people filed a complaint with the European Court of Human Rights against intentional delay in this case.

A criminal case was opened in Kaliningrad against three activists - Mikhail Feldman, Oleg Savvin and Dmitry Fonaryov - under Part 2 of the Criminal Code Article 213 (hooliganism committed by a group of persons by prior arrangement motivated by political hatred and enmity and motivated by hatred of the social group "officials"). They were accused of hanging a German flag on the garage of the Kaliningrad Regional FSB building in March 2014. The activists explained that they acted in response to what is happening in Crimea and Ukraine. All three were arrested in April. In October, Feldman appealed to the European Court of Human Rights complaining about the violation of his right to liberty and security of person.

Dissatisfied Crimean residents also faced government pressure. The Chief Editor of the Crimean Tatar *Avdet* newspaper Shevket Kaibullaev received a warning on impermissibility of extremist activity from the Simferopol Prosecutor's Office. This warning was associated with the words "annexation," "occupation" and "temporary occupation of the Crimea" used in the newspaper's materials.

Reza Shevkiev, a Member of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People and the head of the Crimea Charity Fund received a warning about the impermissibility of extremist activity, because the Mejlis building was "*displaying the flag of Ukraine for propaganda and public demonstration, which served to incite social and ethnic strife and became propaganda of exclusivity.*" The Prosecutor's Office stated that "*Article 2801 of the Criminal Code establishes liability for public calls for action aimed at violating the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation.*" From our point of view, the presence of the flag definitely reflected the attitude of the Mejlis members to Russian annexation of Crimea, but it is

impossible to interpret these actions as propaganda of exclusivity (whose?), or discord (between what ethnic or social groups?); it is equally impossible to qualify this action as a call for violent separatism.

Later, the Crimean Prosecutor General Natalia Poklonskaya personally recited the warning to Refat Chubarov, head of the Mejlis, right at the Chongar checkpoint entrance to Crimea (simultaneously with the decision that prohibited him from entering the Russian Federation for a period of five years). The prosecutorial claims were based on the facts that the Mejlis conducted rallies without permits, announced the beginning of the "*procedures to rebuild the national-territorial autonomy*" of the Crimean Tatars immediately after the annexation of Crimea to Russia, and chose to "*prohibit the Crimean Tatars to participate in the elections on September 14th.*" Notably, neither rallies, nor calls for rebuilding autonomy nor calls for boycotting elections constitute signs of extremist activity; they are not even illegal.

The fight against pro-Ukrainian rhetoric still has not completely distracted the police from their usual targets of prosecution on charges of inciting hatred or calls for extremist activities. Note that the overall number of convictions for propaganda (both appropriate and inappropriate) continues to grow from year to year. In 2014, it, once again, significantly exceeded the number of sentences for all other "extremist" crimes combined. In addition to wrongful convictions, which are the focus of this report, there were at least 153 guilty verdicts against 158 offenders (and one man released due to active repentance). For comparison, there were 133 such sentences against 136 people in 2013.

Below are some examples of inappropriate prosecution for propaganda, unrelated to the Ukrainian events. In some cases, the charges under Article 282 were entirely fictitious, in others the nationalist rhetoric was present but not dangerous.

A criminal case under Article 282 Part 1 was opened against environmentalist Valery Brinikh, the chairman of Republic of Adygeya Division of All-Russia Environmental Protection Association, for publishing on *Za Krasnodar* (For Krasnodar) website an article about environmental pollution produced by a major pig farm in Adygea. The Prosecutor's Office found that the author of the article was "fueling ethnic hatred and sowing enmity" and "calling for extremist activity." The text has been recognized as extremist, and challenges against the ban were unsuccessful. However, we found no signs of inciting hatred and no calls for extremist activity in the article. Obviously, the local authorities used Brinikh's article as an excuse to put pressure on the activist, because the pig farm, discussed in the article, belongs to member of the RF Federation Council Vyacheslav Derev.



Eduard Mochalov, the Editor-in-Chief of the *Vziatka* (Bribe) newspaper in the Chuvash Republic, was found guilty under the Criminal Code Article 282 Part 1 (incitement of hatred or hostility, and humiliation of human dignity on the basis of nationality) and Article 315 Part 1 (failure to comply with a verdict, judgment or other judicial act) and sentenced to 400 hours of mandatory labor. Besides failure to obey the court (consisting of failing to publish in his newspaper the refutations of information “discrediting honor and dignity of individual officials”), Mochalov was also charged under Article 282 for reprinting Fauziya Bayramova’s article “We are Tatars, not Russians”<sup>6</sup>. Bayramova was charged under the same Article 282 Part 1 for distributing via a social network the Milli Mejlis statement of her own authorship, which called for boycotting the Universiade and actions against persecution of Muslims in Tatarstan (Bayramova was already sentenced in 2014 under the same Article 282 for her other texts – see above.) We found no inflammatory slogans against members of another ethnicity or religion in this text. The statement contained sharp criticism of the authorities and the high clergy of Tatarstan, as well as the Russian security services, whom Bayramova accused of an assassination attempt against Mufti Ildus Faizov and murder of his deputy Waliullah Yakupov, committed in order to justify new persecution of Muslims. None of this qualifies to be considered under Article 282.

Vasily Purdenko, the editor of the blog *Svobodnoe Slovo Adygei* (Free Speech of Adygea) was sentenced to a fine of 100 thousand rubles under Article 282 Part 1. In our opinion, the article “Being a Russian in Adygea is Possible, but Hopeless” for which Purdenko has been convicted and which was banned for extremism, was clearly written from the nationalist perspective and criticized local authorities for their “anti-Russian” policies, but the material contained no signs of incitement to hatred or enmity towards the Adyghe people and no dangerous incitement deserving of criminal prosecution.

We should also mention a widely discussed story about the ban against an old joke. A joke, known as “A trial. The case about beating up a native of the Caucasus...” has been known in a different version since the 1940s. While it could be perceived as xenophobic, it contains no dangerous incitement to violence, and, in general, can hardly be considered hate speech. Nevertheless, along with other materials, it served as the basis for a criminal case under Part 1 of Article 282. It was banned and added to the Federal List of Extremist Materials.

<sup>6</sup> Earlier, *Vziatka*’s author Ilie Ivanov was also prosecuted, his article was banned as an extremist, and the newspaper received the Roskomnadzor warning.

Several cases on charges of incitement to hatred against a particular social group were opened in 2014, but we don’t know the details in a number of cases. We believe that an extremely vague concept of a social group should be excluded from the anti-extremist criminal code articles in order to prevent imminent abuses.

One such case went to trial in Ingushetia in 2014. Opposition activist Musa Abadiyev faced charges under the Criminal Code Article 282 Part 1 based on a blog post, in which he allegedly made “*indecorous statements aimed at inciting hatred and enmity towards a particular social group.*” The original case was opened under Article 319 (insulting a representative of authority in connection with performance of his duties), then re-qualified as Article 282. The text in question contained somewhat intolerantly formulated criticism of Russian “patriotic” morality, suggestions to the Russian people to convert to Islam, and invectives against Vladimir Putin. Meanwhile, the authorities are not a social group that needs protection in the form of anti-extremist legislation, and criticism of their actions should not be seen as inciting hatred.

The Smolensk Regional Court reconsidered the case of Smolensk City Council member Andrei Yershov, who insulted former juvenile prisoners of Nazi camps and was found guilty of humiliation on grounds of belonging to a particular social group under Part 1 of Article 282. This time, the Regional Court upheld the City Court’s verdict against Yershov but rescinded the fine due to the statute of limitations. However, Yershov will have to pay two plaintiffs in his civil case ten thousand rubles for causing them moral damage. We believe that monetary compensation in this case was more than appropriate, despite the insignificance of the amount. In general, we believe that civil proceedings are much more appropriate than criminal in such cases.

## Religious Groups

Inappropriate persecution of believers and non-believers just for their statements and actions related to religion continued in 2014. Overall trends of this persecution remained the same, although increased severity of official responses in relation to statements against the Russian Orthodox Church might be worthy of attention.

As usual, the activities of the religious-political party Hizb ut-Tahrir al-Islami, banned as terrorist in 2003, were punished most severely. As usual, we remind that we view this decision as inappropriate, since Hizb ut-Tahrir does not practice violence and does not consider it a method in their struggle to build

the worldwide caliphate. On the other hand, Hizb ut-Tahrir could, in principle, be appropriately banned for other reasons<sup>7</sup>.

Due to increasing severity of anti-terrorism legislation, the sentences of four Hizb ut-Tahrir followers in Moscow - under the Criminal Code Article 282<sup>2</sup>, Article 30 Part 1, Article 278 (preparation for the violent seizure of power), and Article 205<sup>1</sup> Part 1 (engaging a person in terrorist activities) – was unusually harsh. One of the offenders was sentenced to eleven years in prison, two others – to eight years, and the fourth one was sentenced for seven years – all this, despite the absence of any evidence of their plotting a coup or other violent actions. Three new criminal cases against Hizb ut-Tahrir members were inappropriately initiated under a new Article 205<sup>5</sup> (public calls for terrorist activity or justification of terrorism) against five people in Bashkiria and six more in St. Petersburg; the charge is based only on the fact of their involvement in the party.

Note also the verdict against three Hizb ut-Tahrir followers issued in Tatarstan under Articles 282<sup>2</sup> and 282. The offenders were sentenced to imprisonment for terms of three and a half to six and a half years. They were charged with distribution of the leaflets and organizing motor races under the party flags. We are not familiar with the content of the leaflets, but the demonstration of flags with the Shahada “There is no god but Allah, and Mohammed is the Messenger of Allah” does not, in itself, constitute grounds for any criminal prosecution, even if the flag in question is a party flag. The severity of punishment in this case related to allegations of continuing the activities of a banned organization, but we view it as clearly excessive.

The Federal List of Extremist Materials added 10 positions containing Hizb ut-Tahrir materials in the course of the year. It is evident that law enforcement

<sup>7</sup> In most cases, we do not classify cases under Article 282<sup>2</sup> against Hizb ut-Tahrir supporters as inappropriate. Our position is based in particular on the ECHR decision regarding the activity of Hizb ut-Tahrir, rendered as a supplement to the decision on the complaint by the two convicted members of the organization against the actions of the Russian authorities. The ECHR said that, although neither the doctrine nor the practice of Hizb ut-Tahrir suggests a terrorist party, and it does not directly call for violence, banning it as an extremist organization could be justified, because it allows calls to overthrow the existing political system and establish a dictatorship based on Shari'a; it is characterized by anti-Semitism and radical anti-Israeli propaganda (for that, among other things, Hizb ut-Tahrir has been banned in Germany in 2003), as well as its definitive rejection of democracy and political freedoms and recognizing as legitimate the use of force against countries that the party views as aggressors against the “land of Islam”. The objectives of Hizb ut-Tahrir run clearly contrary to the values of the European Convention on Human Rights, including the commitment to the peaceful resolution of international conflicts and the sanctity of human life, recognition of civil and political rights, and democracy. Activities, undertaken for such purposes, are not protected by the European Convention on Human Rights.

agencies recognize these materials as extremist without ever considering them on the merits or determining the extent of their danger, but simply because they are related to a banned organization.

Courts in Republics of Khakassia and Altai delivered three verdicts in 2014 in connection with activities of the Tablighi Jamaat movement. This religious movement has been banned in Russia as extremist despite the fact that it engages only in promoting Islamic religious practices, and not known for any incitement to violence.

Serzhan Svatov, the Imam of the Kosh-Agachsky District in Republic of Altai, was found guilty of disseminating Tablighi Jamaat ideology among local residents and sentenced under Article 282<sup>2</sup> Part 1 to a fine of 100 thousand rubles and a two-year ban on conducting religious activities. The sentence was upheld by the Supreme Court of the Republic of Altai.

Parents of two teenagers from the village of Kosh-Agach faced responsibility under the Administrative Code Article 5.35 Part 1 (failure to carry out, or improper carrying out, by parents or other legal representatives of minors of their obligations regarding maintenance, or upbringing, or training, of minors, as well as the protection of the rights and interests thereof), because their children were studying in a madrassah in Kyrgyzstan, in which, according to the prosecutors, the education is based on Tablighi Jamaat. They were punished with a warning about the

A Sayanogorsk (Khakassia) resident was convicted under Part 2 of the Criminal Code Article 282<sup>2</sup> for participating in the activities of a Tablighi Jamaat “cell,” which had been allegedly using his apartment as a meeting place. He also read excerpts from banned Islamic books out loud during these meetings. A Magistrate’s Court sentenced him to a fine.

Tatarstan prosecutors issued warnings to the imam khatib of the Sababash village mosque and to six local residents. Warnings were issued in connection with the fact that a group of Tablighi Jamaat support went house to house inviting residents to the sermons.

Five sentences under Article 282<sup>2</sup> were issued against the believers who studied the works of Turkish Sufi theologian Said Nursi, whose works, in our opinion, were banned for no valid reason. Remember that Russian law enforcement agencies persecute Muslims who read Nursi’s books for their alleged membership in the Nurcular organization<sup>8</sup>, banned in Russia despite the fact that its activity or even existence has never been proven.

<sup>8</sup> See: The Supreme Court banned Nurcular as an extremist organization // SOVA Center. 2008. 10 April (<http://www.sova-center.ru/misuse/news/persecution/2008/04/d13081/>).

The Magistrate's Court in Perm sentenced six Nursi followers to fines ranging from 30 to 100 thousand rubles for continuing the activities of Nurcular religious association; one more person received a suspended sentence of one year imprisonment. The prosecution against the believers was based on the fact that a large quantity of religious literature had been found in their possession. Three Muslims faced the fines ranging from 50 to 100 thousand rubles in two criminal cases in Naberezhnye Chelny; they were accused of organizing home madrassas (for men and for women) in order to study Nursi's books<sup>9</sup>. A Rostov-on-Don resident was fined 130 thousand rubles - he was also charged with organizing a group for studying the works of the Turkish theologian at home.

A case under Part 1 of Article 282<sup>2</sup>, against a local resident on charges of organizing distribution of Nursi's works was closed in Kaliningrad in early 2014 due to the statute of limitations. Meanwhile, four residents of Ulyanovsk were newly charged with organizing home madrassas and promoting Nursi's books.

Imams Ilkhom Merazhov and Camil Odilov convicted in 2013 in Novosibirsk filed complaints with the Supreme Court and the European Court of Human Rights against their criminal conviction under Article 282<sup>2</sup>. The defenders believe that this verdict, based only on the fact that they collectively studied Nursi's books, contradicted a number of articles of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, including the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, the right to express an opinion, and the right to the freedom of assembly and association.

In 2014, the Federal List of Extremist Materials added two items, which contained eight inappropriately banned books by Nursi. In addition, the ban was imposed against *nurru.com*, the biggest Russian-language site devoted to the legacy of Said Nursi.

In addition to the cases, described above, a number of new criminal cases were inappropriately initiated against Muslims on charges of inciting hatred.

A Vladivostok resident was sentenced to one year and eight months probation under Part 1 of the Criminal Code Article 282 for publishing materials inciting hatred on the social network. We know only one of these materials, the video "Queen of Islam" – a sermon on the duties of Muslim women to wear the hijab and dress appropriately – found by the expertise to contain "*contraposition on religious grounds.*" Condemnation of Western women, who prefer more

<sup>9</sup> A claim for recognizing as extremist 18 books, confiscated from a convicted Naberezhnye Chelny resident, was filed as well; however, the books were destroyed in accordance with the verdict in the criminal case, so the court was unable to review the claim for their ban.

revealing clothing, can not be interpreted as incitement to hatred that merits prosecution. Thus, the verdict is at least partially inappropriate.

A resident of Pervouralsk in the Sverdlovsk Region was prosecuted under Article 282 Part 1 for using strong language on her social network page when criticizing Muslims who celebrate New Year and comparing this holiday to a pagan ritual. The court proceedings started in late 2014.

A penal colony inmate in Nizhny Tagil (the Sverdlovsk Region) was charged under the same article for "*speaking on religious subjects in a rude manner*" and asserting the superiority of one religion over another, while being in a common room, where prisoners watch television and socialize. In our view, the verdict against the inmate under Article 282 was inappropriate, since his insulting remarks weren't made in public - he spoke in one room, addressing a small group - while this Criminal Code article covers only public actions. We also would like to reiterate our opinion that asserting the superiority of one religion over another does not comprise a reason for prosecution.

The vast majority of inappropriate convictions (30 out of 46 known verdicts), issued in 2014 under the Administrative Code Article 20.29 for mass dissemination of extremist materials or possession with intent to distribute, were delivered for distribution of religious literature, especially Muslim (29 of 46). Law enforcement agencies especially zealously fought the distribution of books *Krepost Musulmanina* (The Muslim's Fortress) and *Sady Pravednykh* (Gardens of the Righteous) - a collection of prayers for every day, and a XIII century treatise respectively. These cases took place at the time, when the decision to ban these books, issued in 2013 in Orenburg, was already under review - it was abolished by the Orenburg Regional Court in February 2015<sup>10</sup>.

It is worth noting that after the annexation of Crimea, the peninsula's Muslims found themselves in a difficult situation due to their lack of familiarity with the phenomenon of the Federal List of Extremist Materials. The new Crimean authorities started with extensive searches and seizures of banned literature from Crimean Tatars, but then changed their mind and issued a three-month moratorium (starting in mid-October) on seizing extremist materials, so that the Crimean residents had time to familiarize themselves with the Russian legislation and get rid of the incriminating literature. However, a number of Crimean residents have already been fined under Article 20.29 of the Administrative Code.

In 2014, prosecutors repeatedly issued warnings and cautions addressed to individual Muslims or entire communities. A Muslim religious organization

<sup>10</sup> Unfortunately *Krepost Musulmanina* remains on the Federal List of Extremist Materials despite the repeal of the Orenburg Court decision - the Ussuriysky District Court of the Primorsky Region also recognized it as extremist in June 2014.

in the Borovsky village in the Tyumen Region was eliminated as extremist. The community was destroyed due to the fact that prohibited literature (three books two of which we view as obviously inappropriately banned, and the ban of the third is rather doubtful) was found in the mosque twice - before and after it received a warning about the impermissibility of extremist activity.

The trial of the sixteen Jehovah's Witnesses in Taganrog began in 2013. In 2009, the local community has been banned as an extremist; the case was initiated in 2011 under Parts 1 and 2 of Article 282<sup>2</sup> based on the fact of continuation of its activities and also under part 4 of Article 150 (involvement of a minor in a criminal group). The verdict was issued in the summer of 2014 with seven defendants convicted and nine acquitted. Four offenders were given suspended sentences to loss of liberty for up to five and a half years and fines of 100 thousand rubles with exemption from payment due to the statute of limitation, and three more - to fines ranging from 50 to 60 thousand rubles, also with exemption from payment. However, both sides were dissatisfied with the verdict, and, in the end, this decision was reversed by the Rostov Regional Court and returned for a new trial in the Taganrog City Court.

Seven Jehovah's Witnesses were fined in 2014 under the Administrative Code Article 20.29 for distributing banned pamphlets of their religious organization.

Sanctions against the leader of the Jehovah's Witnesses community in Samara, fined for distributing banned brochures, served as the grounds for banning the Samara organization as extremist and for its elimination, since the community previously (in 2013) received a warning about the impermissibility of extremist activity. This decision was issued by the Samara Regional Court in June and confirmed by the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation in November.

Jehovah's Witnesses in Ussuriysk (the Primorye Territory) and Birobidzhan (the Jewish Autonomous Region) were warned about the impermissibility of extremist activity.

The Supreme Court of the Russian Federation recognized the official site of Jehovah's Witnesses *hw.org* (see above) as extremist in late 2014.

Four brochures - "What Can People Hope For?," "How to Develop a Close Relationship with God," "What Do You Need to Know about God and His Purpose?" and "How to Achieve Happiness in Life?" - were banned in 2014 in Barnaul (the Altai Territory) and in Kurgan; furthermore, the decision of the Kurgan City Court was upheld by the Regional Court.

While identical in content, both verdicts were reflected in two separate items of the Federal List of Extremist Materials, which, in 2014, added five entries that included nine Jehovah's Witnesses booklets.

Anti-Christian statements by social activists also received their share of law enforcement attention in 2014.

A criminal case under Article 282 was opened in the Krasnodar Territory against an activist from Armavir, known under his online pseudonym Sergei Sergeyev. He was indeed known to make rude statements against the Russians, the Cossacks and Christians, but his texts contained no calls to illegal activities. Sergei Sergeyev believes that the authorities' attention was, in fact, caused by his social activism: support for the idea of boycotting the Sochi Olympics, standing for the LGBT equality, participation in environmentalist protests on the Black Sea coast, and opposition against local nationalist organizations.

A criminal case under Part 1 of Article 282 began in Izhevsk for publication, on a social network page, of "*the image of Jesus Christ (on the cross), against whom a group of people is committing acts of rape*" (recognized as an extremist material insulting to the dignity of believers in January 2014) and anti-Christian comments related to it. Unfortunately, we do not know the content of the comments and the degree of their aggressiveness, but it was reported that the picture was accompanied by an inscription with obscenities. We have reservations against prohibiting the image and against initiation of criminal proceedings. We oppose the criminalization of insult to dignity as such. Similarly, we view as inappropriate the criminalization of insults against religious feelings, in particular through images regardless of the extent of their rudeness.

In late 2014, the Supreme Court of the Republic of Karelia decided to eliminate the Youth Human Rights Group of Karelia (*Molodezhnaya Pravoazhchitnaya Gruppy Karelii*, MGP of Karelia) due to the fact that Maksim Yefimov was listed as its founder; Yefimov was included on the Rosfinmonitoring List (list of organizations and individuals involved in terrorist or extremist activities maintained by the Federal Financial Monitoring Service) as a suspect in the case of incitement to religious hatred, opened in 2011. (Yefimov left Russia, and the court in Russia still has not considered his case). According to Article 19 of the Law on Public Associations, the person included on the Rosfinmonitoring List can not serve as a founder of a public association. From our point of view, the case against Yefimov was initiated without adequate justification, since his anti-clerical post, which served as the grounds for prosecution, contained no dangerous calls. However, this is not the only reason why we view the elimination of MGP Karelia as inappropriate. Since Yefimov is only a suspect, his guilt has not been proven, so the option to forcibly disbanding the organization appears to be an anti-constitutional norm that can be challenged in the Constitutional Court.

In Oryol, the case for recognizing as extremist four items on a popular local website *orlec.ru* has been dropped. The case was initiated by a collective appeal from

“the Orthodox community” to the Oryol FSB Department demanding that some materials on the site be “checked for the offense under the Criminal Code Article 282.” The experts, ordered by the FSB, concluded that “the submissions contain hostile and/or derogatory statements directed against individuals that belong to a particular religious group, namely those of the Orthodox faith.” The experts (faculty members of the Oryol State University) ended up citing unrecognized quotes from the *Tale of Bygone Years (Povest Vremennykh Let)* and a text by Protodeacon Andrey Kuraev as evidence of insulting character of the materials. Another expert opinion, ordered by the court, found no signs of extremism in the *orlec.ru* materials.

We would like to note separately that no cases that we could qualify as inappropriate were opened under the Criminal Code Article 148 Part 1 (which stipulates the penalties for insulting the feelings of believers) in 2014 or in 2013. The four cases under this article were opened in 2014; all of them involved protecting the feelings of the Orthodox Christians: the arson against churches, desecration of a church, cursing and fights in a church, felling crosses.

However, in early 2015, the authorities became concerned with protecting the feelings of Muslims and made a series of warnings to the media for republication of Charlie Hebdo cartoons, in the wake of the attack against the magazine’s editors. However, when explaining its actions, Roskomnadzor cited the law on combating extremism rather than the Criminal Code Article 148. Perhaps, the fear of possible radical Muslim protests explains this reaction of the authorities

### Incidental Victims of Inappropriate Anti-Extremism

As in previous years, people and organizations that are clearly not related to any radical activity still become victims of inappropriate enforcement of anti-extremist legislation.

In 2014, prosecutors continued to impose sanctions against libraries that arise from the contradiction between the law “On Librarianship,” requiring them to provide unfettered reader access to collections, and anti-extremist legislation forbidding mass distribution of prohibited materials, continued to grow in 2013.

As you may remember, prosecutors charge libraries with a variety of offences from presence of banned materials (usually books) in their collections (despite the fact that libraries have no legal ground for de-accessioning these materials) to the text of libraries’ bylaws that fail to mention the ban on the dissemination of extremist materials<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> A detailed list of possible charges can be found in our report, A. Verkhovsky, Inappropriate Enforcement of Anti-Extremist Legislation in Russia in 2011 // V. Alperovich, A. Verkhovsky, O. Sibireva, and N. Yudina, *Xenophobia, Freedom of Conscience and Anti-Extremism in Russia in 2011* // Moscow: SOVA Center, 2012.

According to our admittedly incomplete data<sup>12</sup>, in the period from mid-2008 through the end of 2010, at least 170 cases of inappropriate sanctions against library administrators (including school libraries) were recorded; there were at least 138 such cases in 2011, at least 300 in 2012, and at least 417 in 2013. We now know of 297 such cases in 2014, and this inspires cautious optimism.

As a rule, the penalties are limited to disciplinary actions; however, occasionally, the library personnel also face administrative sanctions. At least three librarians were fined in 2014 under the Administrative Code Article 20.29 for possession of extremist materials with intent of mass distribution. They were, de facto, punished for performing their professional duties.

For example, in the recently acquired Crimea, the director of the Feodosia central library system faced the fine of two thousand rubles in December under the Administrative Code Article 20.29, because 12 copies of the book “*The Genocide of Ukrainians. Series: Holodomor of 1932-1933*” by Vasyl Marochko were discovered in the library collection (the book has been banned, in our opinion, inappropriately). The director explained in court, that she learned that this book is forbidden in the Russian Federation (unlike in Ukraine) in September 2014, and the libraries did not have time to remove the books from open access. However, the court agreed with the arguments of the prosecutors and found the librarian guilty of an administrative offense.

Some cases of bringing citizens to responsibility specifically under anti-extremist legislation we can only explain by desire of law enforcement agencies to improve their report statistics in the area of combating extremism. This category includes, among other things, warnings about the impermissibility of violating the law on extremism issued to organizers of mass events and public meetings, regardless of whether participants in these events are prone to extremist outbursts or unlikely to manifest them. For example, a local resident, who publicly opposed the shutdown of the city infectious hospital in Aktarsk (the Saratov Region), received a warning about the impermissibility of extremist activity. She “*simply invited other moms to come to the meeting with representatives of the media and talk about the situation*” via *Odnoklassniki* social network. She also claimed that her friend, who informed the others about the arrival of mass media, received a similar warning.

<sup>12</sup> We are sure that we never find out about the majority of sanctions imposed. Often, we know about the series of inspections, which was conducted and resulted in sanctions, but the number of warnings and other acts of prosecutorial response is not always reported. In such cases, we counted the entire series as a single instance.

In 2014, we recorded seven cases of sanctions for displaying Nazi or extremist symbols that were clearly not intended as dangerous propaganda. Those fined under the Administrative Code Article 20.3 (propaganda and public demonstration of Nazi paraphernalia or symbols) in the past year include activists, who used Nazi symbols as an artistic device to denounce their opponents, antique dealers, and booksellers. In particular, the Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk Prosecutor's Office initiated administrative proceedings against the owner of a bookstore that was selling a historical study *Soldaty Vermakhta*. The Prosecutor's Office found Nazi symbols on the book's cover. The cover of the book in question, known in English as *Soldaten: On Fighting, Killing, and Dying, The Secret WWII Transcripts of German POWS* by German historians Sonke Neitzel and Harald Welzer, indeed includes a small contour image of the Wehrmacht eagle; placement of this image is completely justified by the book's content. In addition, the swastika in the eagle's talons is partially covered by the large printed names of the authors. This document-based research volume debunks the myth of the Wehrmacht's non-involvement in the Nazi crimes committed during the Second World War; thus, it is obviously not intended to promote Nazism.

## A Bit of Statistics

According to our data, 21 verdicts to 45 persons were delivered in 2014 for violent hate-motivated crimes; 153 sentence to 158 persons were issued for the real hate propaganda (here, as always, we need to clarify that in some cases we don't have enough information to evaluate the appropriateness of the verdict, and in a number of cases we can conclude that the statements in question were xenophobic, but the extent of their public danger was clearly insignificant); 4 sentences to six people were delivered for ideologically-motivated vandalism<sup>13</sup>. The number of people, whose verdicts were definitely inappropriate, is much smaller<sup>14</sup>.

We view 5 verdicts to 7 people, handed down in 2014 under Article 282 as inappropriate (in our comparable 2013 report we wrote about 6 verdicts to 6 people). They include the sentences to editor of the "Free Speech Adygea" blog Vasily Purdenko for his nationalist article against Russian oppression in Adygea, to prominent Tatar nationalist Fauziya Bayramova for her articles about the

<sup>13</sup> For more details, see our simultaneously published report: V. Alperovich, N. Yudina. *Calm before the Storm? Xenophobia and Radical Nationalism and Efforts to Counteract Them in Russia in 2014*.

<sup>14</sup> It should be noted that, when speaking about appropriate and inappropriate court decisions, we view them only on their merits, not considering the issue of possible procedural violations.

events in the Crimea and Ukraine, to the Editor-in-Chief of the *Vziatka* (Bribe) newspaper Eduard Mochalov for reprinting Fauziya Bayramova's article on the importance of maintaining the Tatar national identity, and a partially unlawful verdict to a Vladivostok resident for publishing on social network (among other materials) a harmless video addressed to Muslim women, as well as the verdicts to Hizb ut-Tahrir followers Azat Khasanov, Ildar Shaikhutdinov and Ilmir Imaev from Kazan for their auto-rally with the Shahada flags.

One case, opened in 2013 under Article 282 of the Criminal Code (for publishing on *orlec.ru* website a xenophobic material, which was promptly removed by the site administrators) was dropped in 2014.

However, about twenty new criminal cases that we consider inappropriate were opened under this Article in 2014, that is, about twice the number recorded for the preceding year.

It has to be noted separately that not a single case that we could qualify as inappropriate was initiated in 2014 or in 2013 under Part 1 of the Criminal Code Article 148, which stipulates punishment for insulting the feelings of believers.

No inappropriate verdicts were delivered in 2014 under the Criminal Code Article 280 (there were 2 such sentences in 2013), but 6 new cases were initiated without appropriate justification. For comparison, only one new case under this article was initiated in 2013.

One criminal case against three persons was opened in Krasnodar under the new Criminal Code Article 280<sup>1</sup> (public calls for actions aimed at violating the territorial integrity of Russia) for attempting to hold the March for Federalization of Kuban, not featuring any separatist slogans.

Once again, as in 2013, courts handed down no any unlawful sentences under the Criminal Code Article 282<sup>1</sup> and filed no new unjustified court cases utilizing this Article.

Eight inappropriate verdicts were delivered in 2014 under Article 282<sup>2</sup> of the Criminal Code, i.e. 2 more than in the preceding year. 22 people were convicted for organizing activity of organizations, recognized as extremist, or participation in them - twice the number recorded in 2013. Two sentences were delivered against seven believers in Perm, two others - against three Muslims in Naberezhnye Chelny, and one more - against a Rostov-on-Don resident, for studying the books of Said Nursi. Two verdicts against two people for organizing Tablighi Jamaat cells were issued by courts of Republics of Khakassia and Altai. In addition, nine Jehovah's Witnesses were convicted of continuing the activity

of their banned Taganrog community (in late 2014 the Rostov Regional Court returned the case to the Taganrog City Court for retrial). At least 2 new criminal cases were inappropriately opened under this article<sup>15</sup>.

The sentence of four Hizb ut-Tahrir followers from Moscow deserves to be mentioned separately. We consider it inappropriate in its part relating to the composition of the Criminal Code Article 30 Part 1, Article 278 and Article 205<sup>1</sup> Part 1. The defendants were sentenced to lengthy prison terms. One similar verdict was also issued in the preceding year.

Three new criminal cases were inappropriately opened in 2014 under anti-terrorist legislation – under new Article 205<sup>5</sup> against Hizb ut-Tahrir followers in Bashkortostan and St. Petersburg and under Article 205<sup>2</sup> in Barnaul against an activist of the Other Russia party.

No inappropriate sentences were issued in 2014 under the Criminal Code Article 213 (“Hooliganism”) and the Criminal Code Article 214 (“Vandalism”) taking into account the hate motive. For comparison, in 2013, one person was wrongfully convicted under Article 213, and there were no inappropriate convictions under Article 214. A single case, opened under Article 213 in 2013, has been closed. However, at least two new cases were initiated under Article 213 and at least two under Article 214 (one of them under the aggregation of both) including the hate motive, which, we believe, was absent in these cases.

Overall, 14 inappropriate sentences against 26 people were issued under the anti-extremist articles of the Criminal Code in 2014; the sentence against one of them was later repealed. Thus, the statistics is practically identical with our data from 2013 (15 verdicts against 25 persons). At the same time, we know of at least 35 new criminal cases initiated in this period without proper justification (vs. 20 new cases recorded in 2013).

The majority of convicted offenders were sentenced to fines, suspended sentences, or compulsory labor. The Hizb ut-Tahrir supporters convicted in Moscow and Tatarstan were the only ones to receive real and long prison terms.

Before turning to our data on the use of the Administrative Code to combat extremism, please keep in mind that our records here are much less complete than in criminal prosecution cases.

We know of at least 46 wrongful convictions for mass distribution of extremist materials or for possession with intent to distribute, i.e. under the Administra-

<sup>15</sup> In addition, 11 sentences under Article 282<sup>2</sup> of the Criminal Code (often in aggregation with other Criminal Code articles) were issued in 2014 against 23 Hizb ut-Tahrir followers, but we do not include them in our statistics of unlawful judicial decisions, since we view prosecution against members of this party for participation in an extremist organization as acceptable.

tive Code Article 20.29 (vs. at least 37 in 2013). Individuals and organizations, fined under this article, include sellers of Islamic literature, individual Muslims (including imams and even a mufti), Jehovah’s Witnesses, civic activists, bloggers, inmates, library staff and Internet service providers. As a rule, these people were not involved in actual mass distribution of banned materials.

Five individuals and legal entities – an owner of the computer club, two cafe owners, directors of a sanatorium and a secondary school – were inappropriately fined under the Administrative Code Article 6.17 (“Violation of legislation to protect of children from information harmful to their health and (or) development”) for poor quality of their content filtering. In 2013, four Internet service providers were fined under the same article.

The sanctions (fines or administrative detention) for public display of Nazi or similar symbols, that is, under the Administrative Code Article 20.3 were inappropriately imposed on 14 individuals and entities, compared to 8 in 2013; this number almost doubled.

The Federal List of Extremist Materials added 381 items in the course of 2014, i.e. significantly fewer than in 2013, when the list increased by 590 points. We view as definitely inappropriate the addition of 8 items containing a variety of Muslim material from works of Said Nursi to medieval treatises, of 5 items containing 13 Jehovah’s Witnesses booklets, and of 6 items, containing various religious or, conversely, atheistic materials, as well as an Ingush opposition website and one Ukrainian history book – a total of 21 items (vs. 58 clearly inappropriate additions to the List in 2013). In addition, 10 items represented Hizb ut-Tahrir materials, banned on the basis of their association with the banned party, regardless of their level of public danger. We would like to emphasize that we are not familiar with all materials on the List and cannot rule out the possibility that prohibition against some materials of unknown content was also unjustified.

## Appendix. Crime and punishment statistics

### Statistics of Racist and Neo-Nazi Attacks between 2004 – 2014(with categorization of regions)<sup>1</sup>

	2004			2005			2006			2007			2008		
	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>625</b>	<b>721</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>617</b>
<b>Including:</b>															
Moscow and Moscow Region*	18	62	80	16	179	195	40	228	268	45	183	228	49	196	245
St. Petersburg and Leningrad Region*	9	32	41	4	45	49	6	56	62	10	100	110	15	38	53
Altai Territory	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	3	1	1	2	0	0	0
Amur Region	0	2	2	0	7	7	0	1	1	0	0	0	4	0	4
Arkhangelsk Region	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	6	7	0	4	4
Astrakhan Region	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Belgorod Region	0	5	5	0	4	4	0	18	18	0	1	1	0	2	2
Bryansk Region	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	2	2	4	0	20	20
Chelyabinsk Region	1	4	5	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	13	13	1	6	7
Chita Region / Trans-Baikal Territory	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	3	3	0	0	0

<sup>1</sup> The data in our tables is true as of March 7, 2015

	2004			2005			2006			2007			2008		
	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims
Chuvash Republic	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	6	0	0	0	0	2	2
Irkutsk Region	3	0	3	2	5	7	0	8	8	1	34	35	0	0	0
Ivanovo Region	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	0	0	0
Jewish Autonomous Region	0	0	0	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kaliningrad Region	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	11	11	0	1	1	0	11	11
Kaluga Region	0	0	0	0	12	12	1	4	5	3	1	4	2	2	4
Kamchatka Territory	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Kemerovo Region	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Khabarovsk Territory	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	4
Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area – Yugra	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kirov Region	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3
Komi Republic	0	0	0	0	4	4	0	4	4	0	0	0	0	1	1
Kostroma Region	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	10	10	0	3	3	0	0	0
Krasnodar Territory	2	32	34	1	3	4	0	7	7	0	11	11	0	1	1
Krasnoyarsk Territory	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	3	3	0	4	4	0	0	0
Kurgan Region	0	0	0	0	6	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kursk Region	0	5	5	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	3	3



	2004			2005			2006			2007			2008		
	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims
Leningrad Region	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	4	1	8	9
Lipetsk Region	0	1	1	0	3	3	1	0	1	0	3	3	0	6	6
Moscow Region	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	62	68	10	30	40
Murmansk Region	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	8	8	0	0	0
Nizhny Novgorod Region	1	5	6	4	12	16	0	36	36	1	40	41	3	15	18
Novgorod Region	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	7	7
Novosibirsk Region	2	12	14	1	9	10	0	9	9	1	12	13	3	4	7
Omsk Region	0	3	3	0	0	0	1	3	4	2	1	3	0	3	3
Orel Region	0	8	8	0	0	0	0	9	9	0	0	0	0	1	1
Orenburg Region	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	1	2	0	0	0
Penza Region	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	12	13
Perm Territory	0	2	2	3	2	5	0	1	1	0	3	3	1	3	4
Primorye Territory	5	9	14	0	3	3	2	18	20	1	9	10	0	5	5
Pskov Region	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Republic of Adygeya	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Republic of Altai	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	5	0	0	0
Republic of Bashkortostan	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	1	1	0	5	5
Republic of Buryatia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0

	2004			2005			2006			2007			2008		
	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims
Republic of Karelia	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Republic of Khakassia	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0
Republic of Mari El	0	1	1	0	15	15	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0
Republic of Tatarstan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	8	0	1	1	0	25	25
Rostov Region	0	0	0	0	10	10	0	2	2	6	10	16	0	4	4
Ryazan Region	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	4	4	0	7	7	2	2	4
Sakhalin Region	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Samara Region	1	3	4	4	5	9	0	2	2	3	7	10	0	4	4
Saratov Region	1	0	1	0	0	0	4	4	8	2	4	6	0	0	0
Smolensk Region	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stavropol Territory	0	0	0	0	21	21	0	1	1	2	8	10	2	4	6
Sverdlovsk Region	1	7	8	6	6	12	0	6	6	2	16	18	7	14	21
Tambov Region	0	3	3	0	6	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Tomsk Region	0	3	3	0	6	6	0	4	4	0	5	5	0	0	0
Tula Region	1	0	1	0	3	3	1	2	3	0	0	0	1	3	4
Tver Region	0	0	0	2	0	2	2	7	9	0	4	4	1	4	5
Tyumen Region	3	1	4	1	0	1	0	15	15	0	1	1	5	0	5
Udmurtian Republic	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	6	7	1	5	6

	2004			2005			2006			2007			2008		
	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims
Ulyanovsk Region	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	8	9
Vladimir Region	0	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	6	6
Volgograd Region	0	2	2	0	1	1	2	9	11	1	5	6	0	3	3
Vologda Region	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	6	6	0	2	2
Voronezh Region	1	2	3	1	21	22	1	6	7	0	16	16	2	25	27
Yaroslavl Region	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	7	0	5	5	0	1	1

\* Up to the beginning of 2007 data on attacks committed in Moscow and the Moscow region and St. Petersburg and the Leningrad region had been summed up and from the beginning of 2007 they are considered separately.

The regions are arranged in alphabetic order, except Moscow and St. Petersburg - two major centers of racist violence. Victims of attacks in the North Caucasus and Crimea are not counted in this and the following tables; victims of mass brawls and homeless victims before 2007 were only counted where a hate motive has been attributed by law enforcement officials.

	2009			2010			2011			2012			2013		
	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims
<b>Total</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>537</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>226</b>
<b>Including:</b>															
Moscow	35	115	150	18	146	164	7	58	65	6	66	72	9	58	67
St. Petersburg	16	42	58	2	44	46	3	27	30	1	26	27	4	38	42
Altai Territory	0	1	1	1	5	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Amur Region	1	8	9	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Arkhangelsk Region	0	4	4	0	2	2	0	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Astrakhan Region	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	1	1
Belgorod Region	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bryansk Region	0	3	3	1	1	2	1	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chelyabinsk Region	1	7	8	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	8	8
Chuvash Republic	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Irkutsk Region	2	4	6	3	4	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ivanovo Region	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
Jewish Autonomous Region	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kaliningrad Region	2	5	7	1	0	1	0	4	4	0	1	1	0	2	2
Kaluga Region	2	3	5	0	4	4	1	17	18	0	1	1	0	1	1
Kamchatka Territory	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1

	2009			2010			2011			2012			2013		
	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims
Kemerovo Region	1	2	3	1	3	4	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	0	0
Khabarovsk Territory	0	0	0	1	10	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area – Yugra	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	3	3
Kirov Region	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	5	5	0	1	1
Komi Republic	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	6	6	0	4	4
Kostroma Region	0	1	1	0	3	3	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
Krasnodar Territory	0	9	9	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	4	4	0	7	7
Krasnoyarsk Territory	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	2	2	2	0	2	0	0	0
Kurgan Region	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kursk Region	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leningrad Region	3	4	7	0	7	7	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	0	0
Lipetsk Region	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	14	18
Moscow Region	7	40	47	2	36	38	5	15	20	2	29	31	0	11	11
Murmansk Region	0	5	5	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nizhny Novgorod Region	6	31	37	5	21	26	0	6	6	0	2	2	0	0	0
Novgorod Region	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Novosibirsk Region	1	11	12	0	2	2	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	6	7

	2009			2010			2011			2012			2013		
	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims
Omsk Region	0	4	4	2	1	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	4
Orel Region	0	11	11	1	6	7	0	3	3	0	1	1	0	0	0
Orenburg Region	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Penza Region	0	8	8	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Perm Territory	0	0	0	0	5	5	2	1	3	0	0	0	0	3	3
Primorye Territory	2	13	15	1	2	3	0	4	4	4	2	6	0	0	0
Pskov Region	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Republic of Adygeya	0	8	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Republic of Bashkortostan	0	1	1	0	7	7	0	1	1	0	20	20	0	0	0
Republic of Buryatia	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	1	0	1
Republic of Karelia	0	6	6	0	4	4	0	2	2	0	1	1	0	3	3
Republic of Khakassia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Republic of Mari El	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Republic of Mordovia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Republic of Tatarstan	0	4	4	0	8	8	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	0	0
Rostov Region	0	2	2	0	9	9	0	3	3	1	3	4	0	2	2
Ryazan Region	2	7	9	1	2	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	3

	2009			2010			2011			2012			2013		
	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims
Sakhalin Region	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Samara Region	3	5	8	0	13	13	2	1	3	2	4	6	0	4	4
Saratov Region	0	0	0	0	6	6	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Smolensk Region	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	1
Stavropol Territory	2	11	13	1	5	6	2	2	4	0	3	3	0	1	1
Sverdlovsk Region	1	20	21	0	7	7	0	2	2	1	1	2	2	4	6
Tambov Region	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Tomsk Region	0	0	0	1	10	11	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trans-Baikal Territory	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Tula Region	1	1	2	0	1	1	0	3	3	1	2	3	0	0	0
Tver Region	0	0	0	0	4	4	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	2
Tyumen Region	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Udmurtian Republic	0	1	1	0	5	5	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ulyanovsk Region	1	0	1	0	4	4	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vladimir Region	0	10	10	0	2	2	0	3	3	0	2	2	0	6	6
Volgograd Region	0	4	4	1	5	6	0	0	0	0	4	4	1	1	2
Vologda Region	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	1	1	0	2	2

	2009			2010			2011			2012			2013		
	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims
Voronezh Region	0	5	5	0	3	3	0	7	7	0	3	3	0	6	6
Yaroslavl Region	3	6	9	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

2014										
	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims							
				Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims				
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>150</b>		-	-	-			
<b>Including:</b>				<b>Including:</b>						
Moscow	13	42	55	Orenburg Region	0	1	1			
St. Petersburg	3	10	13	Penza Region	0	0	0			
Altai Territory	0	0	0	Perm Territory	1	5	6			
Amur Region	0	0	0	Primorye Territory	0	0	0			
Arkhangelsk Region	1	0	1	Pskov Region	0	0	0			
Astrakhan Region	0	1	1	Republic of Adygeya	0	0	0			
Belgorod Region	0	0	0	Republic of Bashkortostan	0	0	0			

2014							
	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims		Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims
Bryansk Region	0	0	0	Republic of Buryatia	0	0	0
Chelyabinsk Region	0	0	0	Republic of Karelia	0	3	3
Chuvash Republic	0	0	0	Republic of Khakassia	0	0	0
Irkutsk Region	1	3	4	Republic of Mari El	0	0	0
Ivanovo Region	0	0	0	Republic of Mordovia	0	0	0
Jewish Autonomous Region	0	1	1	Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)	0	0	0
Kaliningrad Region	0	0	0	Republic of Tatarstan	0	1	1
Kaluga Region	2	1	3	Rostov Region	0	1	1
Kamchatka Territory	0	0	0	Ryazan Region	0	3	3
Kemerovo Region	0	0	0	Sakhalin Region	2	6	8
Khabarovsk Territory	0	0	0	Samara Region	0	0	0
Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area – Yugra	0	0	0	Saratov Region	0	0	0
Kirov Region	0	0	0	Smolensk Region	0	0	0
Komi Republic	0	0	0	Stavropol Territory	0	0	0
Kostroma Region	0	1	1	Sverdlovsk Region	0	3	3
Krasnodar Territory	1	10	11	Tambov Region	0	0	0

2014							
	Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims		Killed	Beaten, wounded	Total victims
Krasnoyarsk Territory	0	0	0	Tomsk Region	0	1	1
Kurgan Region	0	0	0	Trans-Baikal Territory	0	0	0
Kursk Region	0	0	0	Tula Region	0	2	2
Leningrad Region	1	0	1	Tver Region	0	0	0
Lipetsk Region	0	0	0	Tyumen Region	0	0	0
Moscow Region	1	8	9	Udmurtian Republic	0	0	0
Murmansk Region	0	0	0	Ulyanovsk Region	0	0	0
Nizhny Novgorod Region	0	2	2	Vladimir Region	1	2	3
Novgorod Region	0	0	0	Volgograd Region	0	1	1
Novosibirsk Region	0	9	9	Vologda Region	0	0	0
Omsk Region	0	0	0	Voronezh Region	0	6	6
Orel Region	0	0	0	Yaroslavl Region	0	0	0

In general, the data for 2014 must be taken as preliminary for information often becomes available with considerable delay.

### Consolidates Statistics of Racist and Neo-Nazi Attacks in 2004 –2014 (with categorization of victims)

Year	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008		2009		2010		2011		2012		2013		2014	
	K	B	K	B	K	B	K	B	K	B	K	B	K	B	K	B	K	B	K	B	K	B
<b>K – killed, B – Beaten, wounded</b>																						
Total	50	219	49	419	66	522	96	625	116	501	94	443	44	421	26	211	20	196	23	203	27	123
Dark-skinned people	1	33	3	38	2	32	0	34	2	26	2	59	1	28	1	19	0	26	0	7	0	13
People from Central Asia	10	23	18	35	17	60	36	95	57	133	40	92	20	86	10	38	8	38	14	61	12	23
People from the Caucasus	15	38	12	52	15	72	29	77	22	71	18	78	5	45	7	19	4	15	3	27	3	14
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
From other countries of Asia	8	30	4	58	4	52	9	76	9	40	14	37	3	19	0	13	0	5	0	7	1	5
Other people of “non-Slav appearance”	2	22	3	72	4	69	9	67	13	57	9	62	7	104	1	25	1	15	0	31	2	8
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	15
Homeless	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	4	1	4	0	1	3	3	3	6	2	2	3	6	1
Ethnic Russians	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	22	3	12	0	7	1	8	1	9	0	5	0	3	0	5
Jews	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	9	0	6	0	3	0	3	1	2	0	0	0	2	0	1
Religious groups	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	9	0	6	1	2	0	22	0	24	0	10	0	21	2	12
LGBT	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	7	1	6	0	0	0	3	0	3	0	12	2	25	0	8
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

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 Crimea.

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. Beside 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.

Since 2010 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 – 1.

In general, the data for 2014 must be taken as preliminary for information often becomes available with considerable delay.

### Statistics of convictions for violent crimes with a recognized hate motive in 2004 – 2014<sup>1</sup>

	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2004</b>			
Moscow	4	11	Not known
St. Petersburg	2	10	4
Novgorod Region	1 <sup>2</sup>	1	0
Vladimir Region	1	1	1
Voronezh Region	1	3	0
<i>Total</i>	9	26	5
<b>2005</b>			
Moscow	2	4	0
St. Petersburg	2	10	4
Amur Region	1	4	0
Lipetsk Region	1	4	0
Moscow Region	4 <sup>3</sup>	14	0
Murmansk Region	1	2	1
Perm Territory	1	1	0
Primorye Territory	1	1	0
Sverdlovsk Region	1	3	0
Tambov Region	1	1	0
Tyumen Region	1	5	0
Volgograd Region	1	7	0
<i>Total</i>	17	56	5

<sup>1</sup> This table and the tables that follow include all court verdicts except for the cases where all accused parties were acquitted and the cases that were closed due to the offender's contrition.

The number of convictions reflects only the offenders who faced court-ordered penalties - not the ones who were referred for medical treatment or received no punishment due to the statute of limitations or other reasons.

<sup>2</sup> For threats to blow up a synagogue.

<sup>3</sup> Regretfully, we don't have an exact date for one murder conviction motivated by ethnic hatred, but we assume it was issued in 2005.

	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2006</b>			
Moscow	5	11	1
St. Petersburg	3	10	4
Altai Territory	1	1	1
Belgorod Region	1	11	1
Jewish Autonomous Region	1	3	0
Kaluga Region	1	2	0
Kostroma Region	2	7	5
Moscow Region	3	18	4
Nizhny Novgorod Region	4	6	Not known
Novosibirsk Region	1	Not known	Not known
Orel Region	2	6 <sup>4</sup>	2
Republic of Bashkortostan	1	3	3
Rostov Region	1	2	0
Sakhalin Region	1	1	0
Saratov Region	1	5	0
Sverdlovsk Region	3	8 <sup>5</sup>	0
Tomsk Region	1	3	0
Voronezh Region	1	13	7
<i>Total</i>	33	109 <sup>6</sup>	24
<b>2007</b>			
Moscow	4	11	0
St. Petersburg	2	11	3
Belgorod Region	1	2	0
Kaluga Region	1	3	2
Komi Republic	1	1	0

<sup>4</sup> At least. In one case we only know that the verdict has been delivered.

<sup>5</sup> Three of them were convicted of organizing an extremist community, and also for the murder, where the hate motive was not taken into account.

<sup>6</sup> At least.

	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2007</b>			
Krasnoyarsk Territory	1	2	1
Leningrad Region	1	1	0
Nizhny Novgorod Region	1	9	9
Omsk Region	1	1	0
Republic of North Ossetia - Alania	1	1	0
Stavropol Territory	2	2	0
Sverdlovsk Region	3	9	0
Tambov Region	1	1	0
Tyumen Region	1	6	2
Voronezh Region	1	4	0
Yaroslavl Region	1	1	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>65</i>	<i>18</i>
<b>2008</b>			
Moscow	7	40	4
St. Petersburg	4	9	2
Altai Territory	1	3 <sup>7</sup>	0
Arkhangelsk Region	1	1	1
Ivanovo Region	1	1	0
Kaluga Region	2	13	6
Kostroma Region	1	1	0
Krasnodar Territory	1	1	0
Lipetsk Region	1	1	1
Moscow Region	2	11	3
Nizhny Novgorod Region	1	2	2
Novgorod Region	1	2	0
Novosibirsk Region	1	1	0
Omsk Region	1	4	0
Penza Region	1	1	0

<sup>7</sup> Including one without the hate motive.

	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2008</b>			
Samara Region	1	1	1
Stavropol Territory	1	2	1
Sverdlovsk Region	3	10	0
Tambov Region	1	3	3
Vladimir Region	1	2	0
Yaroslavl Region	1	1	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>110</i>	<i>25</i>
<b>2009</b>			
Moscow	11	41	7
St. Petersburg	2	3	0
Altai Territory	1	7	2
Chelyabinsk Region	1	4	4
Chuvash Republic	2	9	0
Kaluga Region	3	8	3
Khabarovsk Territory	1	1	1
Kirov Region	1	2	0
Kostroma Region	1	1	0
Krasnoyarsk Territory	1	1	0
Kursk Region	1	2	0
Moscow Region	3 <sup>8</sup>	3	0
Nizhny Novgorod Region	5	12	5
Novgorod Region	2	5	0
Novosibirsk Region	3	4	3
Orenburg Region	1	2	0
Republic of Adygeya	1	1	1
Samara Region	1	6	6
Stavropol Territory	1	2	0

<sup>8</sup> The Moscow Regional Prosecutor's Office reported that in 2009 15 cases were examined in the region, 9 of which resulted in convictions against 13 people; 6 cases involving 7 people ended with reconciliation in court. We only know of three cases against four people that ended in guilty verdicts and of one case that ended with a reconciliation of the parties. We didn't include the other ones in our count that we don't know of.



	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2009</b>			
Sverdlovsk Region	1	1	0
Tambov Region	1	1	0
Tula Region	1	2	0
Tver Region	1	1	0
Udmurtian Republic	1	1	0
Vladimir Region	2	2	0
Voronezh Region	3	7	3
<i>Total</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>129</i>	<i>35</i>
<b>2010</b>			
Moscow	10	35	3
St. Petersburg	6	27	18
Amur Region	1	1	0
Bryansk Region	3	4	2
Chuvash Republic	1	2	0
Irkutsk Region	1	1	0
Kaliningrad Region	1	6	2
Kaluga Region	3	5	2
Khabarovsk Territory	1	2	0
Kirov Region	2	5	5
Kostroma Region	1	1	1
Krasnodar Territory	2	3	0
Moscow Region	7	15	8
Murmansk Region	2	7	3
Nizhny Novgorod Region	10	34	22
Novgorod Region	1	3	0
Penza Region	2	6	2
Primorye Territory	2	14	10
Republic of Adygeya	1	3	0
Republic of Bashkortostan	2	10	5
Republic of Karelia	2	8	1
Republic of Tatarstan	2	7	5
Rostov Region	1	1	1

	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2010</b>			
Ryazan Region	1	2	2
Samara Region	2	5	2
Saratov Region	1	1	0
Smolensk Region	1	0	1
Stavropol Territory	4	29	6
Sverdlovsk Region	3	9	0
Tver Region	3	16	2
Tyumen Region	1	14	3
Udmurtian Republic	1	2	0
Ulyanovsk Region	1	9	0
Vladimir Region	4	3	4
Volgograd Region	1	2	0
Voronezh Region	4	5	10
<i>Total</i>	<i>91</i>	<i>297</i>	<i>120</i>
<b>2011</b>			
Moscow	10	34	4
St. Petersburg	3	36	16
Altai Territory	1	3	0
Astrakhan Region	1	1	0
Bryansk Region	1	4	5
Chelyabinsk Region	1	1	0
Irkutsk Region	2	8	4
Kaliningrad Region	2	3	0
Kaluga Region	1	1	0
Kemerovo Region	2	2	0
Khabarovsk Territory	1	2	0
Kirov Region	2	3	0
Moscow Region	4	6	5
Nizhny Novgorod Region	5	17	4
Novosibirsk Region	2	2	1
Omsk Region	1	2	0
Orel Region	1	1	0
Republic of Altai	1	1	1

	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2011</b>			
Republic of Bashkortostan	1	1	1
Republic of Karelia	2	3	1
Republic of Tatarstan	3	11	4
Ryazan Region	1	7	1
Samara Region	1	2	2
Sverdlovsk Region	1	3	5
Tomsk Region	1	7	2
Tula Region	3	3	0
Tver Region	1	1	1
Udmurtian Republic	1	2	2
Vladimir Region	1	4	3
Volgograd Region	1	1	0
Vologda Region	1	1	1
Voronezh Region	1	1	0
Yaroslavl Region	1	19	12
<i>Total</i>	<i>61</i>	<i>193</i>	<i>75</i>
<b>2012</b>			
Moscow	5	13	1
St. Petersburg	3	5	3
Bryansk Region	1	1	0
Irkutsk Region	2	3	0
Kaluga Region	1	3	1
Kirov Region	2	2	0
Komi Republic	1	1	1
Kostroma Region	1	2	0
Krasnodar Territory	1	1	0
Nizhny Novgorod Region	1	5	2
Omsk Region	1	1	0
Orel Region	1	11	2
Perm Territory	1	6	0
Republic of Altai	1	1	0
Republic of Buryatia	1	1	0

	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2012</b>			
Republic of North Ossetia - Alania	1	1	0
Smolensk Region	1	1	0
Stavropol Territory	1	1	1
Sverdlovsk Region	1	2	1
Trans-Baikal Territory	1	0	1
Vladimir Region	1	2	0
Volgograd Region	1	1	0
Voronezh Region	1	3	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>67</i>	<i>13</i>
<b>2013</b>			
Moscow	4	4	0
St. Petersburg	1	1	0
Altai Territory	1	2	1
Irkutsk Region	1	2	0
Kaluga Region	1	1	1
Khabarovsk Territory	1	1	0
Kirov Region	2	2	0
Kostroma Region	1	1	1
Moscow Region	1	3	2
Nizhny Novgorod Region	2	4	5
Omsk Region	1	1	0
Republic of Bashkortostan	1	1	1
Republic of Karelia	1	4	0
Republic of Tatarstan	1	2	0
Rostov Region	1	3	0
Samara Region	3	7	0
Stavropol Territory	2	3	2
Sverdlovsk Region	2	4	1
Tula Region	1	3	0
Ulyanovsk Region	1	3	1

	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2013</b>			
Vladimir Region	1	1	0
Vologda Region	1	1	0
Voronezh Region	1	1	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>16</i>
<b>2014</b>			
Moscow	3	5	0
St. Petersburg	1	9	1
Arkhangelsk Region	1	1	0
Ivanovo Region	1	2	0
Jewish Autonomous Region	1	1	0
Kaliningrad Region	1	1	0
Kostroma Region	1	1	0
Moscow Region	1	1	0
Murmansk Region	1	1	0
Novosibirsk Region	1	2	2
Orenburg Region	1	1	0
Perm Territory	1	2	0
Republic of Karelia	1	2	0
Rostov Region	1	6	0
Ryazan Region	1	3	3
Samara Region	1	1	1
Smolensk Region	1	2	0
Stavropol Territory	1	1	0
Vladimir Region	1	3	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>7</i>

### Statistics of convictions for hate propaganda (art. 282 of Criminal Code) that we do not rate as inappropriate in 2004 – 2014

	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2004</b>			
Novgorod Region	1	1	0
Novosibirsk Region	1	1	1
Udmurtian Republic	1	1	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>
<b>2005</b>			
Moscow	1	1	1
Kabardino-Balkarian Republic	1	1	1
Kemerovo Region	4	4	1
Khabarovsk Territory	1	1	0
Kirov Region	1	1	0
Komi Republic	1	1	1
Novgorod Region	1	3	0
Orel Region	1	2	2
Sverdlovsk Region	1	1	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>6</i>
<b>2006</b>			
Moscow	1	1	0
St. Petersburg	2	2	1
Astrakhan Region	1	1	0
Chelyabinsk Region	1	3	0
Kemerovo Region	2	2	2
Kirov Region	1	1	0
Komi Republic	1	1	0
Krasnodar Territory	1	1	0
Moscow Region	1	1	0
Novgorod Region	1	1	0
Samara Region	2	2	2

	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2007</b>			
Saratov Region	1	1	1
Sverdlovsk Region	1	1	0
Yaroslavl Region	1	2	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>7</i>
<b>2007</b>			
Moscow	1	1	1
Altai Territory	1	1	1
Amur Region	1	1	0
Chelyabinsk Region	1	1	0
Chuvash Republic	1	4	0
Kaliningrad Region	1	1	1
Kaluga Region	1	8	0
Kirov Region	1	1	0
Komi Republic	3	3	0
Krasnodar Territory	3	3	2
Kurgan Region	1	1	0
Novgorod Region	1	1	0
Novosibirsk Region	3	3	0
Republic of Altai	1	2	2
Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)	1	2	0
Ryazan Region	1	2	0
Samara Region	1	2	2
Stavropol Territory	1	1	1
Sverdlovsk Region	1	1	0
Ulyanovsk Region	1	1	1
Vladimir Region	1	1	0
Vologda Region	1	1	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>12</i>
<b>2008</b>			
Moscow	2	4	2
St. Petersburg	3	3	0
Altai Territory	1	1	0
Amur Region	2	4	2

	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2008</b>			
Astrakhan Region	2	4	0
Bryansk Region	1	1	0
Chelyabinsk Region	2	2	1
Kaliningrad Region	1	1	0
Kirov Region	1	1	0
Komi Republic	2	2	0
Krasnodar Territory	2	3	2
Kursk Region	1	1	1
Leningrad Region	1	1	1
Lipetsk Region	1	1	0
Novgorod Region	2	2	0
Novosibirsk Region	1	1	1
Penza Region	1	1	1
Primorye Territory	1	1	1
Republic of Adygeya	1	1	0
Republic of Buryatia	1	1	1
Republic of Daghestan	1	2	2
Republic of Karelia	2	2	2
Republic of Tatarstan	1	6	1
Rostov Region	2	2	1
Samara Region	3	3	1
Stavropol Territory	1	1	0
Tyumen Region	1	1	0
Ulyanovsk Region	1	4	0
Vladimir Region	1	1	0
Voronezh Region	1	1	1
Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Area	1	1	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>21</i>
<b>2009</b>			
Moscow	5	9	2

	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2009</b>			
St. Petersburg	2	2	0
Arkhangelsk Region	3	3	1
Chelyabinsk Region	1	1	0
Ivanovo Region	1	1	0
Kaliningrad Region	2	1	1
Kamchatka Territory	1	2	2
Kemerovo Region	1	1	1
Khabarovsk Territory	3	5	4
Komi Republic	2	1	2
Kostroma Region	1	1	0
Krasnodar Territory	1	1	0
Krasnoyarsk Territory	2	2	0
Kurgan Region	1	0	1
Kursk Region	2	2	2
Murmansk Region	1	1	1
Nizhny Novgorod Region	1	1	0
Novgorod Region	2	2	0
Omsk Region	1	2	0
Orenburg Region	2	5	0
Primorye Territory	1	1	0
Republic of Karelia	1	1	0
Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)	1	1	0
Samara Region	1	1	1
Sverdlovsk Region	1	2	0
Tomsk Region	2	2	0
Trans-Baikal Territory	1	1	1
Tyumen Region	1	1	0
Vladimir Region	2	2	1
Vologda Region	2	3	2
<i>Total</i>	<i>48</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>22</i>

	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2010</b>			
Moscow	1	1	1
St. Petersburg	1	3	2
Arkhangelsk Region	2	2	0
Astrakhan Region	2	2	1
Belgorod Region	1	1	0
Chelyabinsk Region	2	5	3
Chuvash Republic	2	2	1
Kaluga Region	2	2	0
Kamchatka Territory	1	1	1
Khabarovsk Territory	1	1	1
Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area – Yugra	1	1	0
Kirov Region	2	2	1
Komi Republic	4	5	4
Kostroma Region	3	3	2
Krasnodar Territory	3	3	0
Krasnoyarsk Territory	1	1	0
Kurgan Region	1	1	0
Kursk Region	3	3	2
Leningrad Region	1	0	1
Novosibirsk Region	3	3	2
Orel Region	1	1	0
Pskov Region	1	1	0
Republic of Bashkortostan	1	1	1
Republic of Buryatia	1	1	1
Republic of Karelia	2	2	0
Republic of Mari El	1	1	1
Rostov Region	1	1	0
Sakhalin Region	1	2	1
Samara Region	1	1	1

	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2010</b>			
Stavropol Territory	4	4	1
Tomsk Region	1	1	0
Tyumen Region	1	0	1
Udmurtian Republic	3	3	1
Ulyanovsk Region	1	1	0
Vladimir Region	5	5	0
Volgograd Region	1	1	1
Voronezh Region	2	2	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>65</i>	<i>70</i>	<i>32</i>
<b>2011</b>			
Moscow	2	2	1
St. Petersburg	1	1	0
Altai Territory	1	1	0
Arkhangelsk Region	3	4	3
Chelyabinsk Region	4	4	2
Chuvash Republic	5	4	1
Kaluga Region	1	1	1
Khabarovsk Territory	1	1	0
Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area – Yugra	4	4	2
Kirov Region	2	3	1
Komi Republic	4	4	2
Krasnoyarsk Territory	1	1	0
Kurgan Region	2	2	0
Kursk Region	2	2	0
Lipetsk Region	1	1	0
Moscow Region	2	2	2
Murmansk Region	1	1	1
Novgorod Region	1	1	0
Novosibirsk Region	1	1	1
Primorye Territory	1	1	1

	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2011</b>			
Pskov Region	2	2	2
Republic of Adygeya	2	2	2
Republic of Bashkortostan	3	3	1
Republic of Kalmykia	1	1	0
Republic of Karelia	2	2	0
Republic of Tatarstan	1	4	0
Sakhalin Region	1	1	0
Saratov Region	2	2	0
Smolensk Region	1	1	1
Sverdlovsk Region	4	4	3
Tomsk Region	1	1	1
Tula Region	1	1	0
Tver Region	1	0	0
Tyumen Region	1	1	1
Udmurtian Republic	1	1	0
Ulyanovsk Region	1	2	0
Vladimir Region	1	1	0
Volgograd Region	1	1	1
Vologda Region	1	1	1
Voronezh Region	1	1	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>69</i>	<i>73</i>	<i>32</i>
<b>2012</b>			
Moscow	4	5	3
St. Petersburg	1	1	0
Arkhangelsk Region	6	6	2
Chelyabinsk Region	1	0	1
Chuvash Republic	3	3	0
Irkutsk Region	2	2	0
Kaliningrad Region	1	1	0
Kaluga Region	1	1	0

	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2012</b>			
Kemerovo Region	2	0	1
Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area – Yugra	1	1	0
Kirov Region	1	1	0
Kostroma Region	3	3	0
Krasnoyarsk Territory	1	1	1
Kurgan Region	2	2	0
Kursk Region	4	4	0
Murmansk Region	2	3	0
Nizhny Novgorod Region	1	0	1
Novgorod Region	4	4	0
Novosibirsk Region	2	2	0
Omsk Region	2	2	0
Orel Region	1	1	0
Orenburg Region	1	0	1
Primorye Territory	1	1	0
Pskov Region	4	4	0
Republic of Altai	2	1	0
Republic of Bashkortostan	2	2	1
Republic of Khakassia	1	1	0
Republic of North Ossetia - Alania	1	1	0
Republic of Tatarstan	1	1	0
Rostov Region	1	1	0
Ryazan Region	1	1	0
Sakhalin Region	1	1	0
Samara Region	2	2	1
Stavropol Territory	1	1	0
Sverdlovsk Region	4	4	0
Tomsk Region	1	1	0

	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2012</b>			
Trans-Baikal Territory	1	0	3
Tyumen Region	2	2	0
Udmurtian Republic	3	3	1
Ulyanovsk Region	2	7	0
Vladimir Region	1	1	0
Vologda Region	3	3	0
Voronezh Region	1	1	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>82</i>	<i>82</i>	<i>17</i>
<b>2013</b>			
Moscow	1	1	0
St. Petersburg	1	1	0
Altai Territory	2	3	1
Arkhangelsk Region	2	1	2
Astrakhan Region	1	1	0
Chelyabinsk Region	4	4	3
Chuvash Republic	5	4	0
Irkutsk Region	2	2	0
Ivanovo Region	1	1	0
Kaliningrad Region	1	1	0
Kaluga Region	2	2	0
Kamchatka Territory	1	1	0
Kemerovo Region	2	2	1
Khabarovsk Territory	2	2	0
Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area – Yugra	2	2	0
Kirov Region	1	1	0
Komi Republic	3	3	1
Kostroma Region	1	1	0
Krasnodar Territory	2	1	1
Kurgan Region	3	3	0

	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2013</b>			
Kursk Region	2	1	1
Leningrad Region	1	1	0
Magadan Region	1	1	0
Murmansk Region	1	1	0
Novgorod Region	3	3	0
Novosibirsk Region	6	6	0
Omsk Region	1	0	0
Orel Region	1	1	0
Orenburg Region	2	2	0
Penza Region	2	1	1
Pskov Region	2	2	0
Republic of Adygeya	1	1	0
Republic of Altai	2	3	1
Republic of Bashkortostan	3	3	1
Republic of Buryatia	1	1	0
Republic of Kalmykia	1	1	0
Republic of Khakassia	1	1	0
Republic of Tatarstan	7	7	0
Rostov Region	2	2	0
Sakhalin Region	1	1	0
Samara Region	5	4	0
Saratov Region	1	1	0
Smolensk Region	1	1	0
Stavropol Territory	3	3	0
Sverdlovsk Region	8	9	2
Tomsk Region	5	5	0
Trans-Baikal Territory	3	2	1
Tula Region	2	2	0
Tver Region	1	1	0

	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2013</b>			
Tyumen Region	1	1	0
Udmurtian Republic	2	2	0
Ulyanovsk Region	4	4	1
Vladimir Region	3	3	0
Vologda Region	1	1	0
Voronezh Region	2	2	0
Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Area	1	0	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>123</i>	<i>117</i>	<i>18</i>
<b>2014</b>			
Moscow	4	4	1
St. Petersburg	3	3	1
Altai Territory	1	1	0
Amur Region	1	1	0
Arkhangelsk Region	6	6	0
Astrakhan Region	1	1	0
Belgorod Region	3	3	0
Chelyabinsk Region	2	3	1
Chuvash Republic	3	2	0
Irkutsk Region	2	2	0
Ivanovo Region	2	2	0
Jewish Autonomous Region	1	1	0
Kaluga Region	2	2	0
Kemerovo Region	3	3	0
Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area – Yugra	3	3	1
Kirov Region	1	1	0
Komi Republic	2	2	0
Krasnodar Territory	4	4	0
Krasnoyarsk Territory	3	3	0
Kurgan Region	6	6	2



	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2014</b>			
Kursk Region	1	1	0
Leningrad Region	1	0	0
Moscow Region	1	1	1
Murmansk Region	2	2	0
Novgorod Region	4	4	0
Novosibirsk Region	1	1	0
Orel Region	4	4	0
Primorye Territory	2	2	0
Pskov Region	2	1	0
Republic of Bashkortostan	1	1	0
Republic of Buryatia	1	1	0
Republic of Karelia	5	5	0
Republic of Khakassia	2	2	0
Republic of Mordovia	4	4	0
Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)	1	1	0
Republic of Tatarstan	4	4	0
Rostov Region	3	5	0
Samara Region	3	3	1
Saratov Region	4	4	0
Stavropol Territory	4	5	0
Sverdlovsk Region	6	6	0
Tambov Region	1	1	1
Tomsk Region	2	2	0
Tver Region	3	3	0
Tyumen Region	4	4	2
Udmurtian Republic	2	2	0
Ulyanovsk Region	7	7	2
Vladimir Region	2	2	0
Volgograd Region	2	2	0

	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2014</b>			
Vologda Region	2	2	0
Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Area	1	1	0
Yaroslavl Region	2	1	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>137</i>	<i>137</i>	<i>13</i>

### Statistics of convictions for incitement to extremism (art. 280 of Criminal Code) in 2005 – 2014

	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2005</b>			
Kemerovo Region	3	3	2
Kirov Region	1	1	1
Vladimir Region	1	1	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>3</i>
<b>2006</b>			
Moscow	1	1	0
Astrakhan Region	1	1	0
Chelyabinsk Region	1	3	0
Kemerovo Region	2	2	2
<b>2006</b>			
Nizhny Novgorod Region	2	3	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>2</i>
<b>2007</b>			
Kemerovo Region	1	1	0
Krasnodar Territory*	1	1	0
Novgorod Region	1	1	0
Sverdlovsk Region	1	1	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>0</i>

	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2008</b>			
Moscow**	1	1	0
St. Petersburg	1	1	0
Kaluga Region	1	1	0
Novosibirsk Region	1	1	1
Republic of Tatarstan*	1	5	1
Samara Region	2	3	3
Vladimir Region	1	1	0
Vologda Region	1	2	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>7</i>
<b>2009</b>			
Moscow	1	1	1
Amur Region	2	3	2
Arkhangelsk Region*	1	1	1
Jewish Autonomous Region	1	2	2
Kemerovo Region	1	1	1
Khabarovsk Territory	1	1	Not known
Novosibirsk Region*	1	2	2
Primorye Territory*	1	1	1
Samara Region	1	1	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>11</i>
<b>2010</b>			
St. Petersburg	1	1	0
Amur Region	1	1	1
Chelyabinsk Region**	1	1	1
Kemerovo Region	1	1	1
Komi Republic <sup>9</sup>	2	2	1
Novosibirsk Region	1	1	Not known
Omsk Region	1	1	1
Republic of Bashkortostan**	1	1	1
Sakhalin Region	1	2	1

<sup>9</sup> One indictment also includes a charge under the Criminal Code Article 282

	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2010</b>			
Tyumen Region	1	1	0
Yaroslavl Region**	1	2	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>7</i>
<b>2011</b>			
Chelyabinsk Region**	3	3	1
Khabarovsk Territory	1	1	0
Moscow Region**	2	2	2
Primorye Territory*	1	1	1
Republic of Adygeya**	3	3	2
Republic of Bashkortostan <sup>10</sup>	1	2	0
Sakhalin Region*	1	1	0
Tyumen Region	1	1	1
Voronezh Region*	1	1	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>8</i>
<b>2012</b>			
Moscow**	1	1	0
St. Petersburg**	1	1	1
Arkhangelsk Region*	3	3	2
Khabarovsk Territory**	1	1	1
Lipetsk Region	1	1	1
Nizhny Novgorod Region	1	1	0
Novgorod Region*	1	1	0
Orel Region**	1	6	0
Republic of Khakassia*	1	1	0
Sakhalin Region*	1	2	0
Tyumen Region	1	1	0
Voronezh Region*	1	1	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>6</i>

<sup>10</sup> The verdict also uses the Criminal Code Articles 2052 and 282.

	Number of convictions	Number of offenders convicted	Received suspended sentences or were released from punishment
<b>2013</b>			
Altai Territory	1	1	0
Arkhangelsk Region*	1	1	0
Chelyabinsk Region*	1	1	0
Kaliningrad Region	1	1	0
Komi Republic**	1	1	1
Rostov Region	1	1	0
Trans-Baikal Territory*	1	0	1
Voronezh Region*	1	1	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>2</i>
<b>2014</b>			
Moscow**	2	2	0
Amur Region*	2	2	0
Arkhangelsk Region**	2	2	0
Astrakhan Region	1	1	0
Chelyabinsk Region	2	3	1
Chuvash Republic	1	1	0
Kaliningrad Region	2	2	0
Kemerovo Region	1	1	0
Komi Republic	1	1	0
Krasnoyarsk Territory	1	1	0
Kurgan Region*	4	4	2
Kursk Region**	3	3	0
Lipetsk Region**	1	1	0
Murmansk Region*	1	1	1
Republic of Karelia*	2	1	0
Tomsk Region	1	1	0
Udmurtian Republic	1	1	1
Vologda Region*	3	3	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>5</i>

\* Sentences include also Criminal Code Article 282.

\*\* Sentences include also other articles of the Criminal Code.