



23.12.2022

Repressions in Russia in 2022

Along with the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the Russian authorities commenced internal repression on an unprecedented scale. There are more than 21,000 arrests and at least 370 defendants in criminal cases for anti-war statements and speeches, more than 200,000 Internet resources have been blocked and 11 sentences in cases of state treason. OVD-Info collected the main figures on political repressions in 2022.

Russian version

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**DETENTIONS AND VIOLENCE
BY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS**

20 467

political arrests* in from 14 January to 14 December, 2022

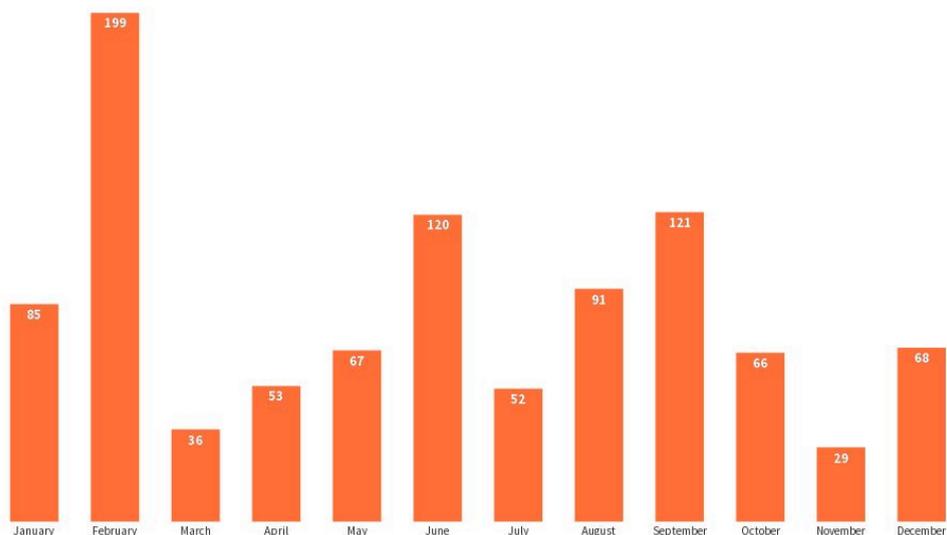
25

days only without politically motivated detentions**
since the beginning of 2022

*at and after street protests, Internet messages, things said during personal conversations, etc. This number includes arrests for an anti-war position.

This year, people went not only to anti-war protests — there were also **environmental protests** in the Verkhnesalda district of the Sverdlovsk region, protests in defense of the Troitsky and Bitsevsky forests, **distribution** of leaflets about labor rights, actions in support of **Sergei Furgal** and **Alexei Navalny**, pickets **against corruption**, and against the new **LGBTQ propaganda** law.

Political arrests not for anti-war position in 2022



Data: [OVD-Info](#) • 19 December 2022

DETENTIONS AT PROTESTS

Detainees at the September protests against mobilization received military conscription notices — we know about 27 departments in 8 cities where this practice was used.



Источник: ОВД-Инфо • [Скачать данные](#) • Создано с помощью [Datawrapper](#)

The authorities also began to use the tactics of preventive detentions during public holidays and other events. A total of 141 people were detained using the facial recognition system on security cameras in the Moscow metro. The authorities confirmed that rally participants' biometrics are entered into the facial recognition system.

The police actively brutalized protesters. During mass rallies both in spring and autumn of 2022, OVD-Info received **plenty of reports** of the use of force by police officers during detention, in police buses, and departments: people were knocked to the ground, thrown onto the asphalt, beaten with truncheons, strangled, beaten in the stomach, face, eyes, their heads were hit against the wall, their hands were twisted and wrung. One of the most outrageous cases of this year is the **torture and humiliating of young women** in the Brateevo

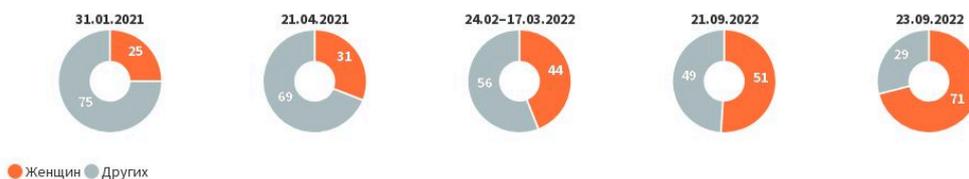
police station in Moscow. However, this case is not the only one.

In 2022, the persecution of the defendants in the so-called «palace case» continued. In just a year, more than 23 defendants in the case were sentenced. Among them, for example, are the editors of student magazine DOXA, who were sentenced to two years of hard labor. Six more defendants had their sentences revised to harsher ones, and two had their sentences revised.

This year, activists who, according to law enforcers, organized protests in 2021 were forced to compensate «the overtime» of the security forces involved. At least 13.7 million rubles were paid (roughly US\$ 199k): 2.4 million rubles in Ufa (US\$ 35k), 3 million rubles in Novosibirsk (US\$ 43.5k), 435 thousand rubles in Samara (US\$ 6.3k), 750 thousand rubles in Kemerovo (US\$ 11k), 3.93 million rubles in St. Petersburg (US\$ 57k), 2.1 million rubles in Chelyabinsk (US\$ 30.5k), 103 thousand rubles in Kirov (US\$ 1.5k), 472 thousand rubles in Tambov (US\$ 6.8k), 565 thousand rubles in Yekaterinburg (US\$ 8.2k).

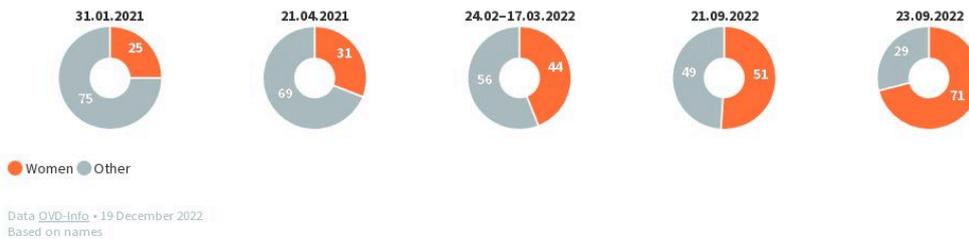
Many defendants in the «palace case» have already served their sentences and were released. OVD-Info spoke to some of them on the anniversary of the January protests.

Процент женщин на крупных акциях 2021 и 2022 годов



Данные ОВД-Инфо • На 19 декабря 2022
На основании известных имён

Percentage of women participating in mass protests 2021 and 2022



Made with Flourish • Create your own

Between 24 February and 12 December, OVD-Info recorded at least 8,500 administrative detentions of women for expressing anti-war positions in various forms, which is about 45% of all known detainees. In recent years, the share of women detained at rallies has increased significantly: in 2021, at rallies in support of Alexei Navalny, it was 25-31%, and in 2022, at rallies after the announcement of mobilization on 21 and 24 September — 51% and 71%, respectively.

PRESSURE ON LAWYERS

275

cases of lawyers and defenders not being let into detention centers and otherwise pressured

According to OVD-Info from 02/24/2022 to 12/15/2022

Among other pressures, for example, Maria Bontsler, a lawyer cooperating with OVD-Info, was **fined** twice under the article on «discrediting the military» for saying the word «war» in court hearings where she defended participants in anti-war rallies.

The police often take detainees' phones so that they cannot contact lawyers. In addition, the police use physical force

against attorneys. For example, in early March, the police **used force** against lawyer Alexei Kalugin and did not let him into the department to see his client. And his colleague, lawyer Sergei Podolsky, was taken to a separate room by the police officers, where they threatened him.

At least two lawyers in Russia have been demanded by the Ministry of Justice to be disbarred due to their anti-war statements — **Alexei Baranovsky** and **Mikhail Benyash**. At least three lawyers in Crimea were **disbarred** because of their human rights activities and work on cases related to Hizb-ut-Tahrir.

CASES AGAINST THE ANTI-CORRUPTION FOUNDATION (FBK) AND ALEXEI NAVALNY

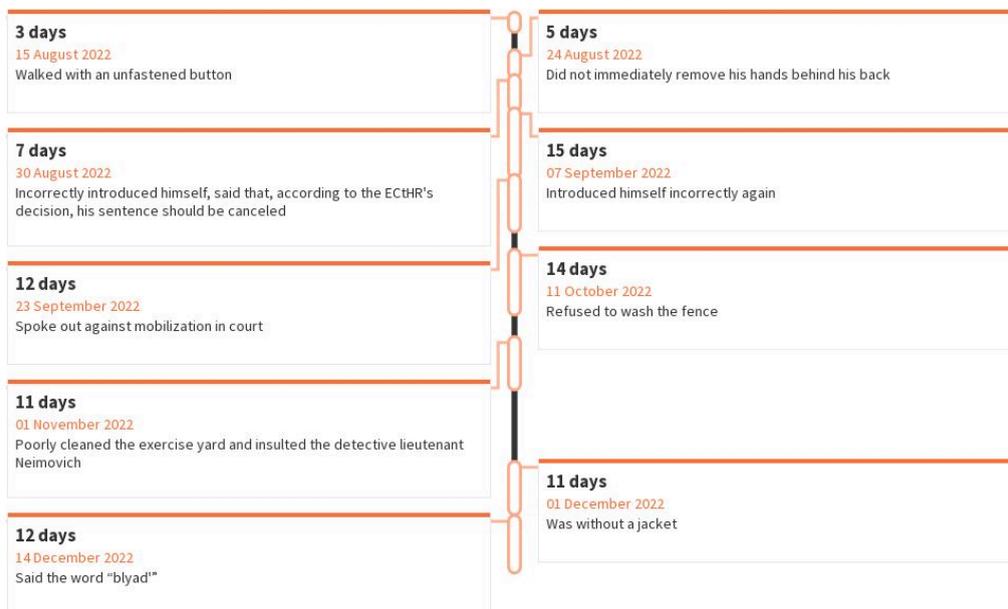
At least 23 people became defendants in the department of cases of an extremist community associated with the FBK and Navalny's headquarters. Of these, 22 are related to the headquarters and / or FBK, of which five people are in custody. Two of those five are Alexei himself and FBK camera man, Pavel Zelensky, who are sentenced due to other cases.

On 22 March, Alexei Navalny **was sentenced** to nine years in a strict regime colony in a fraud case. **At least 10** more criminal cases, combined into one, have also been initiated against him. Alexei is being prosecuted under articles on incitement to terrorism on the Internet (part 2 of article 205.2 of the Criminal Code); calls for extremist activities (article 280 of the Criminal Code); financing of extremist activities (part 1 of article 282.3 of the Criminal Code); the creation of an extremist community (art. 282.1 of the Criminal Code), the creation of a non-profit organization that encroaches the personality and rights of citizens (Part 2 of Art. 239 of the Criminal Code), the distribution

of disrespectful information about the days of military glory and memorable dates in Russia on the Internet, or humiliation of the honor and dignity of a veteran of the Great Patriotic War on the Internet (part 4 of article 354.1 of the Criminal Code) and the legalization of funds acquired by other persons in a criminal way, on an especially large scale (part 4 of article 174 of the Criminal Code).

In 2022, Alexei nine times was in solitary confinement and spent a total of 90 days in it. Navalny was also transferred to a **cell-type room** with no right to receive visitors, and without letters passing through.

The authorities had Navalny spend 90 days in punitive solitary confinement



Made with Flourish • Create your own

Also, Andrei Zayakin, a Novaya Gazeta journalist and co-founder of Dissernet, was **charged** with financing extremist activities (Part 1, Article 282.3 of the Criminal Code). The reason for the criminal prosecution was the donations of the FBK. The Ministry of Internal Affairs established the names of five more people in addition to Zayakin, who transferred money to the FBK that day — who they are is still unknown.

«ANTI-EXTREMISM» AND «ANTI-TERRORISM» CASES

106

cases of illegitimate prosecution under Article 20.3 of the Code of Administrative Offenses in 2022 were recorded

According to "SOVA" Center for Information and Analysis

In 2022, the SOVA Center recorded 106 cases of illegitimate prosecution under Article 20.3 of the Code of Administrative Offenses (Propaganda or public display of Nazi paraphernalia or symbols, or paraphernalia or symbols of extremist organizations). Often these cases of prosecution are connected with Ukraine — the slogan of «Slava Ukraine» (Glory to Ukraine), the songs «Chervona Kalina» (the Red Viburnum) and «Bayraktar» were all for some reason, considered attributes of extremist organizations by courts in Crimea.

21

people sentenced under Article 354.1 (Rehabilitation of Nazism) in 2022

According to "SOVA" Center for Information and Analysis

11 cases under this article were discontinued.

In April 2022, a new article was passed on the equation of the actions of the USSR and Nazi Germany — 13.48 of the Code of Administrative Offenses. Cases of prosecution for social media posts **criticizing** Stalin and **comparing** him to Hitler; **discussing** the memoirs of Soviet soldiers were recorded.

Since the beginning of the full-scale war with Ukraine, the number of cases under the article on the rehabilitation of Nazism (Article 354.1 of the Criminal Code) has increased dramatically. Presumably, law enforcement officers (siloviki) use this article to put pressure on those who could potentially oppose the «special operation» in Ukraine and its «denazification.» Furthermore, criminal cases under this article are initiated for **burning a cable** and «**performing public dance movements**» at the Eternal Flame. Teenagers aged **12-15** are persecuted as well; meanwhile, liability under this article comes from the age of 16.

According to the «SOVA» Center for Information and Analysis, many cases under Article 354.1 of the Criminal Code are initiated illegitimately and should be qualified under other articles of the Criminal Code or resolved through civil proceedings rather than criminal ones.

Other articles introduced this year include article 282.4 of the Criminal Code, which prescribes criminal penalties of up to four years in prison for repeated public displays of prohibited symbols. Such symbols include, for example, the symbols of Alexei Navalny's organizations. At least two cases (**1, 2**) are already known about initiated under this article.

75

In 2022 Ministry of Justice included 75 more materials in the Federal List of Extremist Materials

The city court of Saint Petersburg **labeled** the movement «Vesna» (Spring) as extremist. The content of the lawsuit and the reasoning behind this decision are still unknown, even to the activists of the movement themselves. The State Duma Commission for investigation of the facts of foreign

interference sent an appeal to the Prosecutor General's Office to **recognize** the DOXA magazine as an extremist organization.

In total, at least 10 organizations were recognized by Russian courts as extremist in 2022, including the «1ADAT» **social movement** in Chechnya and the «Citizens of the USSR» **movement**. In April of 2022, Vyacheslav Shepelev, a supporter of the ideas of the «Citizens of the USSR» and head of the «Molot» (Hammer) labor union in Togliatti, **was sentenced to six years in prison**.

In Chelyabinsk, the **court** recognized the anarchist organization «People's Self-Defense» as terrorist and outlawed its activities in Russia. Chelyabinsk anarchists Dmitry Tsibukovsky and Anastasia Safonova, whom the investigation has linked with this organization, were sentenced to a year and nine months in a general regime penal colony for a banner drop reading «FSB is the main terrorist.» At the moment, Anastasia Safonova is not in prison, as she was given jail credit for the time she spent in the pre-trial detention center.

On the second of February, the Supreme Court of Russia recognized «Columbine» as a terrorist organization and outlawed its activities in the country. Cases of prosecution have been recorded after this: a teenager, born in 2005, was **detained** in Sochi, allegedly administering the «Columbine» Internet community; according to the security forces, he received the rights to it from a citizen of Ukraine with the nickname «White Rose.» In the fall of 2021 and spring of 2022, the name of the channel «White Rose,» or the user under the same name, was already **mentioned** in messages about preventing shootings in Kazan and Sochi, not mentioning any details about the identity of this citizen and the ways he connected with school children. In 46 regions of the country, FSB **officers conducted searches** of 187 members of these Internet communities associated

with supporters of the «Columbine» movement. According to the «SOVA» Center, the ban on «Columbine» as a terrorist organization had no legal basis due to the lack of data that would make it qualified to be considered a unified organization. Moreover, experts consider this ban potentially dangerous since it complicates preventive work with school children belonging to certain risk groups, and creates the risk of mass initiation of criminal prosecution against subscribers of thematic communities.

On 11 October, Rosfinmonitoring added Meta Platforms Inc. (the parent company of Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp) to the list of terrorists and extremists, and the Ministry of Justice recognized the company as an extremist organization. There is one known warning for the use of Instagram.

61

**suits against “online justification of terrorism”
have been filed to courts in 2022**

In 2022, at least 61 lawsuits against “online justification of terrorism» were filed to the courts of the first instance, and in 26 cases, the verdict was passed.

Furthermore, new cases were initiated under this article — many of them were related to anti-war statements, but there were different cases- for example, against activist **Mikhail Krieger**, former photographer of Navalny Headquarters **Alexander Strukov**, university student **Maxim Voronovsky**, resident of Primorsky region **Valery Kalita** and anarchist **Denis Kozak**.

Security forces have also considered public calls for terrorism comments about **Mikhail Zhlobitsky** and **other acts**

considered terrorist, or **statements** about «terrorist and separatist activities in the North Caucasus.»

PRESSURE ON THE MEMBERS OF THE RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

Article 282.2 of the Criminal Code (Organizing operations of an extremist organization) is often used against members of religious organizations. Most frequently, this article is used against Jehovah's Witnesses and alleged followers of Muslim organizations such as «Tablighi Jamaat», Nurcular, «At-Takfir wal-Hijra», and the Faizrahmanist Muslim group in Kazan, which are all outlawed as extremist. In practice, not only people directly involved in the creation of these organizations are prosecuted, but also those who study books by the leaders of these movements and take part in discussions of the various aspects of the teachings — because the list of actions that constitute a crime is not indicated in the article.

Article 205.5 (Organization of the operation of a terrorist organization or participation in such activity) of the Criminal Code is often used against alleged «Hizb ut-Tahrir» (considered terrorist) members.

According to «Support for political prisoners. Memorial», as of December 15, 2022, at least 328 people are being prosecuted for the alleged involvement with «Hizb ut-Tahrir al-Islami». 242 of them were convicted: 108 received sentences from 10 to 15 years, 105 received sentences of 15 and more years. At least 58 are under investigation or are being tried in court. At least 27 people are wanted. According to the «SOVA» Center, in 2022 alone, 55 people were sentenced under Article 205.5 of the Criminal Code. In most cases, those persecuted are Crimean Tatar activists.

In addition, **two criminal cases** were opened against human rights activist Bakhrom Khamroev: on the online justification

of terrorism (part 2 of article 205.2 of the Criminal Code) because of the six posts on Facebook about the prosecution of «Hizb ut-Tahrir» and on organizing the activities of a terrorist organization (part 1 of article 205.2 of the Criminal Code). 1 article 205.5 of the Criminal Code) for human rights assistance in such cases. In March, the offices of Memorial and Civic Assistance Committee **were searched** because of their connection with the case of Khamroev. In August, the FSB **searched** the home of a relative of the human rights defender.

Also, according to the **data** of the website following the persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses, as of December 2022, 665 believers became defendants in criminal cases.

The SOVA Center registered 122 members of religious organizations sentenced in 2022 under articles 282.2 and 282.3 (financing extremist activities). According to the experts, the most severe punishment for membership in a religious organization has reached 8.5 years in prison.

CASES CONNECTED TO NATIONAL SECURITY

11

sentences for high treason in 2022

Data: First Department

In 2022, at least 20 persons suspected of high treason were detained, according to the First Department. One of them was detained for «helping foreign powers in activities against the security of Russia, » and two, for defection. Let us note that one of the accused in high treason, Gleb Verdiyán, is charged with Article 30, Part 1 and Article 275 of the

Criminal Code; it is likely that he, too, will be accused of preparation for defection, but we cannot count him in this statistics because we cannot prove this hypothesis.

22

years in prison for Ivan Safronov

The journalist Ivan Safronov **was sentenced** to the maximum prison term for high treason: 22 years for two episodes in the case. The physicist Alexander Lukanin was sentenced to the minimum term: 7.5 years. According to the First Department, physicists are the most numerous group among those accused of high treason.

LAW ON HIGH TREASON CASES

On 6 July, the State Duma approved a law adding several new articles on «threats to national security». A detailed analysis can be found [here \(in Russian\)](#).

They approved a new article 275.1 of the Criminal Code (Confidential cooperation with a foreign power, international or foreign organization) which introduced criminal liability for «confidential» cooperation with foreign powers and organizations, as well as international organizations, which is now punishable with 2 to 8 years in prison. At least one criminal case has been initiated on the basis of this article ([details in Russian](#)).

Article 280.4 of the Criminal Code introduced liability for public calls to actions against national security; Article 283.2 of the Criminal Code criminalized violation of requirements for protection of state secrets, and Article 274.2 of the Criminal Code, violation of the rules for using means ensuring operation of the Internet.

On 14 December, the State Duma approved, in the first reading, a law on life sentences for acts of sabotage ([details in Russian](#)). New articles are proposed for adding to the Criminal Code: 281.1 (Aiding sabotage), 281.2 (Undergoing training for acts of sabotage), and 281.3 (Organization of a sabotage group and participation in it). Now the deputies want to punish not only the saboteurs, but also their assistants, organizers of acts of sabotage, and, in some cases, those who justify their actions.

Ecoactivist Arshak Makichian who spoke against the war in Ukraine and his two brothers and father were stripped of their Russian citizenship because of formal violations ([details in Russian](#)). They have no other citizenships. The department of the Federal Security Service for Saratov Oblast initiated withdrawing the Russian citizenship from a sentenced Jehovah's Witness ([details in Russian](#)).

ELECTORAL RIGHTS

10 to 11 m.

**people are deprived of passive electoral rights
(the right to run for office)**

Estimate: Movement for Defence of Voters' Rights Golos

In 2022, elections of municipal deputies were held in Moscow. On 12 December, municipal deputy Ketevan Kharaidze was sentenced to four years in prison for fraud ([details in Russian](#)).

Before these elections, the authorities started to widely apply Article 20.3 of the Administrative Code («Propaganda or public display of Nazi attributes or symbols, or attributes and symbols of extremist organizations) to remove unwanted candidates from the elections. According to SOVA Center,

in Moscow alone, 47 former municipal deputies, candidates to municipal deputies, and district activists were sentenced under this article before the elections, and two more after them. Most of them were sentenced for using the symbols of the Anti-Corruption Foundation and the Navalny Headquarters (but at least in two cases, the reports were written for the use of the swastika).

According to Article 20.29 of the Administrative Code (Making and distributing extremist materials), courts of the first instance considered at least 727 cases and imposed 631 administrative punishments in 2022. All these cases are connected to distribution of information which is regarded as extremist.

Independent observers and their associations are under physical and political pressure. In autumn of 2022 (almost a month after the united election day), searches were conducted in the houses of members of the Golos movement (about 20 addresses in different regions of the country): equipment, documents, travel passports were confiscated; several attempts to initiate administrative and criminal cases for cooperation with an «unwanted organization» were made. After searches in the Moscow office, one of the movement's coordinators Vladimir Egorov was detained and beaten ([details in Russian](#); [more details in Russian](#)).

Many politicians practically from every wing of the political opposition in different parts of the country are under pressure from the law enforcement authorities.

In 2022 alone, four persons were sentenced: Ilia Yashin (Moscow; [details in Russian](#)), Alexei Gorinov (Moscow; [details in Russian](#)), Artem Samsonov (Primorsky Krai, Communist Party of the Russian Federation; [details in Russian](#)), Valeriy Rashkin (Moscow, Communist Party of the Russian Federation; [details in Russian](#)).

CRIMINAL PROSECUTION FOR AN ANTI-WAR STANCE

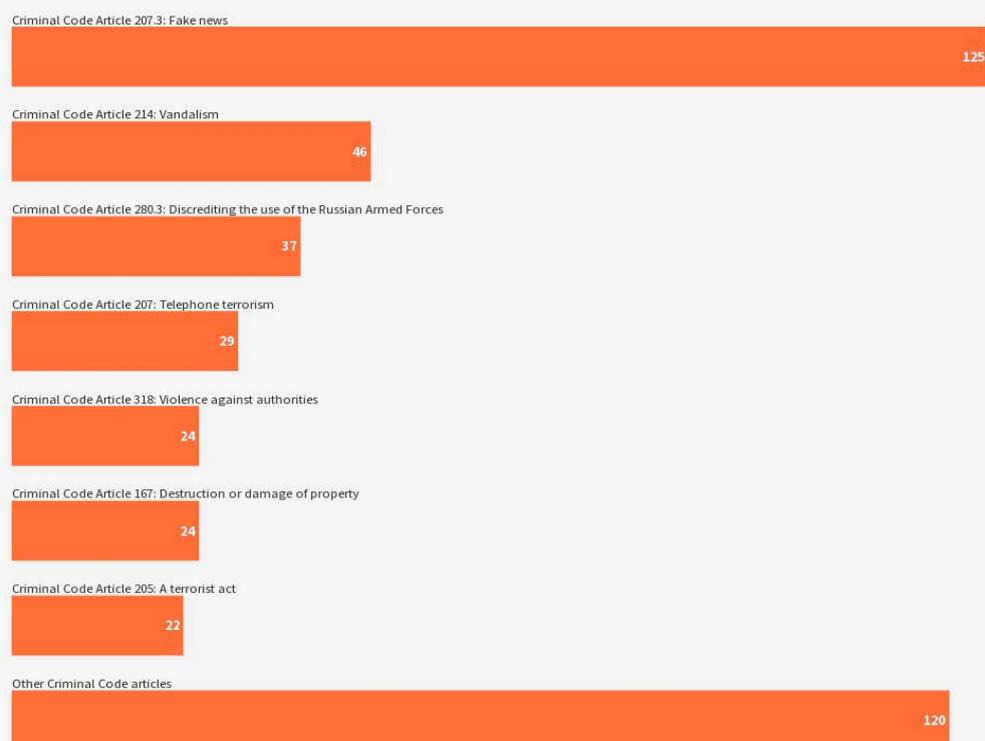
In March, Articles 207.3 (Public distribution of knowingly false information on the use of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation), 280.3 (Public actions aimed at discreditation of the use of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation), and 284.2 (Calls for sanctions against the Russian Federation) were approved for the Criminal Code and started to be used for criminal prosecution of anti-war activists.

As of 19 December, 2022, the anti-war case ([details in Russian](#)) has 378 defendants in 69 regions (we count Crimea and Sevastopol because the Russian Federation de-facto controls these territories and is responsible for human rights violations there).

Women among defendants: 79 (21%).

Minors among defendants: 7 (2%).

The number of defendants in the “anti-war case” prosecuted under each of the articles



Data: [QVD-Info](#) • 19 December 2022
Defendants being prosecuted under several articles are included in each of the corresponding columns

51 people were already sentenced. They include, for example, Alexei Gorinov and Ilia Yashin, defendants in the «anti-war case», they were sentenced to 6 years 11 months and 8 years 6 months, respectively. Both are former municipal deputies, and both received these harsh sentences for speaking about the war in Ukraine and the civilian deaths.

Criminal cases are opened not only for speaking against the war. For example, criticizing the authorities on the Internet leads to criminal cases for defamation ([details in Russian](#)), insulting law enforcement authorities ([details in Russian](#)), public calls for extremist activities — because of criticizing tariffs for public transport ([details in Russian](#)), the healthcare system ([details in Russian](#)), deputies from the United Russia party ([details in Russian](#)), or a voice message in a private Telegram channel ([details in Russian](#)).

Уголовные дела по следам протестных акций



ADMINISTRATIVE PROSECUTION FOR AN ANTI-WAR STANCE

This year saw the fast approval and entrance into effect of Articles 20.3.3 of the Administrative Code (Public actions aimed at discreditation of the use of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation) and 20.3.4 of the Administrative Code (Calls for sanctions against the Russian Federation).

As of 19.12.2022, 5,518 cases were opened under Article 20.3.3 of the Administrative Code, according to Mediazona. At least five cases under Article 20.3.4 of the Administrative Code were considered by courts of original jurisdiction.

At the same time, the authorities consider as discreditation any expression of opinion ([details in Russian](#)) connected to the war in Ukraine, including «silent support» of a protest, solitary protests, including demonstrating a sausage package or asterisks instead of letters, posts, reposts, photo and video published in social networks, profile pictures and placeholders, leaflets, stickers, clothing items, flags (the Ukrainian flag and the white-blue-white flag), tattoos, and many more. There are also cases of administrative punishment for clean white sheets of paper, anti-war conversations in public places, damaging patriotic symbols, inscriptions and graffiti on walls, and other forms of expression of opinion not displaying the person's clearly anti-war stance.

The Russian authorities even prosecute children for expressing their opinion, especially against the war. In particular, minors are prosecuted for posting information about anti-war protests ([details in Russian](#)), distributing anti-mobilisation leaflets ([details in Russian](#)), solitary protests ([details in Russian](#)), expressing anti-war opinions during

school events ([details in Russian](#)), anti-war inscriptions on clothes ([details in Russian](#)).

One of the most prominent cases is the one of the fifth-grader Varvara Galkina who was detained in her school for using a profile picture with the flag of Ukraine. We wrote about this case in detail [here](#) (in Russian).

THE LAW ON «FOREIGN AGENTS». AMENDMENTS AND APPLICATION PRACTICES IN 2022

176

**organizations and people were declared
as “foreign agents” in 2022**

As of 16.12.2022.

Despite the European Court of Human Rights’ [notice](#) that the law on «foreign agents» does not meet international standards, and declaring NGOs as «foreign agents» violates their rights, the Russian government continues to tighten the law.

This way, a new [bill](#) regarding «foreign influence» was [signed](#) into law. That law combined all the existing databases into one and significantly expanded the sphere of application of the law on «foreign agents», as well as the responsibility of people and organizations.

A new law was also signed as «company» for an existing one, changing 40 laws already in power and setting up [additional restrictions](#) for «foreign agents» — for example, all the information produced by them is now forbidden for children.

A new law that increased the responsibility of the «foreign agents» was also passed — now all «foreign agents» will face criminal liability in case of two administrative fines per year, and administrative penalties will even be applied to people who are not listed in the registers, but who carry out activities as a «foreign agent».

In 2022 in Russia a «foreign agent» was fined even for insufficiently large letters in the sign «THIS MESSAGE (MATERIAL) WAS CREATED AND (OR) DISTRIBUTED» — «foreign agents» are required to use the label every time they post something on social media.

18%

of "foreign agents" are under criminal prosecution in Russia

According to the data of «Versta».

≥6

**civil society organizations were liquidated in 2022.
The Ministry of Justice also shut down the representative
offices of 15 international and foreign organizations in Russia**

At least 6 civil society organizations were liquidated in 2022. The Ministry of Justice also shut down the representative offices of 15 international and foreign organizations in Russia.

In November, the Tverskoy District Court of Moscow declared illegal the transfer of the office of the liquidated «International Memorial» to the «Memorial Research and Educational Center». Thus, the court decided to seize the building in favor of the state. This decision was made on the same day as the

awarding of the **Nobel Peace Prize** to Memorial became known.

LEGISLATION ON «UNDESIRABLE ORGANIZATIONS».

Application practices, sentences

Number and type of undesirable organizations by year



Data: Inoteka • 19 December 2022

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22

organizations were recognized as “undesirable” in 2022

The ex-head of «Open Russia», Andrei Pivovarov, **was sentenced** to four years in prison under the article on the activities of an «undesirable organization» (Article 284.1 of the Criminal Code). The case against the politician was initiated because of 30 posts and one «Open Russia» repost on Facebook.

The courts considered at least 79 cases under article 20.33 of the Administrative Code (Participation in the activities of an undesirable organization) and imposed 42 administrative penalties. In 2022, the first case of «undesirability» against a **religious organization** was opened, and two more of the organizations entered in the registers of organizations in 2022 were **religious**. In addition, the first criminal case not related to «Open Russia» was opened against the opposition politician Vladimir Kara-Murza (he is charged with cooperation with the «Free Russia Foundation») — previously all criminal cases concerned the activities of «Open Russia».

OTHER LAWS

22

The Russian authorities adopted 22 repressive laws in 2022

For example, in December, a **law** restricting the holding of meetings in many public places was passed, including train stations, buildings and territories of educational organizations, medical organizations, social protection organizations, playgrounds and sports grounds and other places. Despite the fact that this new restrictive measure was hidden behind the amendments on «foreign agents», the ban applies to all people. At the same time, previously the Constitutional Court **had recognized** regional bans on holding meetings as unacceptable, and also criticized abstract territorial bans in general.

This year, the Constitutional Court also «**approved**» the legislature that is still in force in some regions on public events, including single pickets, under the pretext of a pandemic.

LGBTQ+

On December 5, a bill **was signed into law** on the complete prohibition of «propaganda» of non-traditional sexual relations, sex change and pedophilia. The new law prohibits «propaganda» among Russians of any age in the media, the Internet, advertising, literature, and cinema. It is also prohibited to disseminate information «capable of causing a desire to change gender» among teenagers.

But there is also good news! The Khabarovsk Regional Court **rejected** the complaint of the prosecutor's office and approved the acquittal of the artist and LGBTQ activist Yulia Tsvetkova, who was previously prosecuted for distribution of pornography (paragraph «b» of Part 3 of Article 242 of the Criminal Code). The case against Tsvetkova was initiated because of the publication of body-positive pictures in the public «Vagina Monologues».

BLOCKING INDEPENDENT SOURCES OF INFORMATION

210,450

websites blocked from January 1 to December 16, 2022

According to Roskomsvoboda.

During 2022, according to the independent project «Roskomsvoboda», 9208 sites were subjected to «military censorship», and in total more than 210 thousand resources were blocked.

On February 24, Roskomnadzor **informed** the media that they should use only official information about the armed conflict in Ukraine and demanded that the media remove any publications that use the words «war» or «invasion» instead

of the words «military operation», as well as reports of shelling of cities or losses of Russian personnel. On September 21, the same demand **was made** about the news about mobilization.

HARASSMENT OF JOURNALISTS AND SHUTTING DOWN THE MEDIA

In total, in 2022, almost all independent media outlets were closed, blocked or otherwise subjected to pressure from the authorities. Most of the significant non-governmental publications are now closed.

On March 5, «Important Stories», The Insider and the international association of investigative Journalists OCCRP **were included** in the list of «undesirable organizations». This means that their activities in Russia are subject to a complete ban (including a ban on their publications), and people cooperating with them face criminal liability.

≥26

times independent media or their editors-in-chief received fines for spreading "fake information" or discrediting the Russian army

The Basmany Court of Moscow **declared** the license of Novaya Gazeta invalid and **annulled** the certificate of registration of Novaya Gazeta. In addition, the Supreme Court of Russia **decided to deprive** the Novaya Gazeta website of a media license — this was required by Roskomnadzor. **Dozhd, Bloomberg, CNN, BBC, ABC, CBS and CBC** and others announced the temporary suspension of work in Russia. The Echo of Moscow radio station also stopped broadcasting. The decision to close the radio station

was made not by the editorial board, but by the board of directors controlled by the state corporation Gazprom.

At the request of the tax service, the court in Moscow **began** bankruptcy proceedings against the legal entity of the Radio Liberty publication.

140

times journalists were detained while covering peaceful protests in 2022

At least 17 journalists were subjected to extrajudicial persecution — among them, for example, Elena Chernenko, a veteran of the international policy department of Kommersant, who **was excluded** from the Foreign Ministry's journalistic pool, and Dmitry Muratov, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, editor-in-chief of Novaya Gazeta, who was attacked and doused with green paint.

The Russian authorities are putting pressure on independent journalists, including opening criminal cases against them. To do this, the security forces most often use articles on extortion (Article 163 of the Criminal Code) and slander (Article 128.1 of the Criminal Code), but sometimes cases are initiated under articles that are not typical for journalists — for example, on treason (Article 275 of the Criminal Code), vandalism (Article 214 of the Criminal Code) or even on the storage of weapons (Article 222 of the Criminal Code).

This year, libel and extortion cases were opened against 12 journalists.

After the outbreak of the war, journalists began to be persecuted in the «anti-war» case — at least 34 journalists were involved.

90 journalists **were recognized** as «foreign agents» in 2022. **According to** the investigation of the «Project», in 2022 more than 504 journalists were forced to emigrate, most of them after February 24, 2022.

Journalists are also being persecuted with the help of raids — in «rubber» cases, for example, related to Ilya Ponomarev (at least seven raids, four journalists' accounts **were blocked**), or in the **case** of calls to terrorism via the Internet, initiated against journalists **Andrei Grigoriev** and **Aisyl Kadyrov** (more than ten raids).

*Title illustration: **Elena Nabokova** for OVD-Info*

LINKS TO OTHER DATA AND REPORTS BY OVD-INFO:

- Summary of anti-war repressions. [November 2022](#)
- Summary of anti-war repressions. [October 2022](#)
- Summary of anti-war repressions. [September 2022](#)
- Summary of anti-war repressions. [August 2022](#)
- Summary of anti-war repressions. [July 2022](#)
- Summary of anti-war repressions. [June 2022](#)
- Report in Russian «[No war. How the Russian authorities are fighting anti-war protests.](#)»
- Report in Ukrainian «[No war. How the Russian authorities are fighting anti-war protests.](#)»
- Guide «[The anti-war case.](#)»
- The input of information in reply to the call for submissions: [Challenges to freedom of opinion and expression in times of conflicts and disturbances.](#)
- Report «[Blocking Internet resources as a tool of political censorship.](#)»
- Project on the law on «foreign agents» — «[Inoteka](#)».
- Report «[How the authorities use cameras and facial recognition against protesters.](#)»
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